

Must-haves for country-house interiors

Interior designers Gail Taylor and Karen Howes share their best tips on how to design and accessorise a country house

WHEN you set out to design or redesign your country house, start by thinking how you will use it. Points to consider are whether this is your main home, whether you have to take children, dogs or other pets into account, and whether you plan to entertain formally or have a more casual lifestyle. Once the layout is right, choose lighting, colours and furniture that will create a warm, harmonious atmosphere. Then, a few handpicked accessories will complete the look.

Gail Taylor and Karen Howes are the founders of international interior-design company Taylor Howes Designs (020-7349 9017; www.taylorhowes.co.uk)



↑ The unusual Ormolu cushion by de Le Cuona has silver rope details. £98.04 (020-7584 7677; www.delecuona.co.uk)



← There's no need to compromise on looks even if the family labrador likes to sleep by the Aga. Simply pick up a dog cushion or a bed from Mungo & Maud, Elizabeth Street, London SW1. The Bolster bed comes in three different colours and four different sizes, from £108 (020-7022 1208; www.mungoandmaude.com)



↑ The Beaumont & Fletcher Kingsley bar stool, covered in espresso bantry linen, costs £1,890 (020-7498 2642; www.beaumontandfletcher.com)



↑ Good lighting can make the difference between a warm and a gloomy country house. Made with hand-moulded copper and finished in bronze, the Hamilton Mask Globe, by Jamb Lighting, costs £4,800 (020-7730 2122; www.jamblimited.com)

→ David Mellor, London SW1, remains a firm favourite for cutlery, china and glass, as well as wooden chopping boards and bowls. The Pride stainless-steel six-piece place setting is £95 (020-7730 4259; www.davidmellordesign.com)



↓ A comfortable armchair in the corner makes a kitchen more intimate. The Kingcome Stratford armchair, in Larsen Heirloom/Oat fabric, costs £2,200 (020-7244 7747; www.kingcomesofas.co.uk)

