



ACCESSORISING PRACTICAL SPACES

Natalie Du Bois talks us through accessories for the kitchen and bathroom, and how to make these practical spaces look and feel complete.

MOST OF US TRY NOT TO OVER ACCESSORISE OUR KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS too much, as we like them to look as clean and uncluttered, however some degree of accessorising is important in order for the space to fit in harmoniously with the rest of the home. Both spaces comprise of mostly hard finishes like tiles, stone, glass, steel and timber and therefore it is important for us to pay extra attention to what type of accessories will achieve the correct balance you desire.

Varying accessories and the application of them create different affects in these two harder rooms of the home, the following pages list these affects and various ways to achieve them.

ABOVE Classic black and white is offset with a splash of blue. White accessories work well against the dark surfaces of this kitchen and brighten the space. Accessories from Freedom Furniture. www.freedomfurniture.co.nz



ABOVE Display spices, fruit and vegetables in the kitchen to add natural colour.

TOP RIGHT Yellow bowl from BoConcept.

RIGHT Frame your favourite tea towel for an affordable art option in the kitchen. Tea towel by Shakey Isles.

BOTTOM RIGHT Citta Bath towels from Abode Acquisitions Hamilton.



1 INTEREST

By introducing colour into small objects like vases, bottles or display items means you can get away with a neutral colour scheme but still give the space some interest. Try mixing different shapes and sizes of items together in a group. Include something that may be special to you or with a significant meaning to you personally. This could be a piece of the children's artwork framed or a gift from friend

that has a story behind it. If you have the room, sculptures are great because they are three dimensional, they look different from various angles and also bounce light off different areas. Renovating a bathroom or kitchen is a time and money consuming task. By bringing in smaller interest objects which can be interchanged it allows variation to be undertaken with creative flair and at a lower cost.



2 LIFE

Bring life to either the kitchen or bathroom through herbs or flowers. They will give the space a feeling of freshness. Not only do they look good but they'll also make the space smell fantastic too.

Found objects, like those that originate from the earth such as sea shells or stones are another way to make one feel connected to the earth in the bathroom. My personal favourite in the kitchen is a large bowl of fresh fruit. You could try grouping citrus fruits together or display them in a large glass vase to ensure the zesty colours are visible to all.

As the kitchen and bathroom are made up of hard finishes it is important to bring some softness into the space. Choose plush soft towels in the bathroom or upholstered bar stools in the kitchen. Decorative tea towels are a great way to bring some colour and texture into the kitchen.

In your bathroom you could choose to display pretty soap dispensers, creams and lotions which identify the reality of actually using the bathroom.



3 BALANCE & HARMONY

The introduction of something old or vintage as a display piece can be a great conversation starter and bring something unique to your space. Mixing modern fixtures with the past is a great way to do this. In a recent kitchen project my client kept an old iron scale which is now being used as a fruit bowl. I am a great fan of products being re-used in new ways other than what they were originally intended.



Continuity and flow is important in a home. One way to achieve continuity and flow from the rest of your home is to use the same hardware in your kitchen, laundry and bathrooms. Alternatively you might want to use large cabinet handles in the kitchen and then the same style in a smaller version on your bathroom vanities. The cabinetry in the kitchen might be the same door style or finish as the bathroom to ensure the feel and quality of the products used reflect each other. You don't want to run the risk of the rooms being disjointed and out of balance.

ABOVE Citta black basket from Ground Floor Eclectic Design, Citta white boxes from Corso de Fiori and Floral Storage Boxes from The Warehouse.

RIGHT Inset aluminium drawer handles combined with long vertical cupboard handles make a modern statement. Kitchen by Mastercraft, www.mastercraft.co.nz.



ABOVE This kitchen by Shane George mixes a variety of surfaces with old and new, creating an eclectic space that feels warm and inviting. www.shanegeorgedesign.co.nz

BELOW RIGHT Choose varying sizes of handles in the same style for continuity throughout your home. For a huge range of handles visit www.mardeco.co.nz.

Try to introduce texture and varying tones into monotone spaces. Using only one tone can create a static and dull atmosphere, by adding a bit of texture you can create a simplistic look with the variety of different surfaces. Try using wicker or cane baskets for both the kitchen and bathroom - these are an easy way to introduce texture. Baskets are available in many colours and sizes today and are perfect for neatening and decluttering spaces. Bear in mind that the less clutter the less stress is created.



4 MOOD & AMBIENCE

Candles have always been the number one product used to accessorise bathrooms. Try grouping these together in various colours, tones or sizes. The energy flames exude make people feel warm and relaxed.



ABOVE Clever use of blue LED lighting and stunning interior design give this Woodland Sanctuary bathroom a unique dappled lighting effect. Design by Oliver Heath for Kohler.

ABOVE LEFT Citta Gold Ball Candles from Corso de Fiori make a glamorous addition to the bathroom.



Lighting is one method of easily changing the mood and ambience of a space. Not only is lighting an important consideration in both the kitchen and bathroom for its function, you can also have fun with different lighting effects. Try dramatic strong lighting washing down a wall in a bathroom (particularly good on glass tiles as they will reflect the light) or subtle soft lighting on natural products to create a peaceful Zen-like

space. Introduce LED coloured lights if you want some added flexibility with colour, you can change the colour depending on your mood or effect you would like to create at the time.

Sound is another way to create mood in a room. Look into audio sound systems that continue through into the bathroom space. Especially good for those who like singing in the shower! There are also a huge range of waterproof show radios on the market.

ABOVE The Hansa Canyon basin faucet incorporates an open watercourse spout with electronic sensors. The water stream is illuminated and varies its colour from cool blue into a warm red according to the temperature. Available from Franklins.

RIGHT Lighting placed under the mirror creates a soft, ambient glow in the bathroom, while simple use of accessories add a touch of warmth.



5 CREATIVITY & PERSONALITY

This is quite easily achieved by bringing a bit of what you love into the space. It might be a certain designer's or artist's work you admire, or have a look, style or theme that you would like to portray. Themes like vintage, deco, industrial, nautical or Japanese Zen can work very well in the kitchen or bathroom. If it's a farmhouse look you are after you could accessorise by including a 'Batterie de cuisine' (a central hanging rail suspended from the ceiling) with beautiful copper pots and pans hanging from it. Include dried chillies and garlic for that real authenticity, especially if you are a keen cook.



Include small appliances like coffee machines and blenders to create a commercial industrial look. Accessorising the interiors of cabinets with colourful crockery or cookware can give a kitchen a whole different feel once the doors are open. You might want to keep the exterior of the kitchen minimalist and neutral but the interior full of fun and colour. How exciting to open up a sliding pantry or scullery only to be surprised by an array of colourful items.

Interest, life, balance and harmony, mood and ambience, creativity and personality are all achieved by choosing relevant accessories for your space. Think about how you would like your rooms to feel and what you would like to display. There is no right or wrong way to accessorise. Accessories don't have to cost the earth but can change the whole look and feel of a room. Have fun playing. ■



ABOVE The use of aqua blue throughout this bathroom brings personality to an otherwise neutral space. For bathroomware visit www.robertson.co.nz. **LEFT** Jump into spring with aqua Republic Revolution accessories from The Warehouse.

Owner of Auckland based company Du Bois Design Ltd, Natalie Du Bois designs kitchens, bathrooms and laundries nationwide. Visit Natalie at www.duboisdesign.co.nz