



Personalise your space with photos



Marion and business partner Afaf

Give it some art

Looking to make your white walls pop with funky patterned wallpaper or works of art? **Marion Labani**, co-founder of local art and interior consultants **Artdivano**, shares her top tips on decorating from the heart

1 If you feel insecure in matters of how to execute your envisioned interior design concept such as colour ways, furniture style, wallpaper décor patterns, decoration and accessories get yourself some help, call a consultant who offers such services.

2 Don't spend a fortune on the interiors such as furniture, carpets, tiles etc. and have no budget later for decorating your home. This means no Italian design sofa or cheap copy prints. Give both aspects a fitting budget to keep the style balanced and harmonious.

3 Don't follow any fashion trends of the year for the sole purpose of being 'in'. Some fashionable designs can be really disturbing after a while and soon will make you feel uncomfortable in your own home.

4 Choose what you feel comfortable with and not what others might find right for you. You have to feel good in your home and it doesn't matter if your friends don't like your wall colour or sofa style.

5 Don't replace 'old' pieces with 'new' ones too easily. Rather, start mixing styles and pieces from different times. Pieces which might remind you of a great vacation also create a comfort zone with character. Avoid a sterile, 'perfect' space as no one can live in a magazine picture.

6 Buy from local suppliers as much as you can and support your country's

designers, creative talents, artists and economy. It's eco-friendly, as well as helpful in making small businesses and enterprises strong in your home land.

7 Start your art collection step by step, first with small pieces of art such as little sculptures for table decoration, a painting here and there, and watch out for local artists and talents.

8 In case buying original artworks is not within your budget right now, go for fine art photography prints or fine art reproductions instead. For example, we print in archival quality and enclose certificates with such artworks. This adds value to a collection and they even increase in value.

9 Use your own photographs taken during special occasions, as emotionally valued pieces of art. It can be more than just a photo in a frame, for example, the 'myPHOTObox' by Artdivano is a self-standing art box for table display or sideboard arrangements.

10 Don't think your art collection has to fit in with your home's colour scheme. It's not a handbag which has to match your shoes. It's a piece of art which has to match your heart.

Artdivano offers services in art and interior design consultancy, limited edition fine art reproductions and 'MyPHOTObox' (pictured above). Reem Centre, Riffa (3921 2060).

Quick and easy

Tina Thylen, decoration manager for **THE One**, shares these five cost-effective décor solutions

A lick of paint.

Think light, glowing colours on your walls. We suggest beiges and off-whites. This 'barely there' colour palette provides the perfect backdrop to inspiring home fashion – be it stainless steel, mirrored furniture, dark woods or geometric shapes. The possibilities are endless.

Dress up your walls.

Today's wallpapers are edgy, modern and evocative, with a variety of bold as well as understated patterns available.

Express your soft side.

Changing your soft furnishings can give you a totally fresh look, but make sure you choose them in a colour you can live with, allowing you to express different themes in the future. Curtains, for example, have a big impact on the overall ambiance of a room. We recommend you keep them 'nicely neutral' so they become part of the backdrop, yet add tactile texture.

Accessorise!

Candles and flowers are the easiest and most economical way to introduce form, colour and mood to a room. Since scented candles come in beautifully designed holders these days, they will not only brighten up your evenings with their flickering flames and aroma, but can hold their own as eye-catching accessories, so a wide selection is 'essential'. When it comes to flora, there's nothing like a big bunch of roses in your favourite colour. Tip: If you can't be bothered with fresh flowers, go for the fuss-free faux variety and spritz them with your favourite room spray for fragrance.

Off-the-wall art.

Go big or small, depending on your taste and budget.