

LOVE

where you live

BY LINDA JEFFREYS

We all relish the chance to get away over the summer months, to relax on sun-soaked beaches, or to explore exotic new countries and cultures. And yet, what a privilege to return home, refreshed, to one of the most beautiful and historic cities in Europe, our own Oxford.



Just a stroll through Christchurch Meadows on a balmy late summer evening as the bells ring out, or a glance up at the English Palladian Style beauty of James Gibb's Radcliffe Camera dome and cupola is a joy, and one not to be taken for granted. "I'm not a tourist, I live here..."

We should derive the same pleasure and pride from our homes too. They are our personal sanctuaries, as well as the place where we welcome friends, and should be attractive as well as functional, and reflect our individuality. William Morris got it right when he said:

"If you want a golden rule that will fit everything, this is it: Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful".

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WHETHER YOURS IS A MODERN STUDIO FLAT OR A GEORGIAN TOWN HOUSE, HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR MAKING YOUR HOME A STUNNER:



First impressions are key. Pay attention to the front door and its furniture.

Choose a smart, inviting colour, such as Farrow & Ball's French Gray, and classic ironmongery that will not date. A simple window-box with box hedging is effective and low maintenance.



Make an entrance. Clear away clutter from the hallway, and make it welcoming with a console table, a mirror or a great piece of art above, and a pair of lamps.



Add impact to a living room or bedroom by using wallpaper to create a feature wall in combination with neutral paint colours.



Sort the lighting. A gloomy house won't appeal to anybody, so use task and ambient lighting to create the right atmosphere. Lone ceiling pendants give out light that is either too harsh or inadequate, opt for ceiling down lighters and lamps whenever possible.



Always consider storage. Coats, children's toys, shoes and ironing boards should all be tidied away.



Dress your windows. Roman blinds work well as a sleek, simple treatment for sash windows, and are a great budget solution as they don't use much fabric. They also look good behind dress curtains. To provide privacy, or to screen an unsightly view, light-diffusing sheer roller blinds can be the answer.



Keep flooring consistent. Try not to break up your living space with lots of changes of flooring materials and colours, the flow from room to room is vital.

