



Adding a cushion in popular colours is a low-cost way to update your furniture.

Green interiors

Eco-friendly decorating is the way to go, writes MELISSA JAROS.

Being green is the new black when it comes to interior decorating.

Style It! Penelope owner Penny Magno says eco-friendly designs are in vogue.

"It's not only green energy like solar panels that people are asking for, things such as eco-friendly sheets and fabrics are becoming more popular," Magno says.

International School of Colour and Design general manager Luke Harrison has also seen the demand in eco-designs.

"For many years green products were simply seen as a trend but with the popularity of eco-friendly paints and products made from sustainable materials, it has started to become the norm," Harrison says.

Magno said the main trend for interiors this year is what she calls "bringing the outside inside."

"People are being inspired by nature and what they see when they look outside their windows," she says.

"I recently designed an apartment with a wonderful lime green and an eggplant purple and was inspired by the environment and this is becoming very popular."

Magno says another great way to be eco-chic is to buy pre-loved items from markets or second-hand shops, which can then be refreshed to match trends for the season.

"I have a room in my home which doesn't have an item purchased from a shop, so going to second-hand shops or even auction is a good way to find



International School of Colour and Design's Luke Harrison.

interesting and unique items," she says.

This is a trend Harrison believes will be big in 2009, referring to it as the "nostalgic nerf."

"The idea is based on a bowser bind, which collects bits and pieces over time and this is similar for people who use their home as a gallery to display pieces they love," Harrison says.

"The nostalgic nerf is becoming a trend and by mixing old and new items whether it's a piece of furniture or even a rare picture frame you can produce a stylish room."

The doom and gloom of the recession hasn't affected design colour palettes with bright and bold colours popular for this season.

Magno says bright colours are in vogue and attributes this trend to nature.

"There are always different schools of thought on colours for the season but I have noticed a large demand for bright, vibrant colours taken from nature and a mild version of psychedelic colours from the '60s," she says.

However, more neutral and muted

colours such as black, grey and white are still popular.

If you don't want to lash out on bright wall colour for a subtle version of the nature trend by decorating with botanical inspired cushions. The prints can be a great splash of colour for a plain lounge.

"This season is really about bring the outside inside in every way," Magno says. "Ornaments to add to your room could be a polished rock or a shell which works as a great centrepiece for furniture within your home."

Harrison believes that in tough economic times small changes such as these can have a big impact.

"When economic times get tough we need small indulgences and treats to brighten up our lives. Bold, playful, optimistic yellows will be here we will be doing this in 2009," he says.

Harrison understands that in tough times home decorating can't always a top priority, however, he says you can still have a stylish home that reflects your style.

"Purchase investment items such as lounge suits in basic colours such as beiges and browns and update by incorporating a new trend in simple ways such as adding a yellow or purple cushion to a plain lounge suite to keep up with popular colours for this season," he said.

"People need to be more creative in their choices and use what they have so the idea of nostalgic, nerf is very timely."

Harrison says that decorating is about making it a personal space with items you have collected.

"People are no longer going to a retail outlet and buying an entire room - they are gathering items over time and creating an environment that is unique and authentic to them," he said.



Buying pre-loved furniture and working them into current trends is one way to be eco-chic.



Interior colours and accessories are being driven by what people see outside their window.