

the noughties homes & gardens.

The trends that come and go

After the cool minimalism of the 1990s, the Noughties saw the return of bold pattern, colour and quirky accessories in our homes. OONAGH ROBINSON finds out what else was happening in the world of interior design...

THE END of the 20th century was a tricky time for interior design enthusiasts. Magazines and TV makeover shows of the 1990s were all urging us to stop injecting our own personalities into our homes. Use clean lines, paint your walls magnolia, strip out that carpet and put some nice laminate flooring in instead, they all suggested.

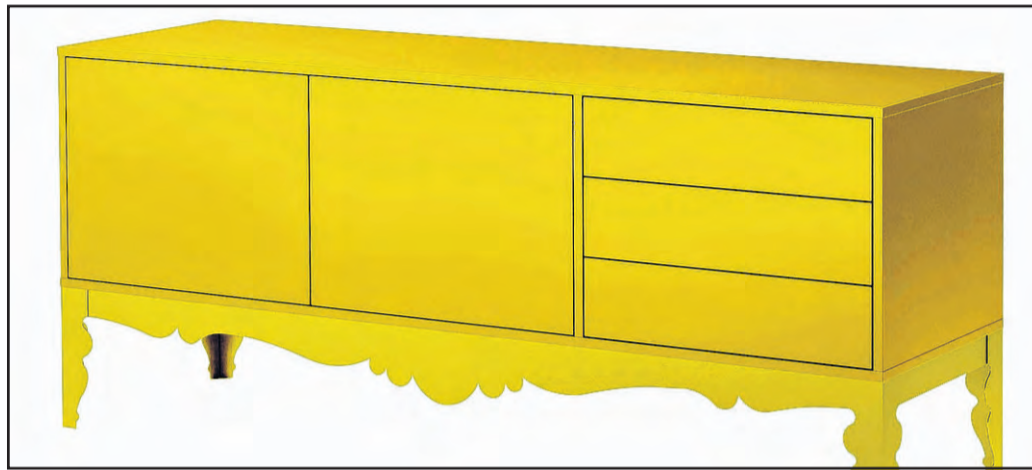
Minimalism wasn't exactly the most inspiring of styles. And let's face it, if you had children, you could just about forget the whole idea.

But then the Noughties arrived and with it came the first signs of hope for people who preferred homes to be a little, well, more homely. Enter the feature wall.

You could keep the magnolia you'd so lovingly cultivated in the previous decade, but on one glorious wall, you could have a bit of fun.

First, people started painting one feature wall an outrageous colour. Red, purple, brown - anything was possible.

Then, somebody had the fabulous idea of



FORCE: A new furniture style force grew and consolidated. It's called IKEA.

reinventing wallpaper for the new century. Instead of the hideous clashing designs that made homes of the 70s and 80s look so utterly ghastly, wallpaper patterns became elegant and trendy. Heavy damasks, florals and designer prints were all the rage.

They were tasteful, but at the same time very bold - making your feature wall the stand-out statement in your home. Add another Noughties favourite, the weathered-looking brown leather sofa and suddenly you had a definite "look"

going on.

Just as retro style and boho chic became big news in fashion in the 00's, so the trend continued into interior design.

The laid-back gypsy theme was everywhere in 2004 and 2005, with vintage florals, exotic colours, romantic layers, flirty fringing and an all-round devil-may-care attitude to life.

Vibrant ethnic velvets with rich red walls and dark wooden furniture could be your starting point.

And the best part of this look was that you didn't have to spend a fortune on brand new "stuff" to make your home look good. In fact, the best place to get the trendiest-looking accessories was your local junk shop or jumble sale.

You could pile your room with old cushions, throws, quilts and rugs in velvet, satin and taffeta (if the colours didn't quite match, all the better) and team them with your granny's old ornaments and vintage pieces for a perfect Bohemian home.

The craze for all things retro spiralled off into other directions too. Designer Cath Kidston took the happy housewife style of the 1950s and turned it into a phenomenally successful range of interior products with a quirky floral vibe. In terms of furniture, flatpack fans could still get their fix from old favourite IKEA - there was even a mini riot when a new store opened in London in 2005.

New technology continued to play a huge part in the way our living spaces were designed, with home cinemas - complete with must-have slimline LCD TV (in black, of course), BluRay player, surround sound speakers and sub woofer - making our lounges like a mini-Odeon.

And it was definitely the decade for open-plan living. No more separate kitchens, living rooms and dining rooms - instead you knocked those walls down and got yourself a king-size family room.

And the most important part of the house was, of course, the kitchen, where you dined, cooked and entertained - in style.



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How TV gave us new horizons on homes and lifestyles



Phil Spencer and Kirstie Allsopp showed us what people were really looking for

While the 1990s saw TV programmes like Changing Rooms inspiring a new enthusiasm for home improvement, the Noughties went one step further. Channel 4's Grand Designs followed couples as they built an entire home from scratch - usually after having at least three nervous breakdowns along the way. The camera crews brought us some truly inspirational stories, like the glorious eco-friendly woodsman cottage in Sussex and the memorable German Huf Haus - made from scratch in about a week. Interiors shows morphed into property shows from the early 2000s onwards. Phil Spencer and Kirstie Allsopp showed us what people were really looking for when buying their dream home via Location, Location,

Location. Then Sarah Beeny showed us how to make a mint doing up a house for sale in Property Ladder. Although most of the people featured completely ignored her wise advice. And as the property slump hit towards the end of the decade, architect George Clarke helped us work with what we already had in The Home Show. No longer did you have to build a new house, move home or do up a property for a quick buck. Instead you worked with your existing home to create a totally new, more manageable, sexier living space. And with trendspotters predicting a rise in garage and loft conversions and extensions this year, it looks like this vibe is here to stay.

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