

Painting THE TOWN

Once a nightmare of knotty pine, this coastal cottage has been transformed into a tasteful holiday home on a tight budget



Stepping through the doors of this beach cottage was more likely to bring on a bout of cabin fever than set the tone for some carefree downtime on the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast.

With varnished knotty pine on the ceilings, walls and floors, it was sauna-like with a dated, claustrophobic feel.

As it's a holiday home, the Johannesburg owners, Isabel and Pieter Marnewick, didn't want to spend a fortune on the much-needed revamp and asked Odette Uys of eye candy interiors to work her magic on a tight budget. "My brief was to transform an ugly bungalow into something that would reflect the lush foliage outside and convey a relaxed, yet upmarket atmosphere," explains this Durban decorator.

To 'open up' the cottage and make

it feel more inviting, Odette decided to camouflage the oppressive pine cladding using paint: a subtle stone shade was selected for most of the internal walls with fresh white for the ceilings, internal doors and trim. Only the wooden floor was left untouched to retain some of the original rustic charm of the house.

"I wanted the background to 'disappear', so only the furniture and accessories would stand out; it's a trick to make small spaces appear larger and is also calming to the eye," says Odette, motivating her colour choices.

In keeping with this restful look, she replaced the motley collection of wildly patterned drapes with simple Venetian blinds and white eyelet curtains, before turning her attention to updating the old light fittings.

A lot of the rooms had inadequate ▷

OPPOSITE PAGE: All the interior pine walls were stripped and most were painted with Plascon Dundas. "This chameleon-like neutral goes with everything," says Odette, who painted the abstract triptych above the new sofa to coordinate with the colour scheme of the open-plan living and dining room. The lamps on the side tables were originally black but were reinvented with a lick of paint and modern shades. ABOVE, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ● Green and white is a good alternative to the popular blue and white colour scheme commonly used in beach houses, and there's an abundance of foliage in the garden that can be used instead of expensive flowers. The green and oyster cushions on the Malawian chairs were chosen to echo the colour of the foliage outside. ● The TV unit was purchased from Coricraft. White Venetian blinds were chosen for most of the windows as they visually take up less space than curtains and are easy to live with.



lighting with only one light source attached to a ceiling fan. To distribute light more evenly in each space and create a pleasant ambience, she installed wall sconces and hanging pendants, planning to dot attractive table lamps here and there at a later stage.

When it came to furnishing the house, Odette once again had her paint brush at the ready. Several of Isabel and Pieter's existing pieces, including their dining table, headboard and bedside pedestals, were refreshed with a coat of white paint. Paint was even used to give some of the new furniture a custom-look.

For the all-important finishing touches, Odette concentrated on adding interest to each room using green and coral as accent colours and introducing various textures with accessories like mother-of-pearl mosaic

mirrors, baskets and rugs. "Some of the accessories were expensive, but I found most of them at Mr Price, Home Etc. and Boardmans," she says. "It's amazing what you can do with a lick of paint, simple accessories from popular home stores and a little savvy, all on a tight budget." Looking at the end results of this makeover, which cost just under R150 000 (including new sanitary ware in the bathrooms), we couldn't agree more. ▷

OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ● "We installed new cupboard doors with stainless steel handles and painted the bar stools white. We also installed a new extra-deep double basin," says Odette about the changes that were made to the kitchen. ● Odette found these dining

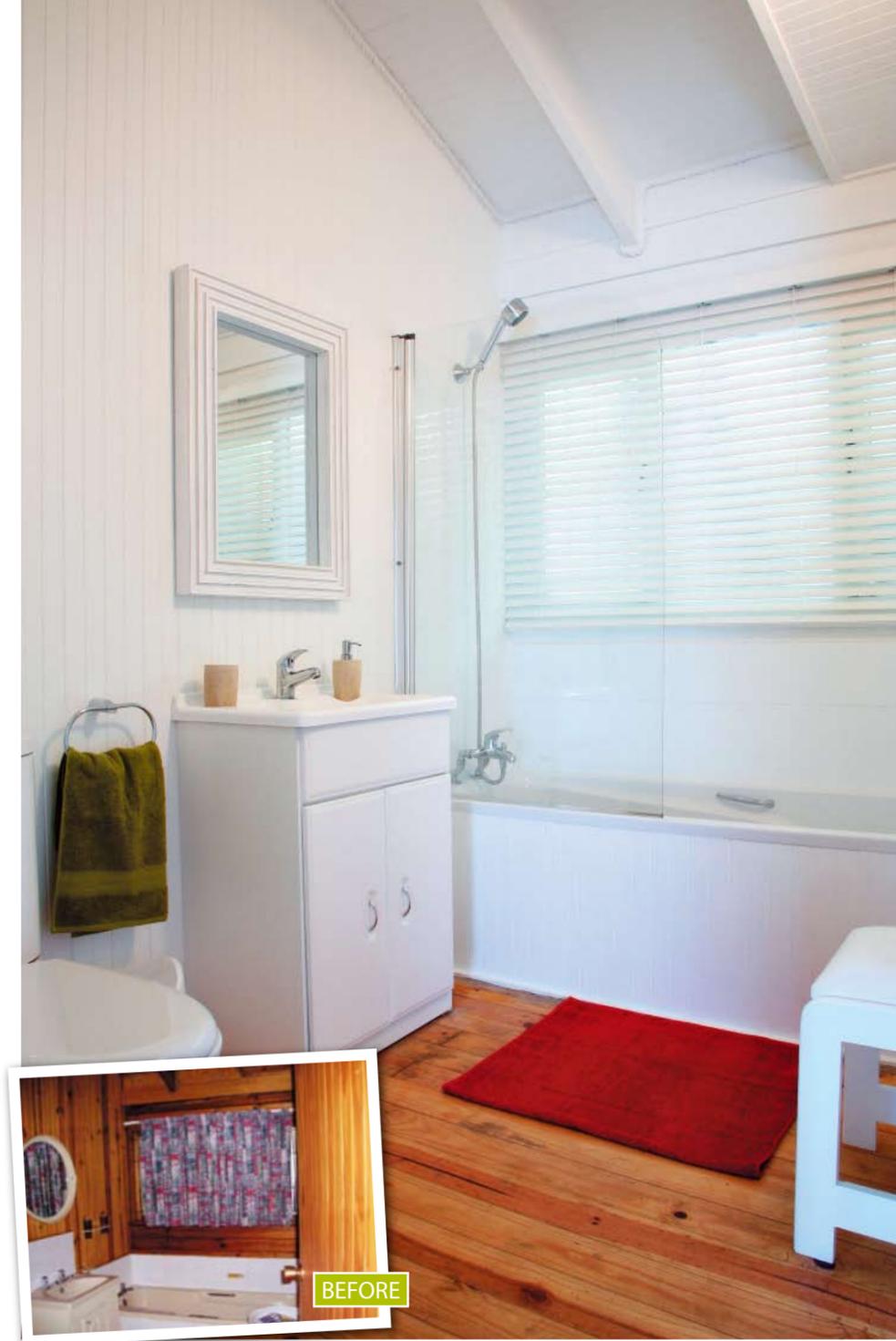
chairs on sale at Weylands; they were originally brown, but she painted the legs white and applied a light white wash to the seats to give them a bleached look. The table is one of many existing pieces of furniture that was revamped with a coat of paint. ● There are many interesting alternatives to traditional artwork that you can use to decorate your home. In this cottage, a bamboo ladder rests against one wall in the dining room; the grass platter hanging above it was painted white. ABOVE, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ● A loosely woven heart adds a touch of whimsy to the second bedroom. ● To make a fun statement, the walls of the second bedroom were painted a fresh shade of green – New Dill from Plascon. The trolley used to be in the lounge area; positioned between the beds it now makes an ideal bedside pedestal.



STYLE ON A SHOESTRING

Follow Odette's tips to revamp your home on a tight budget:

- Start with the framework, i.e. walls, floors and cupboards. Spend time repairing cracks and chips and paint the walls in a neutral shade. If your bedroom and kitchen cupboards are still in good condition, paint them and install new handles to give them a new look.
- Take stock of all your furniture and accessories. Clear out the clutter and see which pieces are still in a good condition and can be revamped with paint or new upholstery. Look out for durable upholstery fabrics on sales and in factory shops.
- You don't have to spend a fortune on having new curtains made; there are many good ready-made options on the market. New curtain rods can be purchased from most large retailers, like Makro and Game.
- New bedlinen will instantly update a bedroom and can be relatively inexpensive to purchase.
- Good lighting can make the world of difference and old light fittings are fairly cheap to replace. Look at the direction of the light, especially if it's a harsh centre light; opt for softer lighting from wall sconces and lamps. Make sure that bathrooms are well lit.
- Money spent on kitchens and bathrooms can add to the resale value of your home. Invest in new fittings and sanitary ware if your budget allows. **GH**



LEFT: A coral throw and botanical scatters add a touch of vibrancy to the restful all-white colour scheme of the master bedroom. The eyelet curtains are from Mr Price Home. TOP: The bathrooms looked small and cramped so we decided to go for an all-white scheme with pops of colour provided in the towels and bath mats," explains Odette. "We replaced the bath, shower, basins and toilets because the old ones were unsuitable for re-enamelling."

- SOURCES**
- Boardmans** 0860 692 274
 - Coricraft** 0861 114 779
 - eye candy interiors** 031 904 1193, 082 459 6673 or www.eyecandyint.co.za
 - Game** 031 302 8991
 - Home Etc.** 031 265 9377
 - Makro** 0860 300 999
 - Mr Price Home** 0800 212 535
 - Plascon** 0860 204 060
 - Weylandts** 0860 103 400