

# Peaceful

will also combine to create a peaceful cocooning result. The key to our basic colour palette (see page 15) is an underlying but subtle warmth – a muted and even slightly sludgy tone which gives a ‘blurred round the edges’ softness to your schemes.

## Make it modern

- **For an up-to-date look which isn't OTT,** lift a neutral room with cushions, curtains and accessories in tones of duck-egg blue and caramel, which add soft contrast while still being very calming colours.
- **Consider mid-grey walls** (or even just one feature wall) teamed with luxurious cream seating for a grown-up and sophisticated look.
- **Try experimenting with mauve** – it's another soft, calming colour that will work in any room. This pale pinky, purple shade has a soft warmth that sets a calm but welcoming feel. It can look stylish in a hall with ivory furniture or in a bedroom with an ivory or pale wooden wardrobe and bedside tables in maple or beech. Team it with natural carpet, birch or maple laminate flooring or even sandstone tiles.
- **Chrome, glass and silver accessories** are the perfect modern complement to a modern calming scheme. ▶



## Botanical style

Enhance a relaxing, calming scheme with botanical prints and fabrics.  
**Blinds** from a selection at Hilarys.



## Ensure sweet dreams

Furniture painted in silvery sage adds depth to this tranquil bedroom, while a subtly patterned carpet in cream, sand and barely-there-pink adds interest and creates a clever visual division between the sleeping and dressing areas.

**Carpets:** Tom's Eye, 4sq metre, from The Classic Furniture Co by Parsons.

## Use textured wallpaper

Stick to designs in neutral tones with fluid lines and subtle textures to add to the tranquil mood.

**Wallpaper** left to right: Grass Cloth; Circuit; both £12.99 a roll, homingwaydesign at Focus; Stitch Trail & Damask, £7.99 a roll, Homebase.



## Calm things down

Pattern in muted shades can give a calming effect. Duck-egg blues or pale greens look fantastic teamed with soft beige and linen.

**Fabrics,** from £14.95 a metre, Biggie Boss.





### Vibrant fabrics

Claudia's sitting room is a mix of bold colour and pattern. Choose checked fabrics similar to those on the armchairs to give soft furnishings a fresh look.

Fabrics, Raspberry check, large and small, both £28 a metre, Nordic Style, 020 7351 1755, nordicstyle.com. Linara, ref 2494/53, col Honey, £25.50 a metre, Romo, 01623 756699, romofabrics.com.



Create a subdued lighting scheme by positioning smart lamps on console tables in the sitting room and hallway for a cosy feel. Try one of these Olive lamps with a grey antique finish, £62.95 each, Dibor, 0870 013 3666, dibor.co.uk.

### Simple mirrors

Ben and Claudia's home has the luxury of high ceilings and open-plan rooms.

Create the illusion of space by placing a large mirror over a mantelpiece in the sitting room to catch light. These wood-framed mirrors cost from £325 each at Lombok, 0870 240 7380, lombok.co.uk.



### Rustic baskets

Make a feature of an open fireplace by using natural baskets to store logs and kindling to get the fire going. Kindling baskets, £45 for two, Founi, 0845 644 2500, founidat.co.uk.



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### Let's go househunting in... PORTUGAL

The Algarve in Portugal has a wonderful climate, but some parts of it have been over-developed. East of Faro

and towards the Spanish border is still unspoilt, as are the towns of Boliqueime, Loulé and Tavira, which have their own festivals and culture.

**1 Tavira** Four-bedroom, four-bathroom villa, five minutes from the beach. £347,222.

**2 Faro** Two-bedroom, two-bathroom villa with a roof terrace and pool. 15 minutes from the beach. £253,424.

**3 Boliqueime** (not pictured) Three-bedroom villa in an unspoilt village, 10 minutes to the beach. £200,342. All Sunrise Homes, 0845 226 2931, sunrise-homes.co.uk.

#### Best places to visit

■ **Cabo de São Vicente** A mystical place on the western tip of the Algarve, where the sun can be watched sinking beneath the

waves. Made more atmospheric by the rugged cliffs and ocean.

■ **Tavira** Amazingly unspoilt town, where the fishermen land their catch of tuna; and with a broad central avenue lined with balconied houses.

#### Best places to stay

■ **The Boliqueime Inn**, Boliqueime. 00 351 289 366021. A simple family-run hotel with a pool situated in an unspoilt village 5km inland.

■ **Hotel Vila Galé Alcabora**, Tavira, 00 351 281 329900. Collection of former fisherman's huts knitted together to form a lovely hotel in one of the finest towns on the Algarve.



#### What's for sale now

There are colonial-style villas with balconies, or modern Spanish-style houses; also plenty of apartments, often in large complexes.

## Go classic

- **Introduce simple scroll-arm sofas** and armchairs in sand or beige tones against creamy walls. A flecked or delicately patterned natural-coloured carpet always looks elegant. Team them with mid- not dark-toned woods - like oak or pine. You could introduce sage and eau-de-nil accessories and glass-based lamps with pleated cream or soft green shades. Chandeliers look beautiful, too.
- **Try simple Shaker-style doors** in the kitchen - cream or pale sage green look best teamed with classic knob handles or pewter-coloured cage work handles.
- **Invest in a period-style roll-top bath** surrounded by simple painted walls for an ultimately elegant and inviting bathroom. Wood and glass accessories or just a few burnished gilt pieces are the perfect complement to a classic, calming scheme.



## Indulge in an armchair

Mixing a period-style piece into a modern scheme adds character and informality. Oxford Button chair, £549, Marks & Spencer.



## ANY OTHER TIPS?

- **MATT OR CHALKY PAINTS** enhance the softening effect of this palette.
- **NATURAL MATERIALS** are good for the floor. Wool carpets or grass coverings offer sound insulation. Natural stone tiles give an informal, irregular patina.
- **SOLID WOOD** has a soft buffed sheen which suits this look more than glossy laminates.
- **BANISH BRILLIANT WHITE** and paint woodwork in a paler tint of your walls or in off-white, ivory or dove to help blur the edges of your room.



## Sink into soft carpet

Although natural tones work well, carpets in muted, sludgy tones will add depth to rooms painted in the pale shades from our colour palette.

**Carpets** left to right: Mezzo in City Faar; Mezzo in White Lime; both £41.45, The Studio Collection, Richeieu 1003; Richeieu 7013; from a selection at Louis de Poortere.