



## Lighten Up

By Cynthia Soda

*Cynthia Soda is the owner and principal interior designer of Soda Pop Design Inc., a multi-disciplinary interior design firm providing complete custom renovation and design services for residential and commercial clients throughout the GTA. Soda Pop Design Inc focuses on merging the client's lifestyle, personality and architecture to create customized liveable luxury. [www.sodapopdesign.ca](http://www.sodapopdesign.ca), Instagram: @csodapop, Twitter: @sodapopdesign*

Living in Ontario, our climate can be less than inspiring when we've experienced a long, cold, dreary winter and our hopes of a sunny spring or summer are lost in endless rain and overcast days. We end up spending a lot of time indoors, so why make our living spaces as grey as the outdoors? After a renovation or even just a paint freshen up, one of the next things you may be looking at are textiles — fabric for drapery, upholstered items and accent pieces. In design blogs, social media and magazines, we see many trends that cross into various streams of design. Mixing metals appears in everything from hardware to furniture and lighting, and fabrics with metallic sheens. Check fabric companies such as Alendel, which now offers a vast array of collections, like its new soft metallic faux leather with inspired shades of bronze, gold alongside pearlized shades of silvers, and creams that are extremely easy to translate into any design plan.

Among fellow designers, some of us joke that we'll completely lose it if yet another client requests a grey sofa. We love our neutrals, and grey has definitely had staying power over the years, but unless we're using it with some more high-contrast patterns, colours or interesting textures, it can be a little boring. If you prefer to stay in the neutral zone, introduce various textures and weaves to add strong visual interest. Patterns will create further interest and movement into the living space.

Nowadays, navy and shades of green have found their way into the neutral zone. For some of our more daring clients, we've designed custom navy sectionals using rich luxurious velvets that have been treated with inherent stain and water repellents to survive family life. Accenting these larger pieces with patterns is a fun way to inject some personality into your space. Using high-contrast patterns and saturated watercolour-inspired floral cushions brings light and dreams of sun-soaked lazy days







to your indoor spaces. Experiment with geometrics or organic flowing lines to play up your space, or throw a little animal print in there for good measure! The point is to have fun and express yourself. I personally adore working with heavy weave fabrics, luxe velvets and textured chenilles, which add so much personality to a room. Combine these with richly coloured silks, textured mohairs or faux furs and mixed patterns – stripes, abstracts, prints – and you begin telling your story through textiles. Your space should be a reflection of who you are, and everything around you should make you happy.

**TIP:** Mix and match patterns with stripes. Choose colours from the same colour family in varying shades and patterns for a sophisticated, elegant look or use different colours with similar saturation or intensity for a more eclectic vibe.

