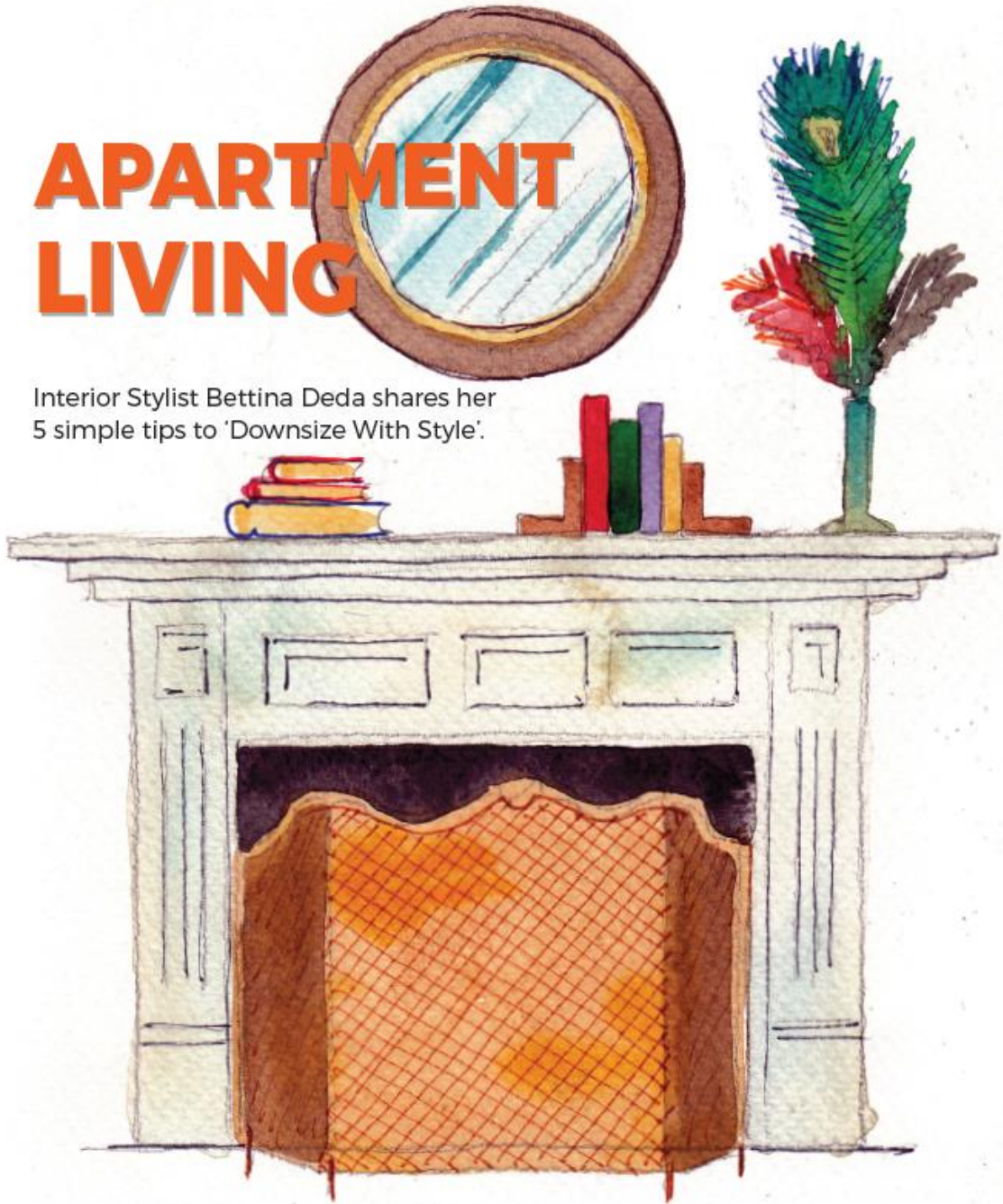


APARTMENT LIVING

Interior Stylist Bettina Deda shares her 5 simple tips to 'Downsize With Style'.



More and more people are opting for an urban lifestyle close to amenities and infrastructure. They are choosing to live in low maintenance apartments rather than big houses for various reasons such as simplifying their lifestyle, saving money on furnishings and appliances, gaining more time for travelling and hobbies or downsizing to start a new chapter of their life. While downsizing is the beginning of a more streamlined living space and life, there can be some major challenges, including the often daunting task of de-cluttering and prioritising what items to keep or dispose of and optimising storage in a smaller living space.

To help you create a stylish home and to reduce stress while downsizing, follow the 5 steps from my book *Downsize With Style*.

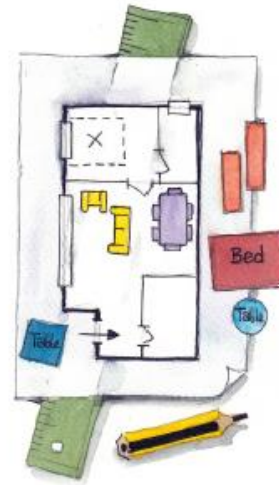
STEP 1: DE-CLUTTER AND TIDY UP

It is inevitable that over time, clutter can build up in your home. Make de-cluttering a regular habit and see it as a means to establishing your future

lifestyle. Start with a room that is your biggest problem and begin de-cluttering by category, for example your clothes. Empty your wardrobe and sort your clothes in groups, pants, shirts, jumpers etc., then, go through each item and decide if you want to keep it. Only keep items that you will make use of and will add joy and value to your current life. Everything else discard, donate or sell.

STEP 2: FIND YOUR PERSONAL DECORATING STYLE

Go on a self-discovery journey that starts in your home. Walk through every room and note all the things that inspire you: photographs, art, cushions, travel souvenirs, china, books, fabrics or colours. Buy interior design magazines and start collecting tear sheets of interiors that appeal to you. Once you have gathered your inspiration, lay everything out on a table and see what pattern emerges; you will find common colours, textures and styles shine through. This is the starting point your of mood board, a type of poster design consisting of all your inspiration images.



HOME IDEAS

STEP 3: VISUALISE YOUR IDEAS

With the help of your mood board you can start visualising your ideas. Your board should reflect the mood and atmosphere you want to achieve in your space. For example, if you found that you love French provincial style, add elements and objects to your board that translate this into to your space. The more time you allocate to this fun task, the better your outcome will be. It will also save you a lot of time shopping for items as well, having already established the look and feel you want for your space.

STEP 4: LAYOUT YOUR SPACE

Once you have decided on the look and feel of your rooms, it is time to layout the space and work out if and how your furniture will fit into your new dwelling. By drawing up a plan of your rooms you will get a better idea of the size and proportion and of the overall look of your new home. Small spaces require

clever space management and room layouts, and every square metre needs to be utilised to its full potential. All you need is a scale ruler and grid paper. Measure your furniture and draw each piece to the same scale in your floor plan e.g. 1cm = 1m. Cut the pieces out then place them on your floor plan and move them around to find the best layout for your apartment.

STEP 5: START DECORATING

Decide on the focal point in each room, choose one in each room and work around it. Work with architectural features like fireplaces, columns or feature walls. To inject your personality into your new apartment, be courageous: mix styles, price points, shapes, textures, colours and pieces from different origins and eras to create your unique interior. Just follow the rule that everything you buy has to mean something to you and your interior will work. It is a simple as that. ●



Illustrations: Joaquín Gonzalez Dorao. All other images: Bettina Deda.



WIN A COPY OF 'DOWNSIZE WITH STYLE'

If you are ready to start your downsizing journey, visit j.mp/downsize21 to book your personal

consultation. Write '21' along with your name to go into the draw to win a signed copy of Bettina's book (valid during September and October 2015). The winners will be notified at the end of each month.



ABOUT BETTINA DEDA

Bettina is an Interior Stylist, Colour Consultant, Design Writer, Author and Speaker living on Sydney's Northern Beaches. She is on a mission to help empty nesters achieve a stylish and functional home in a more compact space and enhance their apartment lifestyle. In 2014, Bettina published *Downsize With Style*, which won a bronze medal at the 2015 Independent Publisher Book Awards, and the correspondent podcast show. As a born organiser, she has also published an eBook to manage DIY home renovations. Through her business Bettina Deda colour design, the book and podcast, her interior decorating e-course HomeStyling101 and her passion for colour and design she hopes to make a difference to the growing number of apartment downsizers. Follow Bettina on Twitter @bdcolourdesign and Facebook www.facebook.com/downsizewithstyle