

SOUTH FLORIDA SunSentinel

BRING SUMMER INSIDE

By *South Florida design expert offers five cheap, easy tips to bring the beauty of the season into your home.*

By **JOHNNY DIAZ** | Staff writer

Ahhh, summer in South Florida. The sticky humidity. Longer days. Hurricane season.

Summer here is akin to winter in the Northeast — a great time to cozy up indoors. The key to avoiding the sweltering heat, but not the beauty of the season, is to make your home feel and look summery.

South Florida design expert Martin Amado offers a few decorating tips to update your home during the warmer months.

"The inspiration you see outdoors, you want indoors," says Amado.

The Sunrise resident revamps interiors on WSVN-Ch.7's "Room for Improvement" segment, contributes to Univision's morning show "Despierta America" and appears on design segments nationally for the Home Shopping Network.

"When you think of summer, you think of the beach, the sand, the pale blues," he says.

"It's almost like giving everything a light and airy feeling."

Here are five easy and cheap tips to achieve that look.

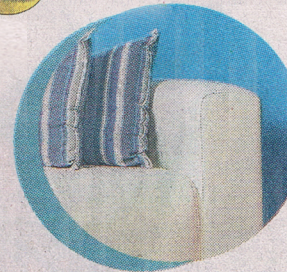
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Design expert Martin Amado finds plenty of small, colorful ways to bring summer into his Sunrise dining room.

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PHOTOGRAPHER



Winner of the **2013 Pulitzer Prize**
Gold Medal for Public Service



Slip covers

Add crisp white or linen slip covers to living room furniture. "If you have a dark sofa or dated pattern, a white slip cover is a great way to give your furniture a face-lift," Amado says. "You can add new toss pillows that are inexpensive."



Window treatments

Use sheer or transparent panels in cotton or linen that appear airy to lighten up dark curtains and heavy drapes. "Something with a woven texture. It just diffuses the light. Especially if you have dated verticals, you can add a curtain rod and panels in the front to tweak the look," Amado says.

He also suggests using curtain rings to clip the panels on and off for the different seasons.

"It's an easy way to swap out the panels," he says. "You don't have to take down the curtain rod. You give it a whole new look."



Colors

Splash a new color on an accent wall. Amado says painting one wall behind your bed or in the dining room can energize the look of a room. "Colors that remind you of being outdoor at the beach: the blues, yellows, greens."



Go organic

Add an organic design element for that outdoor theme. "When you think of summer, it's about incorporating organic elements that we see outdoors." In his home, Amado has a woven roped foyer bench that looks like something that might be found aboard a sailboat. He also has dining chairs made of woven texture. Add a piece of driftwood to a coffee table. "It's a subtle hint to an activity or experience that we do outdoors, like going to the beach or boating," he says.



Bedding

Store away comforters and duvets and swap them for lighter quilts. "Bedding is the key to giving your home a new look for summer," he said. "Quilts are lighter and offer you coverage at night." He suggests using quilts that call to mind summer colors, such as sandy hues, pale blues or yellows. And for an aquatic feel, try using a cabana stripe or coastal-style quilt.

