

25 BEAUTIFUL HOMES

COASTAL LIVING

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SEASIDE-STYLE VICTORIAN VILLA

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*It's inspired by
our view of the
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ADD A TOUCH OF STYLE

Smart buys & clever decorating ideas

INSIGHT

Add character to a rental

Keen to inject personality and style into a rented home as Fanny Moizant has done? Consider these points before making a start

If you are a tenant, it doesn't necessarily mean you can't make your home your own. While structural improvements may not be an option, you can still enhance a property's best features with a host of decorative touches.

GET CREATIVE

Rentals, whether houses or flats, almost always come with restrictive covenants regarding structural changes. But there are still ways to decorate a rental home to add flair, colour and character. A clever means of injecting new life is to paint the walls – if you plan to rent long-term, most landlords will permit a fresh colour scheme as long as you agree to revert to the original decor. But if that isn't an option, enliven the walls with artwork. If wallpaper appeals, try framing a favourite design as a large-scale piece. Decals can be easily removed when necessary – try Notonthehighstreet.com for some witty options. Consider investing in good-quality curtains or blinds to inject colour and pattern. Smartening up kitchens and bathrooms with new handles is an affordable way to add a chic touch, but remember to keep existing accessories so that they can easily be replaced if you move. Take the opportunity to invest in heirloom furniture you can keep forever. Look for sleek freestanding storage pieces such as statement consoles and comfortable seating.

LIGHT IT RIGHT

Lighting is an important mood setter, and one of the best ways to add character to your home is to banish harsh overhead lamps. If you can, consider replacing existing centre lights with a striking pendant, and if you plan to rent long-term, upgrading light switches and plug sockets is a good way to create a cohesive, more personal look. Almas Shamsee of Maisha Design suggests creating a sophisticated ambience by layering table lamps, floor lamps and shelving units with built-in lights – these can be used in different combinations to suit the mood. Interesting sculptural table lamps will add character – try Porta Romana for beautiful and striking pieces, while Heathfield & Co offer a number of two-tone pendant shades. Finally, think about adding dimmers to help create a subtle scheme.



EXPERT EYE

'Make a statement by changing curtains, throws and rugs to reflect your own style, keeping a common thread in every room. It's easier and more cost-effective to update soft furnishings such as these'

VERONIQUE PIEDELEU, CARAVANE

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE ...



- 'Upscaling mirrors in narrow corridors can enhance spaces, making them appear larger. This is especially important in small, dark flats.'
- "Less is more" is my motto. Buy a few large, high-impact bespoke pieces rather than cluttering the room with lots of furniture. For additional storage, I like to choose coffee tables and ottomans that have plenty of space beneath or inside.'
- Freestanding open shelving will create different zones and provide storage for objects, books, etc, that can be accessed from both sides. I recently used a 6ft high-wine rack to act as a room divider as well as being a decorative and functional piece.'
- Fresh flowers and plants placed around the house are one of the best ways to make the place feel alive. Don't forget the little things – candles add fragrance and softer light, while seashells and corals in the bathroom and fresh white towels inject a comfortable touch.'

MILA PODIABLONSKA, ABSOLUTE INTERIOR DECOR

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