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BREAKFAST DISHES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE



Light It Up

A Fairfax-based interior design expert explains how to optimize your lighting.

By Meredith Lindemon

➔ **“IF YOU’RE SPENDING** a good deal of money on a renovation but don’t light the space correctly, it defeats the whole purpose,” says Ann Gottlieb, who is an interior designer — and also something of a lighting guru.

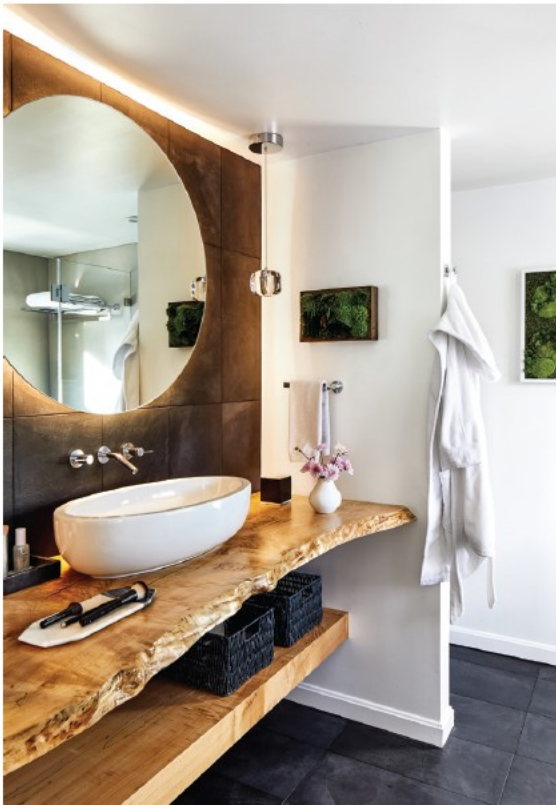
Principal of Ann Gottlieb Design, she creates contemporary styles that bring in natural materials. She demonstrates a masterful utilization of

specific fixtures and “light temperatures” to illuminate spaces, direct drama onto pieces of artwork, and balance out shadowy rooms.

Here, Gottlieb explains how you can enhance your own interior lighting design.

How to Highlight a Special Wall

If you have a built-in or a gallery wall in your



house, you have an opportunity to showcase your collection with light. “If I’m in a formal living room with a wall of shelving and art, with furniture in the center, I’m going to use smaller, closer together downlights to highlight the art,” Gottlieb says. “Then, I’m going to do long, linear, recessed light to highlight the cabinet. There are also [Gimbal recessed lights], which allow you to adjust the head to highlight millwork.”

“I space recessed downlights farther apart if there’s a blank wall,” she says. “The placement of the fixture boils down to what’s happening in the room.”

How to Balance Light

If you have a smaller bathroom with a vanity mirror and uneven light (perhaps that’s coming in through a window on one side) you can still balance the light to make

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shaving or makeup application easier.

“I always have a mix of lighting at the vanity wall, no matter what,” says Gottlieb. “Not just a sconce. Then, you can play with the light, [whether] it’s dark or bright outside. If you can only put fixtures on the wall, I recommend an electric mirror that’s backlit — that’s what I use in my bath-

room. I have recessed lights and I rarely turn them on because the backlit mirror is so effective.”

How to Use Hanging Fixtures

If you have a space with a high ceiling, like a staircase to the second floor, then a hanging fixture may be the perfect way to make sure your light is



ANGELA NEWTON BOY PHOTOGRAPHY

even. But there are rules to follow. "It depends on the ceiling height," says Gottlieb. "If it's just a bathroom, they shouldn't hang below 7 feet."

Gottlieb says you need to then determine the right diameter for the fixture in order for it to be proportionate to the room size. "The diameter depends on the ceiling size and the space the fixture is away from the wall," she says.

"This is why I study and plan in 3D, to determine whether it's a decorative fixture, or if it could be a pendant that's down about 18 inches from the ceiling. I also ask, 'What existing conditions do I have to utilize?' And, 'How dolled up does the space need to be?'" Gottlieb says.

How to Choose a Lightbulb

If you like to geek out over lightbulbs, you're in good hands with Gottlieb. "LED definitely is my favorite bulb," she says. "But I like to use fixtures that are dim-to-warm, which means you can change the color temperature."

Gottlieb says that lately, she has been using WAC Lighting Oculux Dim-to-Warm recessed lighting. "It's a cooler, 3,000-to-1,800 Kelvin bulb that I get from Dominion Lighting [in Arlington; Chantilly; and Laurel, Maryland]. For interior residential spaces, you want to get 3,000 Kelvin or warmer, which is actually a lower number."

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LIGHTING TERMS TO KNOW

ACCENT LIGHTING

Lighting focused in a narrow beam that draws attention to decorative features or objects.

TASK LIGHTING

Lighting fixtures that improve visibility in an area where specific tasks will be carried out, like a desk lamp.

AMBIENT LIGHTING

General lighting that provides visibility in a room. Includes artificial and natural light, but not task or accent lighting.

DIMMER

A device that regulates the amount of light visible from a fixture by controlling the power supplied to it. A dimmer can be used to customize indoor environments and help save energy. Not all fixtures are compatible with dimmers. To avoid damage to the fixtures, make sure to get one that is compatible.

COLOR TEMPERATURE

Color temperature is a way to describe the light appearance provided by a lightbulb. It is measured in degrees of Kelvin (K).

KELVIN

Measurement unit for light (or color) temperature; it might also indicate the correlated color temperature (CCT) of light sources. It is measured in degrees, on a scale from 1,000 to 10,000 K.

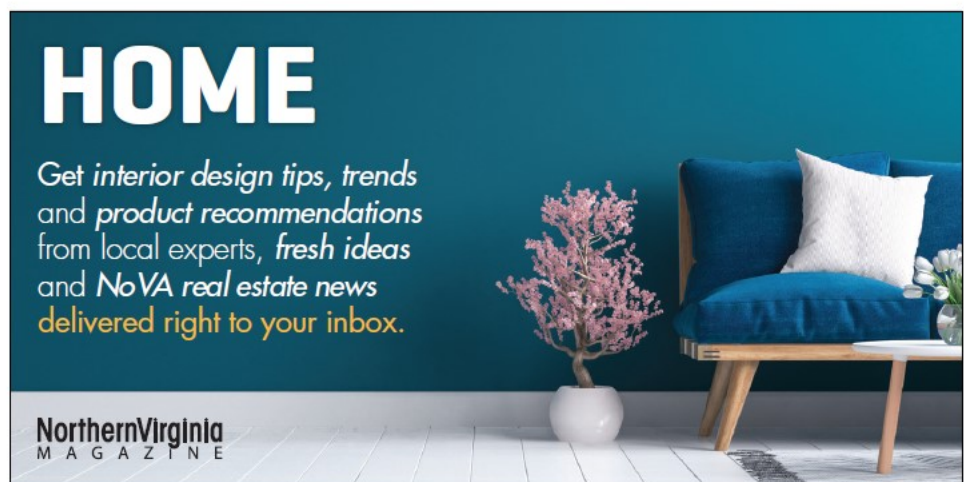


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