

## PRESS RELEASE

### Opening up your options

*Claire Gibson from leading furniture manufacturer, La-Z-Boy, offers her top 7 design-savvy ideas that will help you make the most of your open-plan living area.*

25 September 2018, Johannesburg: Open-plan living spaces that combine the kitchen, living and dining areas into one seamless space, are becoming an increasingly sought after design feature in the majority of modern homes today. However, although it is easy to see the many advantages of this kind of layout, it is not always easy to create a cosy, yet seamless design for these large areas.

Claire Gibson from leading furniture manufacturer, La-Z-Boy, says: "Today, most homeowners have embraced the concept of open-plan living, shunning the 'old fashioned' idea of having separate rooms for your kitchen, dining and living rooms. The open-plan layout provides a virtually endless array of options with regards to decorating and furniture arrangements – and I believe it is this that can make it a difficult space to decorate. However, there are definitely some tried-and-true tricks of the trade that can help you master your own open-plan floor design, and keep the spaces looking separate, yet seamless," explains Claire.

Here are her top 7 tips for decorating an open-plan space:

- 1. Get in the zone:** The first place to start when it comes to decorating an open-plan area is to divide the space up into different functional and usable zones. You will need to allocate different zones for lounging, dining, cooking and working. Says Claire: "You can start with a linear approach – place all your anchor pieces, such as your sofa, dining table and kitchen island, parallel and perpendicular to one another and see how they fit. The effect will create a clean, and well-balanced look. Once you have defined the spaces, it is time to define each space as a unique area in its own right, while still being connected to the other spaces in a seamless manner. You can do this through the use of rugs, decorating with colour, lighting, and furniture placement."
- 2. Let the light in:** Making the most of natural light is a great way to keep the room feeling vibrant and inviting, and it can even make a space seem larger and airier than it actually is. It is also of the utmost importance to create a layered lighting design so that the various spaces are well lit for the necessary tasks they need to perform. Claire says that lighting is an essential element in any successful interior design: "There are three main types of lighting – ambient or general lighting, task lighting, and feature lighting – these should be used in conjunction with one another in each of the different zones to ensure a balanced and layered lighting composition for the best possible end result."
- 3. Furniture placement 101:** You can section off various areas within an open-plan space through the careful placement of furniture, says Claire:

“A simple way to successfully tackle an expansive open-plan layout is to create a look that is balanced and has symmetry with your larger pieces of furniture. For example, doubling up sofas and occasional chairs for a sumptuous seating area, and then complementing it with an equally sized dining table and chairs, will instantly create an ordered, symmetrical look. From there, you can add contrast through the use of colour and smaller items, such as soft furnishings, window dressing and other objets d’art and accents.”

4. **Create a feature:** Adding visual features to each zone in an open-plan living space can take the design from ordinary to “wow!” in a few easy steps. Claire explains: “Every zone in an open-plan living area should have its own feature – whether it is a feature wall, a particular work of art, lighting, a rug, occasional chairs with interesting upholstery, any other interesting piece of furniture for that matter. Providing the eye with something out of the ordinary and dramatic to focus on is a great way to supercharge any décor scheme.”
5. **Bring the outdoors inside:** You can really optimise your open-plan living space if you can create a seamless flow between the indoor spaces, and the adjacent outdoor areas. Claire offers some pointers: “Ensuring your indoor spaces open out to your outdoor areas allows for a great entertaining and living space – not only will it allow you to enjoy the outdoors more, but it also maximises the amount of usable living space, increases the natural light to the indoors, as well as offering a great view to the natural outdoor vistas beyond. You can achieve this by adding wall-to-wall concertina, sliding or French doors that open to the outdoors. You can make the transition even more seamless by matching your choice of indoor and outdoor flooring.”
6. **L is for sofa:** The L-shaped corner sofa is a piece of furniture that really lends itself to open-plan décor, explains Claire: “You can use an L-shaped corner sofa to easily define the seating area in a multi-functional open-plan space. It adds a sense of intimacy to the space, and creates a comfy haven for a more friendly and inviting feel. It does all the work for you – visually defining the seating zone on its own, as well as maximising the functionality of the space in question by offering a place to sit or to lie down in.”
7. **Colour palettes:** When it comes to the use of colour in open-plan décor schemes, there are two schools of thought – the first is to define the different zones through the use of different colours, and the second entails creating one seamlessly harmonious colour scheme throughout the space. There is no winner here though – both schools of thought are equally as effective, notes Claire: “If you choose to use colour to define the different areas, be sure that you choose something that echoes throughout all the zones in order to pull the entire space all together. For example you can have a single accent colour, or perhaps the same flooring that is featured throughout. Alternatively, a harmonious colour scheme

that creates a seamless flow between all the spaces can also be very attractive, and it has the added benefit of visually maximising the space as well.”

ENDS

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