

GENIAL DESIGN

PROMOTING GROWTH AND LIFE IN YOUR HOME

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The home is often our sanctuary and anything that lifts our spirits and promotes vitality is easily welcomed.

Outdoor spaces such as patios, porches and decks bring us closer to nature. It's the sensation of daylight on our skin and fresh oxygen rich air that speak to living well and feeling well too. We associate the best of summer with outdoor concerts, grilled food, and family time. So how do we provide more elements that promote feeling alive throughout our homes and throughout the year?

Adding Plants and Flowers

Plants and flowers have several life affirming effects for all of us in our homes. Plants greatly improve air quality as described by the NASA Clean Air Study of 1989 by absorbing carbon dioxide, releasing oxygen, and removing pollutants. Think of them as the best natural air filtration system you could have. One plant will roughly filter about 100 square feet of interior space so you may plan accordingly. In addition, beautiful flower pots or arrangements elevate our positive vibrations by allowing us to focus on the beauty around us. Even if it's for a few moments during our hectic schedules, it's still the reminder to be present and open to what is good.



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Try any of these common house plants in your home: Snake Plant, Peace Lily, Chinese Evergreen, Lady Palm, Corn Plant, English Ivy, Spider Plant, Parlor Palm, Bamboo Palm, Ficus, or Lady Palm.

Adding a Home Air Purifier

If you're like me and the green thumb of plant care eludes you, try adding an air purifier system. There are several on the market from \$100-\$1,000+ and they will purify one room or an entire home. By making sure we are getting cleaner air, we'll of course feel better. It's easy for us to understand the concept of cleaner filtered water for drinking, but we can also improve our indoor air quality. Don't forget to readily change your HVAC filters as well. It's recommended to do this at a minimum of every 60-90 days or more frequently for those with asthma or allergies.

Adding Proper Levels of Lighting

Outdoor summer fun reminds us of the positive effects of natural daylight on our moods. Lighting completely changes how we feel within a space. Here are a few tips to bring more natural light into your home.

1. Take away the heavy blinds or drapes. Unless it's a bedroom, bathroom, or media room, there's really no rule to completely shut out natural daylight. Think less is more when it comes to covering up those windows.

2. Change your bulbs. Use bulbs that say "natural light" or "full-spectrum" for the multiple benefits of recreating natural daylight in the home. Full-spectrum means the light closely copies the light spectrum of natural daylight. Usually this is noted as the Color Rendering Index (CRI) of 95 or higher and the "kelvin" output of 6500. Kelvin is a unit of measurement for energy output. Systemic illness, mental health, chronic pain,



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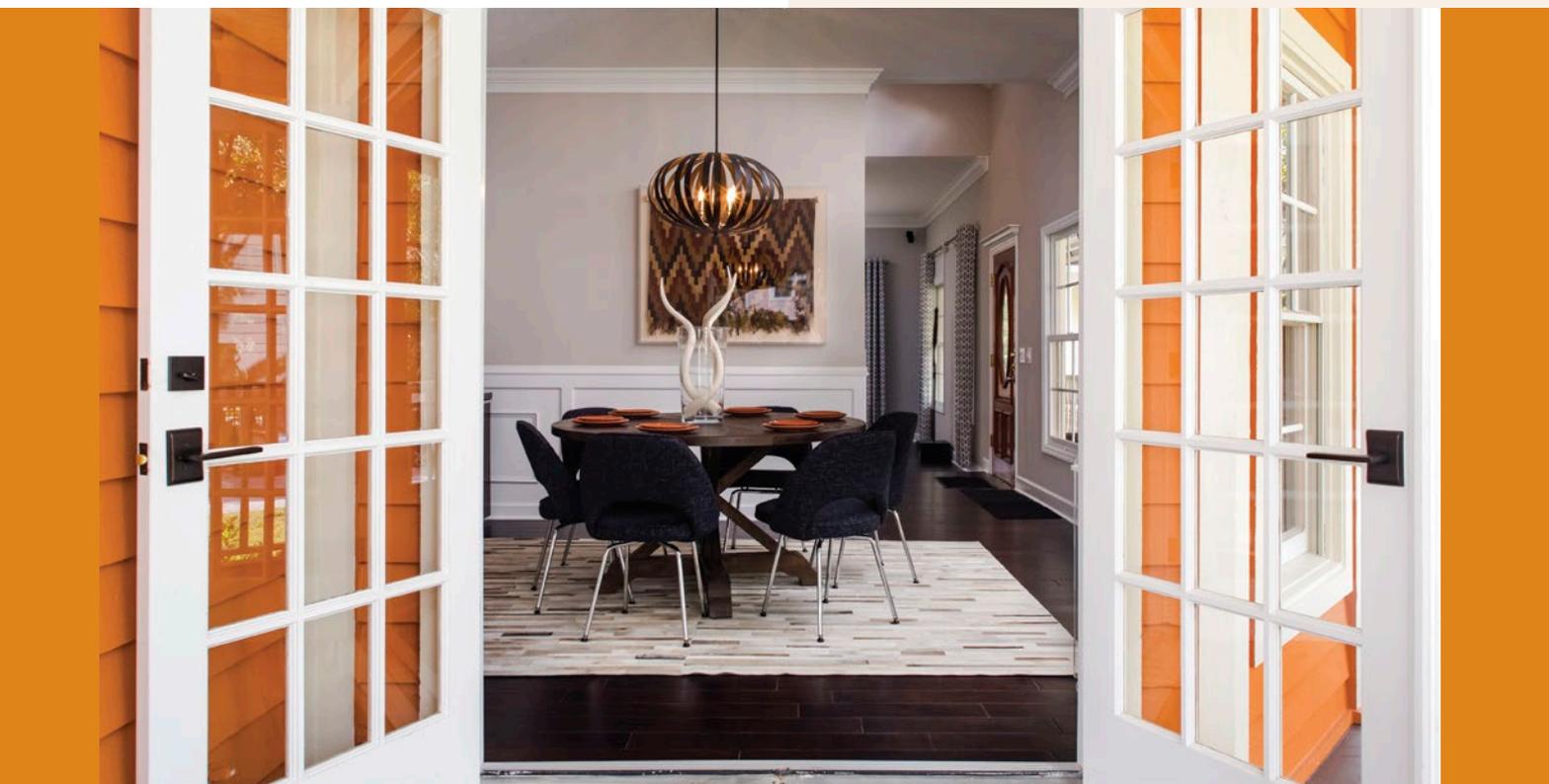


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and a boost in vitamin D may all be positively affected by natural daylight and full-spectrum lighting.

3. Add three levels of lighting to each room. If you have general (aka ambient), task, and accent lighting in a space, you'll be able to manipulate the level of illumination AND the quality of the light. Outside we're exposed to the full-spectrum of light and you may recreate this within your home for maximum benefit.

Adding Natural Sounds/Music

Outdoor sounds have a calming effect. Ocean waves hitting the shore or specifically, as I write this article, the birds chirping all around me, can usher in a sense of peace. We may recreate this sense of calm with our own devices - iPad, TV, stereo, or phone. There are specific apps and videos that we may play to bring in peace, especially while doing those mundane tasks of washing dishes or folding laundry. How much more enjoyable would it be to clean up after dinner if we could also listen to ocean waves? So the next time you have a boring task to complete, ask yourself, "How can I get this done and have fun doing it?" The sounds of nature and music are a great way to complement our environment and elevate the experience.

Gathering to Eat

Summer means getting together with those we love and often times eating as a group. There is a sense of togetherness that we celebrate when we dine with others. So why not do this more often throughout the year? Put that leaf in the table and invite your friends over for a Sunday meal. Plan a menu with the kids and actually cook it together. Change out those chairs you've always hated in the formal dining room – you know the room that is just collecting dust. Use it now! Life is in the present and the present moment is the gift.

Being outside during the summer just makes us feel good. It's our time to connect with one another and with nature. If we transfer a few of these genial components to our homes throughout the year, we'll be honoring our own growth, vitality, and healing. Enjoy the family BBQ. Listen to the wind. Unwind in the pool. Just don't wait to incorporate your favorite life affirming element into your home now. You deserve it!

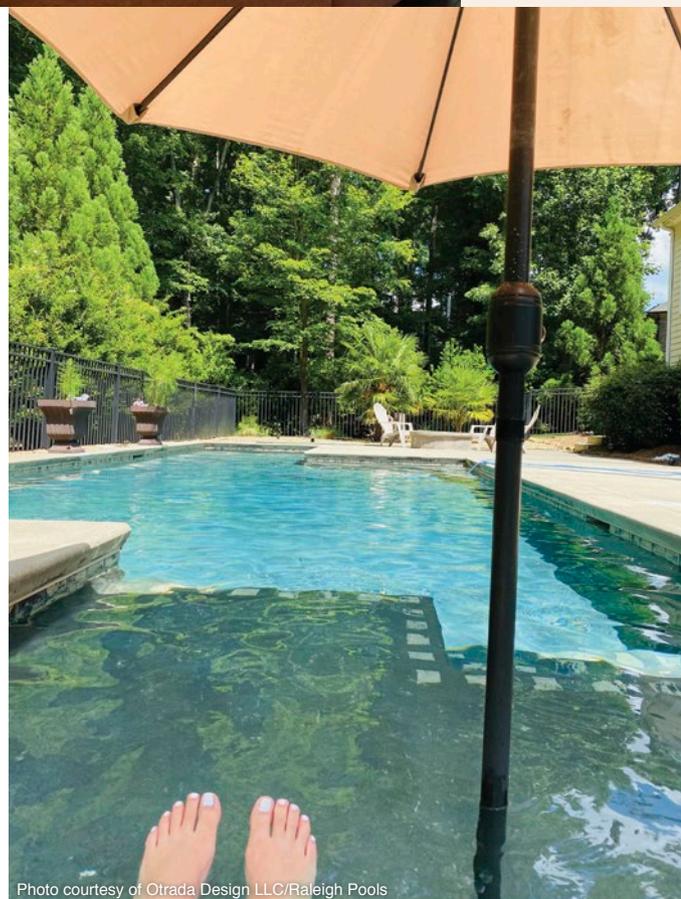


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