

## **Keep a Light on: The Importance of Lighting in Interior Design**

When we think about architecture and interior design, the first things we conceptualise are colours, styles, lines and how these all arrange into one single component that ties the dynamic of the room together. However, an often overlooked but pivotal element into coherent design is how it's lit.

Lighting is essential to establishing the spirit of any room. In fact, lighting goes beyond that. Lighting is ingrained into the core of our existence. The lightwaves produced by morning light, which tend to be bluer and with a shorter wavelength than the sepia hues of the golden hour, actually have an energising effect on our bodies. Cosy early evening light, conversely, is of longer wavelength and actually produces higher levels of melatonin in the brain, known for its lulling effect on the body and its role in the quality of our sleep. It should be of little surprise, then, that the lighting of a room can have such a profound effect on our mood.

Iconic clothing designer Oscar de la Renta, known for his knack for combining traditional craftsmanship with modern lines, once said, "The most important thing? Perfect lighting at all times." A beautiful piece of art is devalued if not properly lit to highlight its nature; this is true of a dress, a work of art, or a room in a home.

Candles are the perfect example of mood lighting. Candles emit a soft, diaphanous and forgiving light that evokes the feeling of being at home. Firelight through torches, lanterns and candles were the first sources of evening lighting that early humans created. The atavistic glow of candlelight is inherently comforting and reminds us that it's nighttime. Quite naturally, then, effective bedroom lighting should veer towards the warmer spectrum, and blanket through the room unnoticed and cosy.

Since discovering our first man-made sources of light, illumination has come a long way, and has taken on different iterations throughout not just history but cultures. When we think of impeccable lighting, the French come to mind. Walk into any friendly bistro and you will never encounter the shocking, fluorescent lighting we might find in franchised counterparts of other countries. French lighting styles tend to be diffuse and come from different focal points. Some such lighting examples are rustic linen shades, lanterns or cage lighting. Nothing whets the appetite as well as relaxation, and soothing light is a must-have finishing touch to any dining room area.

Gossamer lighting can be achieved through myriad methods, one of our favourites is light filtered through crystal. A popular example of crystal lighting is the light emitted by chandeliers. Crystal chandeliers not only give off flattering, diffuse light but also pin a tone of elegance to any room, the ideal final touch to a curated interior design.