



SUMMER HOUSE

WE LOOK AT HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR SUMMER
(AND HOW TO PREPARE A SUMMER HOME FOR YOU)

“When a new season sets in,” says Dubai-based feng shui expert Shivani Adalja, “elements corresponding to that season become predominant.” It’s a simple bit of advice, but one that is worth bearing in mind for homes in summer. Seasons can vary so wildly that our homes are often left unprepared, and our mood is affected as a result – whether it’s a chill and rainy winter night, or the blazing heat of high summer.

“In feng shui, it is believed that energy is made up of five elements,” explains Adalja, “wood, fire, earth, metal and water. Every element corresponds to an area of life, colours, and a particular season. Wood represents spring, fire represents summer, earth represents the end of summer, metal represents autumn and water represents winter.”

She uses, as an example, the silver reclining chair seen on these pages, made by Ego Paris, designers of delectable indoor and outdoor furniture. “This chair is ideal for summer,” she explains, “as it is white in colour and has curved edges. This is a metal shape. In feng shui it is believed that metal creates water. Therefore by using a metal shape and water colour, this piece of furniture is ideal for summer by the pool.”

As with all things, balance is needed, and the season’s predominant element must be countered by other elements. “In summer, the fire element is very strong,” says Adalja. “Fire in moderation is healthy, but one needs to balance fire with water in their surroundings to calm the energy.”

As ever, colour is vitally important when creating inspiring interiors, and some colours are more summer friendly than others. Shades of red or orange, so closely linked to the fire element, should be avoided. Adalja advises using calming colours, such as “grey, white, gold, silver and blue”.

Blending indoor and outdoor space, wherever possible, is also important in creating a free flow of energy, and countering the claustrophobia of a Gulf summer. This of course is something that is seen in the open, shade-drenched courtyards of a traditional Arabian home, but which is easy to forget in more modern structures.

“If you have open space in your living room that opens up to the patio or an open area, it is considered to be good feng shui.”



says Adalja. “By opening the space between the living room and the outdoor area, you are inviting the good energy into your home. It is important that the open space reflects light into your home and you can feel the breeze in your house.” Again, she explains, mixing elemental colours helps. A red couch with black wall decoration and white walls brings a balance of elements. “Red is the colour for fire and black is the colour for water,” says Adalja, “and white is also a metal colour. These create water energy which calms hot summer energy and one will feel less hot. Natural light and open space balance the energy in the area.”

Fans of strong colours and clean, subtle lines might like to note the works of two of Europe’s premier furniture designers: Ego Paris, mentioned above, and Casa Milano, the Italian purveyors of fine furnishings and accessories. Both have a simplicity of style that is well suited to the summer home.

There will be moments, of course, when allowing outdoor and indoor areas to mix is not possible, because of high heat. How, then, can we create better flow? “First of all clear the clutter from the house,” says Adalja. “This will get your energy in the house moving.” Then, you must insist on allowing fresh air to pass through, for at least an hour a day. Open windows, regardless of the heat and allow air to flow to combat the recirculation of air conditioning.

Then, to the interiors themselves, and Adalja has some simple





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but useful suggestions. “Displaying a blue or white painting with water will create a calm ambiance,” she says. “If possible add a small water feature in your house and leave the water fountain on during the day. The sound of running water is very calming. If you have a swimming pool in your villa or your apartment overlooks a swimming pool, keep the window or door in that direction open for a few hours every day. It will invite the calming water energy into your house.” The stringent demand for A/C is not always the right answer.

And for those that can brave outdoor areas, similar rules apply, Adalja explains. “Keep your outdoor clutter-free and have lots of space to move around,” she says. In the picture here, the exterior wall is violet in colour. This is a fire colour. However the impact

of the colour is lessened as there is a pool and other walls and furniture is white in colour. This creates water energy and balances the environment. There is plenty of natural light and the deck has no extra furniture. This allows energy to move freely and gives a feeling of open space. The heat is not felt much in this area as the movement of air and energy will calm the hot air in the surroundings.” ■

The furniture displayed on these pages comes from collections by ego Paris and Casamilano. Both are available at Baituti (www.baituti.com). Shivani Adalja can be contacted through Pathwood (www.pathwood.com) or directly on +971 50 681 1728.

Feng shui summer guidelines

- ✓ Clean out the clutter from your house
- ✓ Use lighter colours in your surroundings
- ✓ Light aromatic oils and incense to create good energy flow
- ✓ Add a water feature to your house
- ✓ Open windows for movement of energy
- ✓ Add an aquarium with live fish in your living room
- ✓ Display fresh flowers in open spaces
- ✓ Breathe deeply and meditate for 10 minutes daily
- ✓ Avoid using carpets during summer months and keep your flooring cool by mopping with cold water

