

DECORATION

the ultimate in luxurious living ideas

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Eclectic style
A Flat in Burj Dubai

Spice Emporium
A visual fusion feast

French
Manor
A Deauville Estate

UAE - Dhs 15



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technical tips

Lighting in layers

The art of layered lighting



Marie-Noëlle Swiderski, a design professional since 1993, set up the Blanchard Design House in Dubai in September 2006. Her aim "to comfort her soul with beauty".



Lighting plays a big role in my life, as a designer or as a dweller of any space I enter. I am of the opinion that lighting a room is more important than filling it – with furniture, colour, textures, accessories or art. A room usually has more than one purpose, according to its location and its function. The sources and quality of the light on offer should enhance that. They are what will ultimately make or break the atmosphere of the space.

When we approach the design of a room, at Blanchard, we consider first and foremost how much natural light it receives and when. The ensuing step is to address the possible lack or excess of this light, so that the space remains a welcoming and functional one at all times. Whether we are considering a reception room or a bedroom, a study or a gym, a playroom or a kitchen, the questions we ask ourselves are the same but the answers

and solutions to potential issues will differ.

I feel the secret to successful lighting is: LAYERING. No matter where, or how, you are incorporating lighting, the magic ingredient is gradation; the superimposition and nuances of intensity, level, colour and direction.

In a public space, such as a hallway, reception, living or dining room, the key is to think of all case scenarios. The room will need to be provided

with ample general task light for what is usually a broader area within the house – that is essentially functional but should still allow appreciation of the room's main features, be they architectural, spatial or aesthetic. More often than not, this type of lighting is at high level (ie. ceiling mounted), whether as a pendant, chandelier or snug surface mounted. One step further into the lighting setup, and one level lower, a certain ambient or mood lighting should be introduced. This can be in the form of wall lights or table lamps.

The former double up as detail or feature lighting, meaning that they are strategically placed to underline specific areas: a textured wall grazed by close-fitted sconces, a piece of art flanked by torch-like appliques. The latter, in turn, create intimate areas for conversation, reading or reflection: nestling an armchair or the corner of a sofa within a halo of warm light, leaving the rest of the room in soothing penumbra. The third level of lighting is specifically detail lighting, indirect and directional alike. It consists of usually more inconspicuous fittings, interesting not so much in themselves but rather in the effect they create. Recessed directional downlights within a ceiling can celebrate a piece of art, underline the intricate carving of the plasterwork or, again, show off the expertly applied texture of a wallpaper or paint effect. Floor-mounted uplighters will give curtains and architectural features alike the impression of floating, scalloping walls and creating depth between wall and furniture, for example. Cove lighting will add perspective and height to any room, giving the ceiling, its detailing or finish pride of place.

In a more intimate space, such as a bedroom, it is essential that feelings of warmth, serenity and escape be achieved. This can and ideally should include at least the first two levels mentioned above, but would benefit of course of the third level of layering. The difference is the scale and the intensity.

When in doubt, I would recommend allowing for more light sources than less. Too much of a good thing is wonderful!

