

# 'Cwtch up for A Warm Welsh Winter'



I HAVE TO ADMIT I'M NOT A FAN OF THE LONG COLD WINTER NIGHTS, AND SHORT GREY WINTER DAYS, SO MUCH SO THAT I HAVE MADE JANUARY 1ST MY OFFICIAL FIRST DAY OF SPRING, WITH THE VIEW THAT I CAN, PSYCHOLOGICALLY, MAKE THE WHOLE GLOOMY EXPERIENCE CONSIDERABLY SHORTER.

The idea being that by the time I have busied myself through the end of year festivities I will have barely noticed the damp, dismal, dreariness outside my front door. On the upside, it means my winters are magically just four weeks long and I shouldn't have to wait too long before the first climatically confused daffodil's spring into action to lift my spirits.

So no matter how long your winter is for you, whether you love it or hate it, the one thing we know for sure, it's going to be cold outside, but this doesn't mean, we shouldn't ooze coziness within our own four walls, and do you know what? It's all here on our own doorstep in Wales; you really don't have to go that far to find the perfect 'pick me up' for a dull gloomy room. Some of the following talent is well established, but there are some budding young designers in our midst who are in the embryonic stages of their careers, whose names, in the not too distant future, hopefully will be instantly recognizable, and, I know, we would like to wish them every success for their futures.

So why don't you kick off your Boots, hang up your scarf, fill your room with the dulcet duet of Tom Jones and Cerys Matthews and snuggle up on your sofa with a steaming cup of Pemberton's Hot Chocolate, and read on for some of my great pointers and creative tips for Welsh winter warmers in your home.

NOMAD & NEST AND  
ATTIC2



## NOMAD & NEST AND ATTIC2

Angela Gidden and Lynsey Jackson are the designers behind Attic 2 which is divided into 'Studio' the creative hub behind their bespoke design service, and, 'Originals', which is their fantastic signature collection of contemporary furniture. Angela has always promoted their designs as being 'modern antiques of the future', and she does have a point, their 'Stretch' sofa (as shown) has been hugely popular with its timeless and 'no fuss' appeal and there really is something for everyone, as seen at [www.attic2.co.uk](http://www.attic2.co.uk). As if one thriving business was not enough, Angela along with Fi Campbell have together recently founded Nomad and Nest designing and manufacturing furniture and handbags. Passionate about the environment and sustainable design, their plan was to take Nomad and Nest back to roots, to simplify and embrace traditional values. Making zero waste their target, they are utilizing the left over hides and fabrics from their furniture production and given them another lease of life in the form of handbags, right down to the smallest pieces, which are transformed into wallets and key fobs, ultimately making a positive difference which is everything that Nomad & Nest are about. The furniture side focuses on a simple and natural appeal, but draws on the design influences from Attic 2, as seen in the beautiful 'Caerdydd Raw' chair, where raw edges are elemental to the design along with all the captivatingly 'perfect' imperfections of a natural hide. Check out their new website, [www.nomadandnest.co.uk](http://www.nomadandnest.co.uk) recently launched in November, for plenty of information and enjoy the dreamy photography on their website – another pastime of this busy, but multi-talented outfit.

INDIVIDUAL  
FURNITURE



INDIVIDUAL FURNITURE

For those among you who are looking for modern statement pieces of furniture for your home look no further than Individual Furniture based in Cardiff. Each piece is designed and handmade by Shane Taylor, a '3D Design' graduate who set up his business 15 years ago. I spoke to Shane, who, adores his work and his Welsh roots and whilst he is very busy meeting orders, he will be expanding his range in the near future. His online range includes CD and DVD racks, magazine racks and mirrors, which are currently flying out of Heal's. They are available in various veneers and are exceptional value. Perfect for a minimal look turning an otherwise messy ensemble, into a neat unobtrusive statement, and a great design talking point in your home. Shown is one of Shane's contemporary mirrors in Walnut and you can see more of his talented work at [www.individualfurniture.co.uk](http://www.individualfurniture.co.uk).

KATHRYN ROBERTS

Glassmaker Kathryn, and MA, Royal College of Art graduate, was born in Cardiff and is now based at The Gate Gallery and Glassworks in Brecon, where she has combined home and work. With years of experience as a glass blower and cutter, Kathryn has worked for both corporate and private clients on commissions and installations. Combining timeless aesthetics and functionality, Kathryn uses the natural quality of the glass and it's fluidity to capture 'a moment frozen in time'. Shown here are her 'Slate Vase' and her 'Stacked Tona Vessels', the beautiful qualities are immediately evident. You can also visit her Glassworks, where you can view her glassware – visit her website [www.thegategallery.co.uk](http://www.thegategallery.co.uk) for details and more images of her creative work.

KATHRYN  
ROBERTS



MARGAM  
JONES



MARGAM JONES

Now, who could resist these curtain raisers? They're the type of product that you may never have considered before, but once you've laid your eyes on them you'll be desperately trying to find a window in your home for these tempting tassels to live. Designed and beautifully handmade at Margam Jones, a family-run business in Swansea. Margam is passionate about their strong Welsh links and their bespoke design service. When I spoke to the delightful Margam, who has worked across the UK, she told me she thrived on the personable element she gets from working in Wales, and that she feels her close client relationships creates an enormous sense of satisfaction, which perpetually fuels her motivation and passion. I love these leather tassels, 'Coffi' from their Wood Range and 'hufen' from their Glass Range perfectly combining contemporary and traditional design. Visit [www.margamjonestassels.com](http://www.margamjonestassels.com) to view her extensive range of exquisite tassels.

MELIN TREGWYNT



**MELIN TREGWYNT**  
For those of you who have not yet discovered the wonderful woolly pleasures of Melin Tregwynt, feast your eyes upon these beautiful designs, 'Mondo' and 'Roundcross' both in 'Spice'. Changing the cushions in a room and using the odd throw here and there, can visually transform the space and at a minimum cost. Warm tones of oranges or reds will definitely lift your spirits through the winter months and with textures like this, they are surely a must. Just be sure to stick to plains if your patterns are high elsewhere in the room, such as your walls, sofas and rugs. All the textiles are made on site, where they combine modern designs with authentic Welsh tradition to produce exclusive pieces, and even better you can also visit their working mill based near Fishguard for a great day out. All products are available by mail order and you can visit their website [www.melintregwynt.co.uk](http://www.melintregwynt.co.uk) - download their latest catalogue which includes blankets, throws, and cushions, along with furniture, clothing and a range of accessories.....time to go shopping!!

ANNE REYNOLDS RUGS

Brighten up that neutral floor with one of Anne Reynolds, superb rugs. Textile Designer Anne designs the rugs in Wales, and she has some vibrant and contemporary designs which will pull those warm accent colours together, to create a sharp modern look, with a pleasurable deep quality underfoot. Visit her website [www.annereynoldsdesign.com](http://www.annereynoldsdesign.com) to view her extensive range of rugs, or for other bespoke work Anne has undertaken, visit her other website at [www.ardigitextile.com](http://www.ardigitextile.com) for inspiration.

ANNE REYNOLDS RUGS



KIRSTY PATRICK - LIGHTING



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Now here's a young lady to watch out for. Kirsty Patrick graduated from Carmarthen College in 2006 having studied '3D Design in the Landscape'. Her work is inspirational and her contemporary lighting designs are proving to be hugely successful. Look out for her website [www.bykirsty.co.uk](http://www.bykirsty.co.uk) which is to be launched in the New Year and check out her full range. Shown here is her 30cm 'Sphere' light, hard to resist at just £80.00. Larger versions of the 'Sphere' are available – price on request.

MAKEPEACE FURNITURE



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For those who will be embarking on kitchen projects in the New Year I would recommend you consider Makepeace Furniture. Based in Llandysul in Carmarthenshire they make beautiful bespoke kitchens, Welsh Dressers and a range of furniture all from sustainable sources. The established talent of the owners, Nicholas and Sarah Makepeace, combined with the quality of the kitchens crafted by a workforce of locally employed craftsmen was a guaranteed winner for this company. Shown here is one of their natural ash kitchens with turned and reeded posts and Seaweed Green granite worktops. They say the kitchen is the hub of any home, with a hub like this, chores would be an absolute pleasure, don't you think?

Well, let's face it, with talent like this on our doorstep, and, believe me, I've hardly touched on what is actually here in Wales, we really don't have to go far to find what we are looking for, and boy, it makes you feel proud.

STUMBLING BLOCK



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For rooms where the fitting of halogens lights proves problematic, The Exciting Lighting Company has the perfect solution. Requiring only one feed, these lighting panels come in an array of different sizes and contemporary finishes and contain halogen lights and led's which are dimmable and work from a remote controlled unit. The unit is wired into the existing feed and invisible brackets fix to the ceiling, giving you relief on your ceiling and a superb lighting feature which is also great for low ceilings. Take a look at their website [www.theexcitinglightingcompany.com](http://www.theexcitinglightingcompany.com) for a superb solution for those keen to achieve a modern subtle look.

Medieval Christmas Market takes place on 8th & 9th December 2007 in Caerphilly Town Centre/Caerphilly Castle. Call 02920 880011 for entry fees and opening times.

16th December 2007 at Chapter Arts Centre, Canton, Cardiff Check out the latest talent and craftsmanship at WonderCulture, an annual event, for designers, old and new, to showcase their inspirational wares.

Beautiful scenery, shopping and coffee all wrapped up in a daytrip to see the old mill at Melin Tregwynt. Check out their website [www.melintregwynt.co.uk](http://www.melintregwynt.co.uk) for the numerous collections of home wares and clothing and opening times.

3 Day Craft Event at the Red Dragon Centre, Cardiff Bay 25th - 27th January 2008.

A quick reminder for those planning on visiting the Ideal Home Exhibition at Earl's Court between 14th March and 6th April 2008, tickets are on offer at £20 for two if you buy them before 31st December 2007. Call their hotline 0844 415 4144 to book.

Deborah Drew, Interior Designer and designer for the TV series **DIY SOS**, has become an official member of the **Welsh Living** team and gives her Interior design knowledge for you to re-create at home.