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Rethinking the “Bachelor Pad”

It's a cliché that will never die. The term “bachelor pad” conjures up some pretty vivid images in our minds; the slick abode of the single guy perpetually “on the make” or the sparsely furnished chaos of the aging frat boy whose idea of décor is a tower of beer cans on the coffee table and unframed posters of scantily clad women. Frankly, I'm not sure which is worse.

While there are plenty of single men who take the time to create a living space that is tasteful and reflects their personality, they tend to be the exception, not the rule. In most cases, decorating is an afterthought...if it's thought of at all.

Here are a few tips for creating an inviting, interesting living space for the single guy. After all, you want leave a great impression on that lady you're having over for a drink...not leave her wondering when the toga party starts.

You're too old for Garanimals

Many single guys go out and purchase full sets of home furnishings; matching sofas, chairs and coffee tables. Admirable, but this can be expensive...and boring. It's ok to mix styles and colors, provided you have a few items to pull everything together. A matching coffee table and end table can bring together a mismatched couch and chair combination. An interesting rug that pulls colors from other furnishings is an inexpensive way to make diverse pieces look like they belong together. Or consider stretch-on slipcovers in complimentary colors or patterns as a way to dress up mismatched upholstered pieces. They're inexpensive and they're machine washable; great for those inevitable “party fouls”.

Black isn't the New Black

Men tend to stick to dark colors for their masculine appeal and the ease of mixing with other colors. But consider some other equally versatile color options, such as khaki, olive green and navy blue. These colors all look great with contrasting hues. If color makes you nervous, try adding a few colorful accent pieces such as lamps and throw pillows. And while white or beige walls are a safe choice, they can be cold and uninteresting. Consider painting one wall in your living area in a deep or bold shade that you love. Not sure what color to pic? Take a look in your closet; see lots of blue? Green? Then there's a good

chance those are colors you can live with on your walls. (If all you see is black, you might consider some professional help...with decorating, that is!)

I Gotta Be Me

Let's face it; a bachelor pad isn't just a place to sleep and eat. It's also a place to entertain. Women notice little details, so consider your personality and the image you want to portray. Are you a sports fanatic? That's great, but don't overwhelm your décor with sports-related details. A few select items; a signed baseball, a souvenir program and other memorabilia can be tastefully displayed on an attractive wall shelf or small display cabinet. Love fly-fishing? Why not create a montage of beautiful fly-fishing shots in matching store-bought frames, and a shadowbox of interesting flies. (Keep your waders in the closet.) You want your space to quietly express who you are, without shouting.

Chicks Dig It

Women notice the little details. Here are some easy suggestions for making a great impression:

Bedding: Own at least one set of high quality, high thread-count bed linens.

Tableware: Your dishes needn't be expensive, but they should match and be free of chips and cracks. Plain white restaurant-ware is a great option for bachelors; it's durable, dishwasher safe and goes with any décor. Buy an assortment of colorful, inexpensive cloth napkins in a variety of patterns and colors. It's an easy way to change the look of your table and it's sure to impress.

Candles: We all look more beautiful by candle-light. A few lightly scented, good quality candles can add a touch of romance and fragrance to a room. And remember to avoid scented candles at the dining table, and keep the candles to a tasteful minimum. Too many and you'll not only create a fire hazard, but you'll look like you're setting the stage for a sacrificial rite, not a quiet evening with a new friend.

Keep it Clean

Like it or not, women will form an impression of you based on the cleanliness of your surroundings. Disposable cleaning wipes, dust cloths and wet mops are a great way to give your place a quick sprucing up before company arrives.

If cleaning isn't your thing (and that's ok, we don't really like it either), consider hiring a cleaning service. Even a once-monthly professional cleaning can make a big difference.

With a little imagination and not a lot of money, you can create a space that is warm, comfortable and inviting...just like you.

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