

accent on accessories

Whether your walls are neutral or coloured, accent colours and accessories bring house interiors to life.

The trend in interior design has been neutral colours for years now. Varying shades of beige, taupe and mushroom along with hundreds of different whites and creams have reigned supreme, with colour and personality being injected into the home through carefully chosen furniture, accessories and painted feature areas.

But whatever the colour of your walls or floors, accessories and good use of accent colour are the details that bring a room to life.

Auckland interior designer Angela Hutton recommends picking a theme and an accent colour to use throughout the house to create cohesion between the rooms.

She suggests taking a colour and using it in different ways in different rooms. Let's say your favourite colour is red. You could add a few magenta cushions in the lounge, paint the walls in the entranceway a deep burgundy, such as Resene Rendezvous, and hang cherry red towels in the bathroom. Remember, however, warns Angela, "the brighter the accent colour, the less of it you need."


Your choice of accent colours will also be affected by the aspect of the room – sunny rooms are better with cooler shades and darker rooms look great with warmer tones.


You also want to consider what the room is used for. A busy room, such as the kitchen or living area, may be overpowered by a strong colour used everywhere – but that may work very well in the study or dining room.

A recurring theme throughout the home also adds unity. Angela gives a Middle Eastern example – a Moroccan lamp here, an Egyptian throw there and a few trinkets scattered throughout the house. You don't need much to create a theme, in fact, Angela cautions against overdoing it.

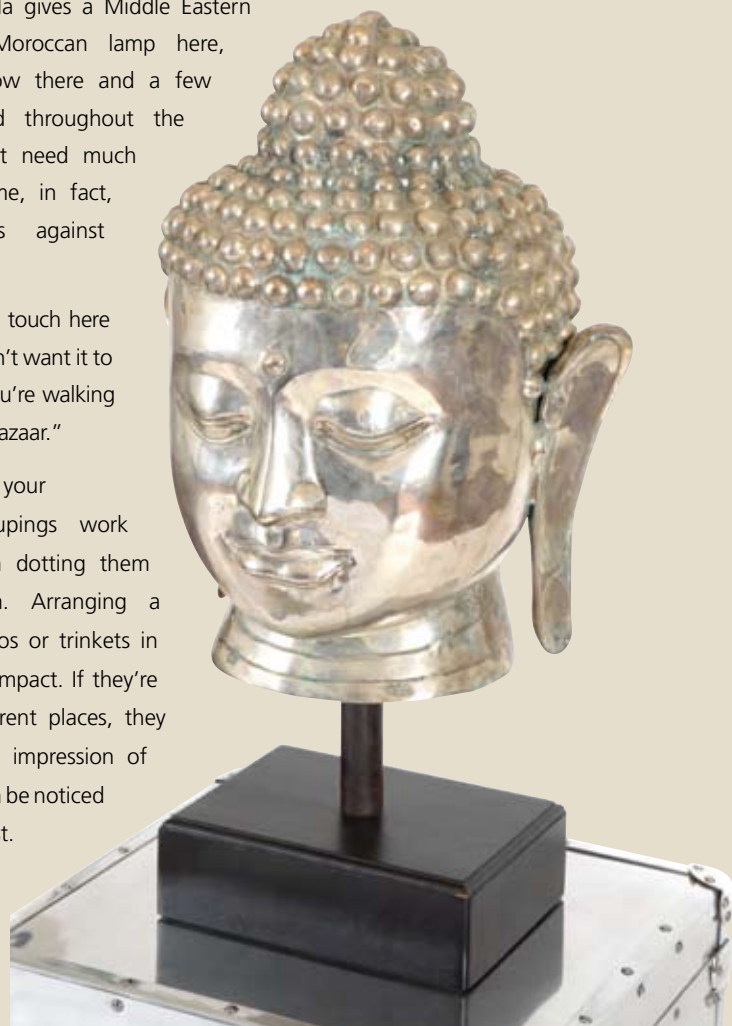
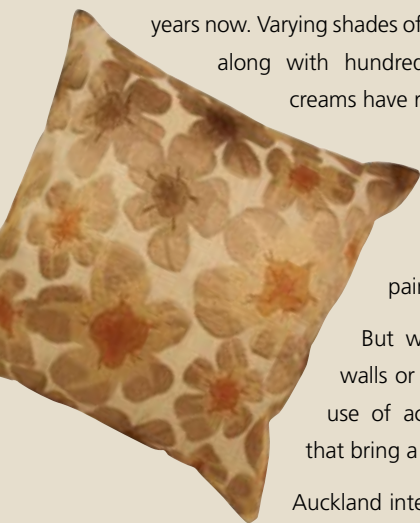
"All you need is a touch here and there. You don't want it to look as though you're walking into a Moroccan bazaar."

When arranging your accessories, groupings work well, rather than dotting them around a room. Arranging a selection of photos or trinkets in a cluster creates impact. If they're scattered in different places, they tend to give the impression of clutter, rather than be noticed as items of interest.

 Resene Quarter Sisal

 Resene Raging Bull

 Resene Rendezvous



If you're hanging photos on a wall, Angela says to arrange a number of them in an imaginary frame. She also suggests finding a link between them; maybe they all have the same frame, or feature a particular colour or have a theme.

Mirrors make excellent accessories, especially in dark areas. They enhance the sense of space and reflect extra light into a room. Hang one in the entranceway, over the fireplace or at the end of long corridors.

Angela has two tips for placing a mirror. Make sure it's in proportion to what's below it – a big fireplace demands a large mirror – and ensure it reflects something pleasant, such as a window into the garden.

Candles or a lamp placed in front of a mirror look fantastic and add a touch of opulence.

Don't worry if your lamps are a bit old-fashioned. They can easily be brought up to date with a new shade. Drum-shaped lampshades are very popular at the moment and look great with vintage lamp stands.

Throw rugs can be used to great effect around the house, too. You can have different throws for different seasons: faux fur in the cooler months and pretty sea greens for summer.

Plants and flowers make great accessories but always make sure they look fresh and healthy. Dusty aspidistras or wilting lilies are definite no-nos.

When you decide to redecorate, regardless of whether you're moving into a brand-new house, undertaking a low-budget refurbishment or just rearranging the furniture, Angela recommends editing out all the accessories you don't like, and reusing your favourites or things that have sentimental value.

"It's not important to be fashionable. It's better to be surrounded by things you love." **H**



top tip

A busy room, such as the kitchen or living area, may be overpowered by a strong colour used everywhere. Instead, use it as an accent on one or two walls and as a splashback.

Resene Secrets



Mirror and chandelier from Ashton Grove, www.ashtongrove.co.nz

Resene High Five

Aluminium flightcase and handle hurricane lamp from Kovacs Design Furniture, Christchurch. Also Javanese Buddha (far left) from Kovacs Design Furniture



Resene Backcountry



Deep lustre amber bowl from May Time Marketing. Also Lopez lamp with taupe shade and floral embroidery taupe cushion (far left)

Resene Tandoori

Room setting designed by Angela Hutton



Resene Quarter Tea



Resene Chameleon

A collection of accessories from Allium Interiors