

The time for cosy moments at home

Changing seasons



By interior designer Azra Zakir

As the season moves closer towards winter, homes that were perfect summer spots need to be prepared to turn them into cosy retreats for cold days and long evenings. Summers in Ibiza are spent enjoying the outdoors, but the winter months find us all retreating inside. However, there are plenty of ways to make your home a welcoming haven, somewhere to enjoy being inside. The key to really enjoying your home in the winter is to make it as warm, cosy and luxurious as possible. Some things can only be done if you're having major structural reforms taking place, but there are plenty of other ways to turn your home into something to snuggle into.

Winter colours

The winter months are perfect for using colours in the home that would have been too heavy in the summer. Darker, richer colours all help to create a more luxurious feel, think chocolate brown, aubergine, dark olive and deep red. Choosing accessories like cushions, curtains, rugs and towels in these colours offer ways to bring these colours into the home without redecorating throughout. You could also paint one wall in a room in your favourite winter colour (and then change it again for the summer). Alternatively create your own art by painting canvases in your favourite colours and hang these around the home, for an instant injection of richness and warmth.

Cosy homes

Summer curtains used to keep the glare of sunlight out and the house cool need to be changed as the temperature drops. Double thickness curtains are perfect for keeping the warmth in and the cold out. Using just one set of curtains all year round will mean that they are either too flimsy in the winter or too heavy in the summer. Two sets are highly recommended. It also means you can use appropriate colour schemes, something light for the summer and something a little richer and more opulent for the winter.

Invest in a thick, down-filled winter duvet for maximum warmth and comfort in bed. Add some thick blankets on the end of your bed, perfect for when you're lounging around. Turn your bathroom into your own personal spa, the perfect place to retreat and relax. Although a hot bath would be crazy in the summer, winter is the ideal time to soak in the bath, enhance the mood with wonderful bath oils and



A thick woollen rug adds warmth to tiled floors

candles. Finish the pampering session by wrapping yourself in thick fluffy towels or a super soft bathrobe.

Thick woollen carpets or rugs will help add to that



Blankets and cushions make this sofa more comfortable for winter nights



A thick woollen blanket at the end of the bed - ready for any cold nights

cosy feeling. They can be rolled up and put away for the summer, but will make all the difference in the winter. They'll also come in handy if you're inclined to use the floor to laze upon. Turn

your sofa into the perfect place for watching a film or curling up with a book. Use lots of cushions for added comfort and go for fabrics that evoke a feeling of luxury, fabrics that entice you to touch them, stroke them or just cuddle up with them. In addition to cushions, keep some throws or blankets close to your sofa. Once again, choose fabrics that are soft and wonderful to touch. Use the winter months to envelop yourself in luxury.

Candles also help to create a cosy feeling in the winter months. The soft flickering light they give off is perfect for long nights spent indoors.



Wood fire and a stack of logs in preparation for colder days ahead

Wood fires

Wood fires, be they open or closed, are a wonderful way to heat a room as well as to draw people round to the mesmerising flames. If the wind is howling and the rain is lashing down outside, being curled up in front of a roaring log fire is perhaps the only place to be! Real wood fires are one of the greatest joys of the winter months, but if you don't have a wood fire in your home fire bowls can be used inside to recreate a warm cosy atmosphere. These are smoke free with bio alcohol and the best selection on the island can be found at Arcos 10 (Ctra. A Cap Martinet Ed. Los Arcos, Jesus. www.arcos10.com Tel: 971 191 772)

Structural Reforms

Tiled and concrete floors are immensely popular in homes in Ibiza. In the heat of the summer, the cool tiles or concrete are a welcome surface to walk on barefoot. But these same surfaces retain a sharp chill in the winter months and you certainly would not want to be stepping on them with bare feet. If you're having floors laid, consider under-floor heating for added warmth in the winter. It's an excellent, unobtrusive method of heating and can be used throughout the home or just in certain rooms. The control panels often come with timers, perfect for taking the chill off bathroom tiles in the morning before you step in to take a shower. Under-floor heating is also a relatively inexpensive method of heating and easily installed when new flooring is being laid.



Spoil yourself at bathtime with a stack of soft fluffy towels

The obvious method of heating the home is to install central heating. This will ensure that all parts of the home get toasty warm and, once again, can be set on a timer to make sure it's warm when you have to get up. If you are having central heating installed, make sure that all pipes are chased into the wall or floor for a cleaner, more streamlined effect. Unless of course you're aiming

for an industrial feel, in which case leave them exposed.

Make the most of the winter months on the island by turning your home into the perfect cosy retreat! ■

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