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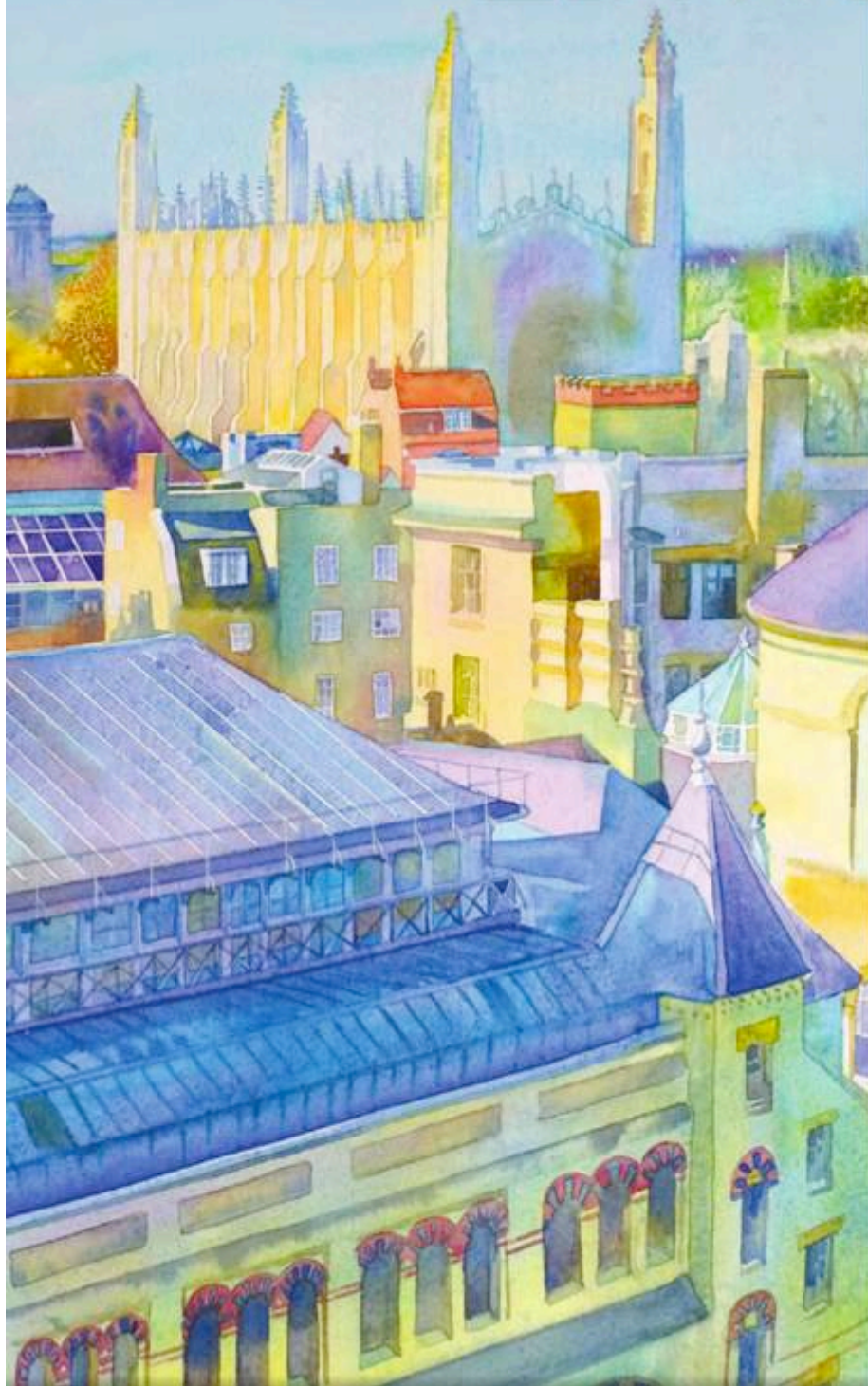
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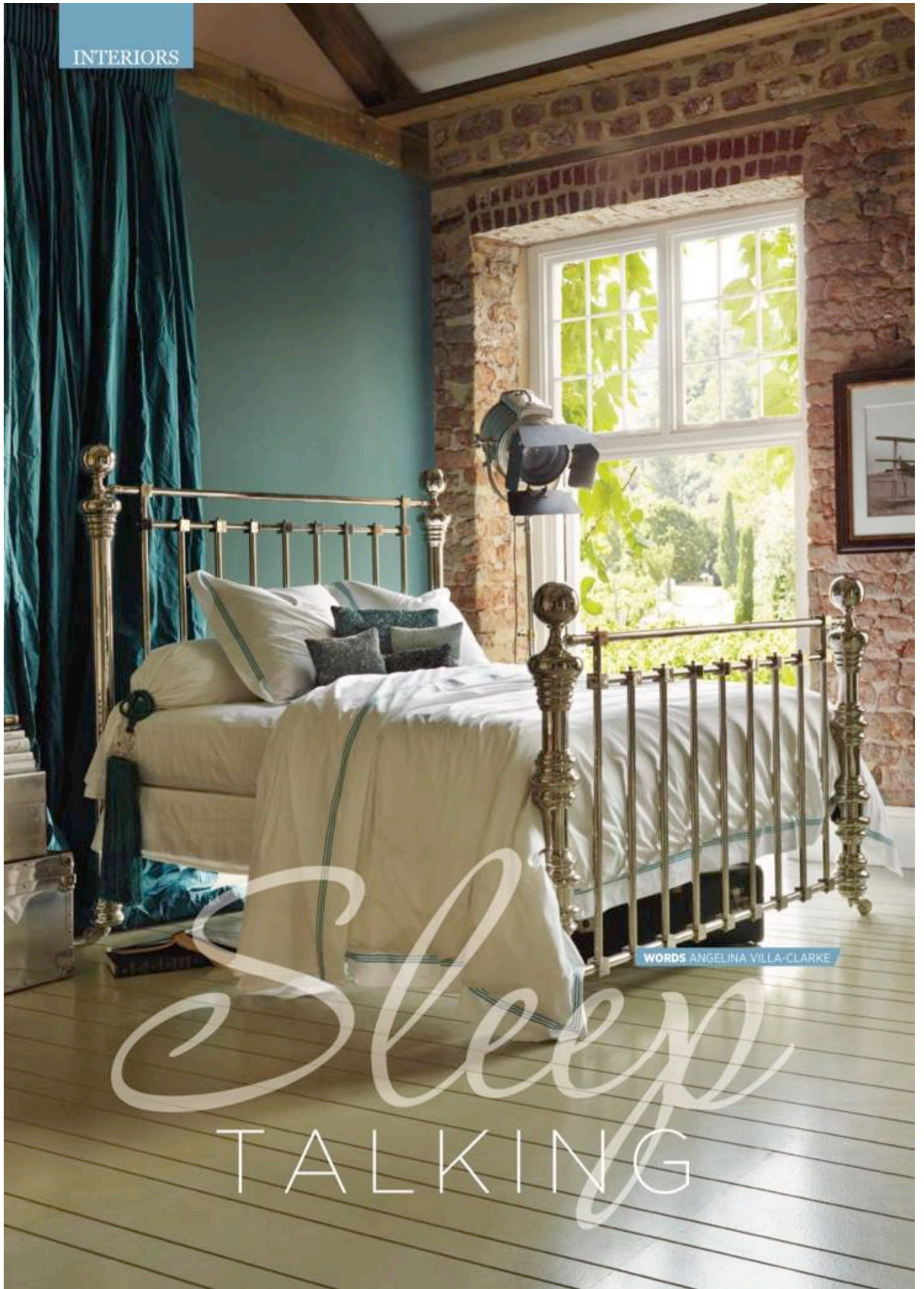
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INTERIORS



WORDS ANGELINA VILLA-CLARKE

Sleep TALKING



As we are asleep for a third of our lives, the bedroom is where we spend a lot of our downtime. We talk to the experts to reveal the latest trends and how to achieve the perfect sanctuary



SLUMBER STYLING

The bedroom is one of our most private rooms and it is often the place where many of us express our personality. It's a personal sanctuary we can retreat to and relax in at the end of a busy day. To create the ultimate modern bedroom, blend trends with timeless pieces of furniture, adding in cherished items which have special meaning for you. Whether you veer towards a Nordic cool sensibility or boutique boudoir, comfort and cosiness is important, so choose fine linens, sumptuous bedcovers and luxury window treatments.

A one-stop shop for a pulled-together, unique finish is Sandra Jane at Home. As well as advice on how to create your theme, with complementary fabrics, wallpapers and accessories, they can also commission original, crafted furniture to match your style.

A neutral colour palette works well. Iced Mauve, Pashmina and Lavender Mist are all pretty, pared-back paint shades available at Benjamin Moore. These are ideal base colours from which to add interest – paint a bolder statement wall, mix and match prints and textiles and use contrasting accessories.

Ruth Mottershead, marketing director at Paint & Paper Library, suggests darker hues give a cocooning feel: "Clutter-free bedrooms

are the key to a good night's sleep – so painting walls, doors and skirting boards the same in our Architects' Matt helps create an oasis of tranquillity. I choose dark colours for the bedroom so that, even in lighter evenings, I am sure of a restful sleep and feel cosseted in the rich colour."

Textile designer Vanessa Arbuthnott reveals how to bring this idea to life: "Layer colour and pattern gently for the ultimate in pared-down living. Make this room a haven from the busy world outside. Made-to-measure quilts and padded headboards are the ultimate bedroom luxury."

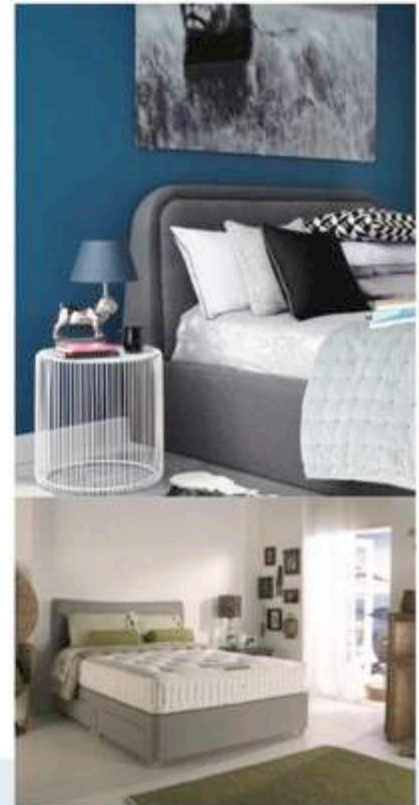
To complete the look, add in accessories. Check out the homeware collections at Sainsbury's, currently causing a stir with their accessible take on high-end design. From the indigo-blue bed linens to the relaxed, muted Coastal range, you'll find a host of covetable pieces for a contemporary bedroom. Rona Olds, head of buying for Sainsbury's Home, comments: "There's no doubt that patterned bed linen is having a renaissance. It is a brilliant way to bring a focal point to a bedroom scheme. Layering is key, so team the

Ditsy Geo linen set with a bold Moroccan style cushion and a navy knitted throw."

Wallpaper is also back in vogue. Sandberg designs combine flora and fauna, while the new 'trompe l'oeil' effect wallpapers, such as Mineheart's Panelling Wallpaper, are a contemporary update for bedroom walls.

David Mottershead, managing director of Little Greene, says: "Waking up surrounded by a botanical print is like waking up in your own art gallery. Keep the look on-trend by painting the skirting boards and mouldings in a dark colour inspired by the wallpaper." ➤

Rest your head LEFT And So To Bed's Dickens Bedstead, from £6,675, in polished nickel, is perfect for adding a sense of grandeur to a bedroom ABOVE. FROM TOP Little Greene's Scree and Shallows shades of grey paint, £38 for 2.5l of matt emulsion, gives a calm and sophisticated atmosphere. Put up Sandberg's Liljekorvall wallpaper, £90 per roll, for a fresh feel. Sainsbury's Coastal range of bedroom accessories, from £6, offers a relaxed and gentle vibe.



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BED

Central to any bedroom is the bed you choose. Whether you go for a lavish, padded style, like those at And So To Bed, or a practical, wooden bed with storage, like those at Direct Furniture, make sure you select a model that will stand the test of time. Space is also important. Dwell's felt Morrison storage bed is a practical choice, while Natuzzi's Fenice model lifts up to give extra storage space underneath, making it ideal for smaller rooms.

Specialising in beautifully romantic beds is Sweetpea & Willow and co-founder Jacquie Dunton says the size of your room is the most important consideration: "It's essential that a bed is practical and beautiful. Before committing to your favourite design ensure that you've taken into account the size of the room and the measurements of the bed. Many homeowners don't realise the size of a headboard or height of the bed and this can completely distort the feel of the room if not considered correctly. If storage is a necessity then an ottoman or drawer-base bed is imperative. Look for beds with wide panelling, which will give your mattress support and additional comfort. A bed can often completely change the feel of a room

and with an array of headboard options it is important to pick one which complements the rest of the scheme."

Arguably more important than the frame is the mattress – after all, this will be where you will be resting your head for many years to come. Interior designer Nicola Sanders, at Parsons Gray in Cambridge, agrees: "When choosing a new bed and mattress, apply an approximate rule of one third of your budget on the base and two thirds on the mattress. It's possible to pick up a decent base for under £200 if budget is tight, but it's well worth spending as much as you can afford on the mattress. Less glamorous, yes, but a really good mattress should last you ten to 15 years and will improve the quality of your sleep, which is invaluable. I prefer natural fillings – such as silk or wool – but it really comes down to personal preference."

Jim Carlile, managing director of Reeds Homestore, gives his expertise: "On average we spend a third of our lifetime sleeping, so choosing the right bed is a very important decision. Reeds Homestore in Ely have a huge range of beds and mattresses to suit everyone. With so much choice, finding the right one can be daunting so we have

trained staff to help you. With the latest health advice being about the importance of getting a good night's sleep, it is vital to create a serene environment in the bedroom. Make sure your pillows are technologically designed to do the best job to suit your sleep patterns (replace them every two years) and get some expert advice on the best mattress for you."

Lastly, choose your pillows, duvets and bed linen wisely. According to John Lewis, how your pillow feels is affected by how firm or soft your mattress is. It will perform best when there's a match rather than a contrast, so avoid a firm pillow with a soft mattress.

Taibah Mazhar, brand director at Bedmonkey, adds: "The bed is the main visual focus in any bedroom, so it's worth choosing the right bedding to make your room look and feel as cosy and plush as possible. Invest in a feather duvet and layer with pillows, cushions and a throw to create the ultimate on-trend stylish bedroom retreat. Combine different luxurious materials and textures in your bedding, rugs and accessories too, for instance try layering textured linens with silk throws, knitted blankets and velvet cushions." ➔

Softly does it ABOVE. CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Sweetpea & Willow's Lauren Bed, from £1390, oozes romance. The felt Morrison bed, £899, Dwell, provides storage. Reeds Homestore offers a range of beds, such as this Harrison Breeze four-drawer divan, £899



LOVELY LUMINOSITY

Serenity is all-important in the place where we end and start the day, and lighting is key to this. A stand-out ceiling fitting, such as a chandelier or modern pendant, will give the wow factor and dimmer switches mean you can create different moods.

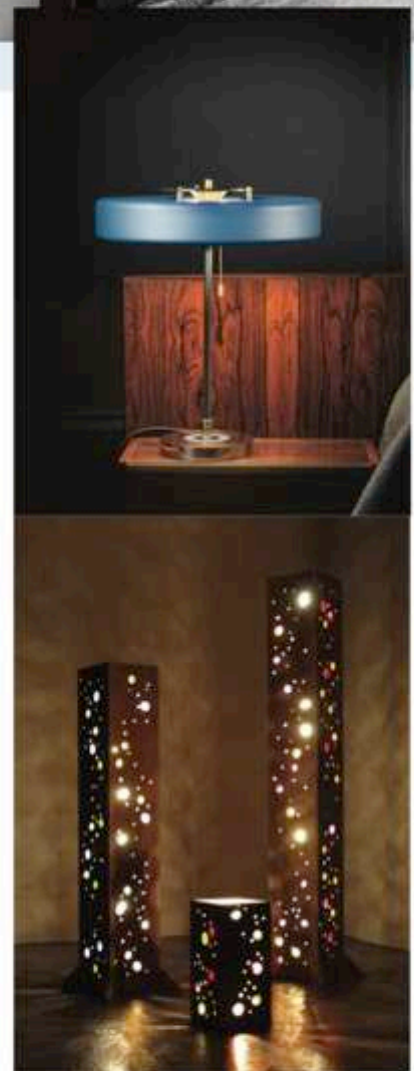
Søren Ravn Christensen, chief creative developer at VITA Copenhagen, says: "A central, stunning pendant lamp is key to any interior design. Just like a piece of jewellery, it can create a powerful design statement. Consider style, shape, size and colour when choosing the centrepiece light in a room."

Adding in different layers of illumination with bedside lamps or reading lights, which are practical choices if there are two of you, can heighten the ambience. Smaller pendant lights, like the Cask model at Bert Frank, hung either side of the bed are currently in vogue, while the Swiss Oak lamps, from MOS Furniture, have neon flock internal surfaces to create coloured circle patterns from the light giving a gentle glow to the room.

"In the bedroom it is particularly important to choose several light sources for different functionalities," says Sarah Lister, director at David Hunt Lighting.

"A bedside or wall light creates ambience and is perfect for reading, while an overhead light is bright enough for dressing. To create a cosy and intimate atmosphere, try placing reading lamps on either side of the bed. For table lamps, opt for tinted low-wattage bulbs to mimic candlelight."

Revealing the latest trends in bedroom lighting is Diane Simpson, lighting buyer at John Lewis: "We've seen some beautiful, ornate lighting using mixed materials and wonderful coloured and smoky glass finishes over the past few seasons. This year, we've seen a growing trend of customers wanting well-designed lighting made from natural materials such as raw wood and polished concrete. The emphasis has moved to a focus on using high-tech design techniques on raw base materials to create lighting that can work in any interior space, be it classic or modern. There is still very much a trend for using bold colours and pattern, but the quality of craftsmanship and beauty of using raw materials is at the forefront. This is something we feel the market is moving towards and will be relevant to the customer for the coming season."



Light up the room CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT David Hunt's Dallas Pendant, £63.50. Soften the mood with the grey Eos feather light, £84, Vita Copenhagen. Bert Franks's modern Revolve Table Lamp in Brass and Matte Petrol Blue, £79. The Swiss Oak Lamps, £295, MOS Furniture, have neon flock internal surfaces to give coloured circles of light

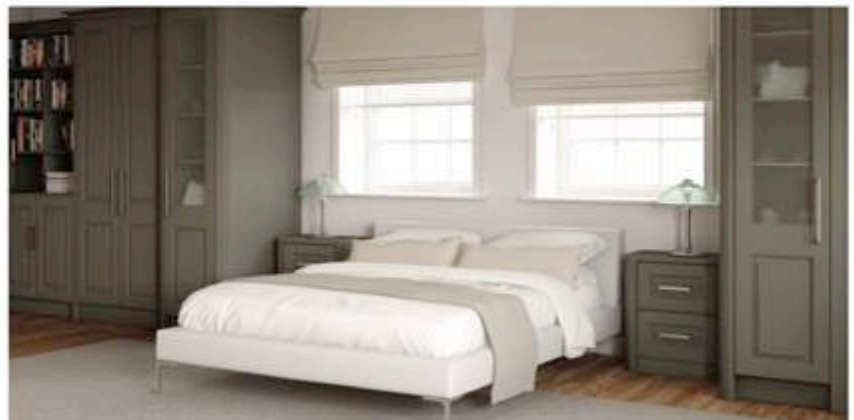
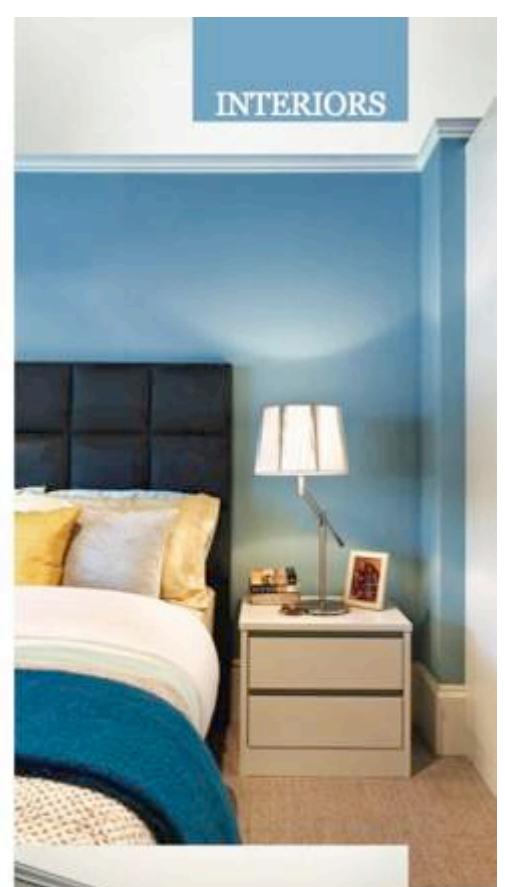
SENSIBLE STORAGE

Having ample storage is vital to creating a decluttered aesthetic and therefore a calm environment. Due to its practicality, fitted bedroom furniture is having a renaissance and is perfect for rooms with alcoves or odd-shaped walls. Add personality by mixing and matching quirky bedside tables or a vintage dressing table.

"It's all about using every spare inch of space for storage," says Mark Law, managing director at Law & Lewis Joinery of Cambridge. "Clever, fitted wardrobes including pull-down hanging space to take advantage of full room heights, lighting fitted into wardrobes so you can see into dark corners and ingenious shoe and handbag shelving to keep everything in perfect condition with easy access are all really great."

Another expert in fitted bedrooms is Langtry Fitted Furniture, also in the Cambridge area. The company offers a range of different styles, all made to fit individual bedrooms. Owner Tony Jones comments: "Our bedroom storage is fitted from floor to ceiling so it makes the most of a room's space. Sleek designs are popular at the moment, with natural colours - cream and grey - our bestsellers. Another trend are designs that feature coloured glass in the doors."

For more traditional, stand-alone cabinetry then turn to John Lewis of Hungerford. Its range of painted wardrobes and bedside cabinets means everything has its place but is hidden from view. ➤



Hideaways CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT The Pure Bedside Table matches the Pure fitted wardrobe range, from £5,000. The Artisan lay-on bedroom furniture comes in birch with clear crystal handles, from £5,000, all John Lewis of Hungerford. Langtry Fitted Furniture offers a wide range of bespoke fitted furniture, prices vary. Visit John Lewis for a selection of lighting options



ACCENT TOUCHES

Finally, pulling a look together are those all-important finishing touches. Source sumptuous carpets from The Carpet Mill or from leading specialists Brintons.

"Carpet is perfect for creating a cosy bedroom," says Natalie Littlehales, consumer marketing manager at Brintons. "The texture of wool coupled with a warm colour or pattern is a great way to build a comfortable scheme. We have seen a surge in demand for our Bell Twist Rosebud carpet. A luxurious shade in a hard-wearing weave, it pairs perfectly with grey furniture and accessories."

Dress windows with luxurious fabrics made into flowing curtains, such as those available from Sandberg or Harlequin. If budget allows, fit wooden shutters or roller blinds underneath for a practical touch.

Fiona Garwood, director at Cambridge Sunblinds, gives her insight: "White and cream wooden shutters are popular. Giving a classic finish, they filter the light and give privacy. We also have a fabulous range of Roman blinds. Printed designs, with birds

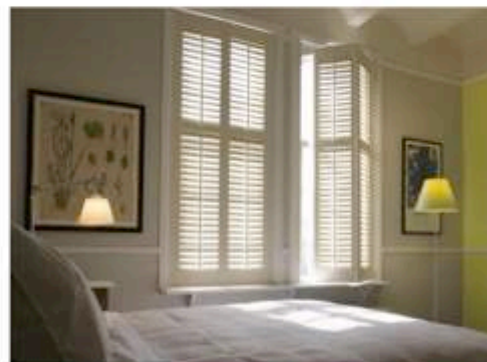
and butterflies, in grey, natural and duck-egg blue, are on trend. These can be supplied with blackout lining and give a warm, cosy look. If you don't know where to start, we offer a free measuring and estimating service, where we bring samples to your home, and help you find the perfect choice."

Added touches, such as throws – the merino wool versions at Janie Knitted Textiles are super luxe – and fine bed linen, like the Beardmore Egyptian cotton range by Sheridan, give a welcoming feel. Statement pieces of furniture also give personality. Visit Rachel Bates Interiors for inspiration.

"The Horatio carver chair makes a smart, cosy addition to any bedroom," Rachel says. "The world's your oyster when choosing upholstery, trims and wood finish. We can bespoke the chair to your requirements creating a statement piece for any scheme."

Championing British design, Mineheart is a great source of eclectic finds. John Mabhegede, Mineheart's commercial director, comments: "One of the emerging trends

for 2016 is the use of feathers for interior decoration and as motifs in pattern and textiles. The Mineheart Feather Table Lamp is the perfect way to introduce this trend. These glamorous feather lamps feature luxurious black or white ostrich feathers held in place by a gold metal wire frame. Soft and delicate, the lights are reminiscent of the elegant feather boas and decadent hats of days gone by, but the design is totally contemporary." X



Pretty it up CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Go quirky with Mineheart's Feather Lamps, from £395; and the Birdcage Pendant Lamp, £150. Add a feminine touch with Brintons' Bell Twist carpet in Rosebud, £39.99 per sq metre. Cambridge Sunblinds' stylish shutters offer a perfect finish. Make a statement with Rachel Bates' customisable Horatio chairs, from £1,400

