

PRESS RELEASE

Nordic now

01 August 2014, Johannesburg: There's no denying the influence of Nordic style on the global design arena – whether it's simply represented in a quirky stylised scatter on your sofa, or via an entire home that has been styled with the simple clean lines synonymous with Nordic design. Grafton Everest's Sue Scott talks us through this ever popular design aesthetic, explaining what it is to how you can incorporate it in your home.

Culture clash

“Let's start with the basics,” smiles Sue, explaining, “The word comes from The French *Nord* meaning *North*, so Nordic refers to a geographical region in Northern Europe that encompasses Scandinavia, Finland and Iceland. The Nordic design movement was born out of modernism and began to blossom in the 1950s, with utilitarianism at it's core. It champions democratic design that has a strong relationship with nature, and the fact that it is available to the broader public at reasonable prices. It is in the midst of this movement that innovative designers began to develop a pared-down and relaxed aesthetic that is stylishly streamlined, yet super functional – traits that still ring true today.”

Keep it simple

“Nordic designers are versed at clean lines and simplistic style that allows room to breathe,” says Sue, who believes this look is rooted in functionality. There's little room for superfluous decoration when it comes to Nordic style, with designers rather opting for minimal detail and careful craftsmanship. “First and foremost, items must be practical. The chair you're sitting in should offer maximum comfort for example, rather than simply looking good. Grafton Everest's new iMove range of motion furniture for example, offers just that – apart from gorgeous designer good-looks, the range boasts streamlined minimalist design, with built-in Leggit and Platt 300 Ezee reclining mechanisms, which are the only mechanisms for domestic use that have been tested to carry up to 136kg and guarantee optimum comfort and durability.”

Nature calls

The inclusion of practicality does not have to mean that one must compromise on style. In fact, Nordic design does the exact opposite, notes Sue: “There's a definite inclination towards warm, subdued colours that are rooted in the natural elements around us. It's a fine balance between rustic and modern detailing that make this look unique. Think light-coloured wood finishes, worn leather, crisp glass, cozy wool and handmade ceramics – anything oozing earthiness. The iMove range is a prime example of this symbiotic relationship with nature. You'll notice the organic curves of the solid Maple blonde hardwood armrests that have been specially imported from America, and the high-end genuine leather or high-performance fabrics that have been used – all available in a wide range of stunning nature-inspired hues. Geometric lines are softened with flowing curves and ergonomic design principles that underline Nordic design.”

Make it yours

“More and more people are moving towards a pared-down look that's easy on the eye and even

easier to live with as there's little to no clutter involved," says Sue. Colours lean towards gradations of white, grey, sand and black – peaceful colours that if not used correctly, can tend to be quite cold. Sue offers some tips on how to use these colours, yet ensure a warm and inviting space: "The trick is in the texture and layering – a lived-in linen arm chair with all its wrinkles, or love lines as I like to call them, looks amazing with a cuddly sheepskin thrown over it. A Rough jute rug layered with an animal hide or Kelim adds coziness underfoot, whilst a chunky hand-knitted blanket is the perfect place to snuggle under whilst watching a movie with the kids."

If muted tones aren't really your thing then simply introduce a splash of colour. "This look lends itself beautifully to injections of graphic colour and pattern. Combine a big floral motif scatter cushion in bright pink with a chevron rug in navy blue and white, and a checkered fleece blanket," recommends Sue, "Just be sure to keep the surroundings simple - clear the space of any clutter, give the walls a fresh coat of white paint and open the curtains to let the natural light flow in."

ENDS

Released on behalf of Grafton Everest (www.graftoneverest.co.za) by The Line Communications (www.theline.co.za, ant@theline.co.za).