

Press Release

Living room design for the whole family

For an integrated and happy home, it is essential to have a family living room that works for all the whole family. We speak to Claire Gibson from leading furniture manufacturer, La-Z-Boy, about how to create an inviting and relaxing living room that will be comfortable for all members of the family to use.

15 October 2018, Johannesburg: The living room is one of the most used rooms in the home – it is where the family can relax and unwind together, or socialise with friends and family. As such, it is important that this room be as accommodating as possible, and takes everybody’s needs into account. Says Claire Gibson from leading furniture manufacturer, La-Z-Boy: “Accommodating the whole family in one space can be really challenging, but there are various changes that you can make to the style, layout and functionality of this space that will guarantee that all members of your family find this space equally as inviting.”

Read on to discover more of Claire’s top tips for improving the livability and comfort of your living room:

1.) Seating for everyone

The living room is by far the most sociable room in your home, so it is imperative that it has enough seating for the entire family, as well as for a couple of guests. Says Claire: “Conventional 3-2-1 lounge suites, as well as corner units, are great in this regard. However, you can create extra seating by adding a couple of ottomans, which can double as footstools when they are not being used as a seat.”

2.) Make it inviting

She says that more than anything else, your living room needs to be an inviting and comfortable space for the whole family to enjoy: “If your living room is uninviting and unfriendly, then you need to look at ways in which you can warm it up a bit. Think large squashy sofas decorated with soft feathery scatters, an atmosphere warming fireplace, and a collection of throws for when you feel like snuggling up and chilling out – these elements will all go a long way to making a space seem more inviting, and entice the whole family to settle in and spend an evening together, rather than in separate rooms.”

3.) An area for play

If you have small kids, then it is wise to dedicate a corner of your living room to being a play area. Says Claire: “If you have kids, then it is inevitable that they will spread their toys everywhere, turning your entire living room into one big play area, which is not ideal. If, however, you section off a specific area for this purpose, more often than not, the toys and play things will generally remain

within this area – allowing the grown-ups and the little ones to enjoy the same space in harmony.”

4.) Loads of storage

An essential ingredient to any successful living room design is to include as much storage space as possible: “Everybody will be using this room, so it should be able to accommodate everybody’s needs. One of the best ideas I have come across is to ensure that every member of the family has a dedicated cupboard, drawer or trunk in the living room, in which they can store their own things. This will provide a space in which to neatly store toys and other items out of the way when they are not in use – keeping your living room looking nice and neat. It is also a great idea to have dedicated storage for items that the whole family uses, such as family albums, board games, and throw blankets for winter for example – this will keep treasured items safely stored away, but still easily accessible.”

5.) Create a rogues gallery

The living room should be a personalised space that speaks of the family that will be using it, explains Claire: “Including photographs in your living room is a great way of personalising the space, as well as making each family member feel included. For example, a bare expanse of wall above the sofa or sideboard serves as the ideal location for hanging up a collection of family photos. You can choose to either hang them up in a free-form manner, or for a more symmetrical look, choose frames that are identical in size and colour, and arrange them in a grid formation for a striking visual impact.”

6.) Integrate technology

Whether we like it or not, technology is an integral part of family life and entertainment these days. As such, Claire says that it is a good idea to ensure your living room is media-friendly: “Accommodate the television into your interior design, so that it integrates seamlessly with the overall design. Also, include items that will accommodate the various TV-related gadgetry, such as TV controls for example. Several La-Z-Boy® sofas and lounge suites for example, have a dedicate console in which you can store these kinds of things. You can also order power La-Z-Boy incliners, which can be ordered with the option of a built-in USB charger in the chair. Another innovative idea is to include plug points on the side tables where you can quickly and easily charge your smartphone or tablets for example.”

7.) Get rid of clutter

Clutter is the enemy of any well thought out interior design, and the living room is no exception. You can create a clutter-free living room by keeping shelves orderly and free from lots of objects, notes Claire: “Only display a few select items that mean something to you, or that draw the interior composition together. All other items should be neatly stored away out of sight in dedicated cupboards, drawers or boxes.

8.) Durability is king

One thing you can be certain of is that your living room will be used a lot, and you need to take this into consideration when selecting your finishes. Claire advises that you paint the walls with a cleanable paint, update curtains to clean-lined shutters, and choose hardwearing leather for your choice of sofa upholstery: “Seating upholstered in genuine leather remains a great choice for any number of people – it is great for families, as it can weather heavy traffic and it is easy to maintain and clean, and it is also a good option for those looking for high-end, designer aesthetics, as there is very little that oozes comfort and opulence like leather does.”

Alternatively, Claire says that if leather is not your thing, then it is imperative to have your upholstery fabric treated so that it can withstand the inevitable stains and spills: “Treating your upholstery fabric goes a long way to making it more durable, however, for the ultimate in fabric durability, you can opt for the La-Z-Boy® iClean fabric – a high-performance fabric that incorporates safe, sophisticated chemistry to protect and surround each fibre, repelling spills before they turn into stains. Everyday spills are now protected with iClean, including coffee, wine, salsa, dirt, chocolate and more – now you can simply wipe them off.”

9.) Zone off areas

Today, most living rooms are designed in an open-plan layout with the kitchen. This is a great design, as it allows you to integrate and spend time with your family when you are cooking and they are watching TV, doing homework or playing games for example. However, Claire says that although open-plan living is a great choice as the social aspect is perfect for family interaction, it can be a challenge from a design point of view: “For any open-plan design to work, it is essential that various zones are created. For example, you should try and design allocated zones for lounging, dining and working to keep the room organised.”

ENDS

Released on behalf of La-Z-Boy (www.la-z-boy.co.za) by The Line (www.theline.co.za).