

House Doctor



How to help your noisy neighbours keep the volume down; why filtering your water could improve your health, and how to keep the romance alive this winter

Feng shui fixers



Q) I enjoy living on my own but I miss my friends, who are all settled down now in relationships. Is there a way to re-arrange my home to boost my social life and attract more visitors?

A) Start by making the approach to your home more welcoming. Clear and sweep the path, cut any over-grown bushes, perhaps re-paint the fence or gate (if you have one); make sure there is no rubbish lingering around the door or in the front garden, and make sure your doorbell works. Next, make the hallway as clear as possible, and then

hang a picture of a happy group of people there. Now arrange your living room furniture so it is conducive to social situations. While doing all this, keep in mind the intention that each action is to attract a better social life. Action with intention is very powerful!

Crystal of the month

Pyrite

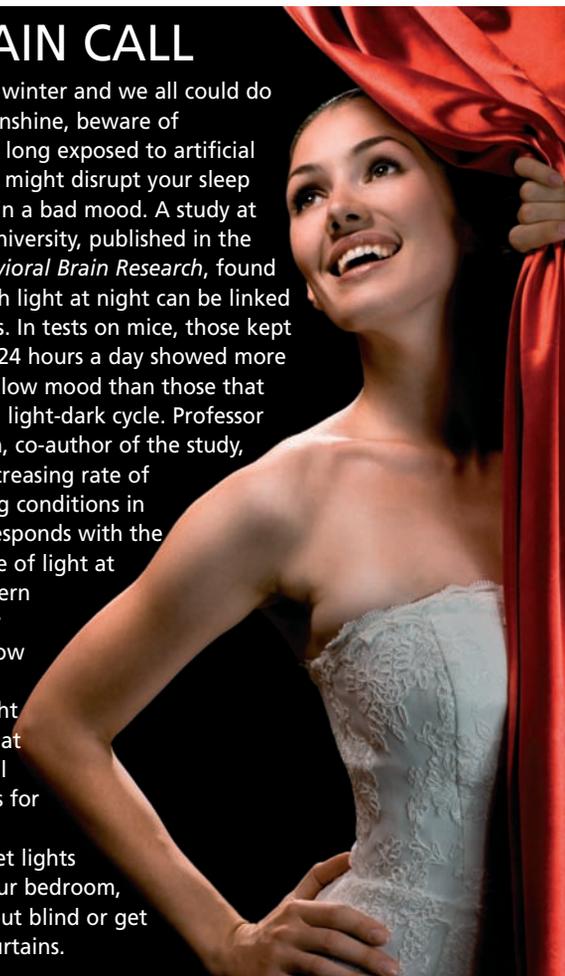
This crystal, also known as Fool's Gold, comes from Peru, Spain, the USA and also the UK. It is good for memory and thought processes and is also said to bring protection. It's also an excellent remedy for dealing with noisy neighbours; just place a stone on each of your window sills and life will be quieter in no time!



CURTAIN CALL

Although it's winter and we all could do with more sunshine, beware of spending too long exposed to artificial lighting, as it might disrupt your sleep and put you in a bad mood. A study at Ohio State University, published in the journal *Behavioral Brain Research*, found that too much light at night can be linked to low moods. In tests on mice, those kept in a lit room 24 hours a day showed more symptoms of low mood than those that had a normal light-dark cycle. Professor Randy Nelson, co-author of the study, said: "The increasing rate of mood altering conditions in humans corresponds with the increasing use of light at night in modern society. Many people are now exposed to unnatural light cycles, and that may have real consequences for our health."

So if the street lights shine into your bedroom, buy a black-out blind or get some thick curtains.





Purple reign

Tap into this season's hottest colour – purple – by bringing some splashes into your home. All shades – from aubergine to violet and mauve – are in vogue right now, and can be found in curtains, lamps, picture frames, and bedspreads. Violet is the most steady of all the rays, as it balances the hot energy of red, with the cool calming influence of blue. Use any shade of this colour in rooms where you want to sit and contemplate, or meditate. The hue promotes self respect, strength and spiritual development.

WATER WATER EVERYWHERE



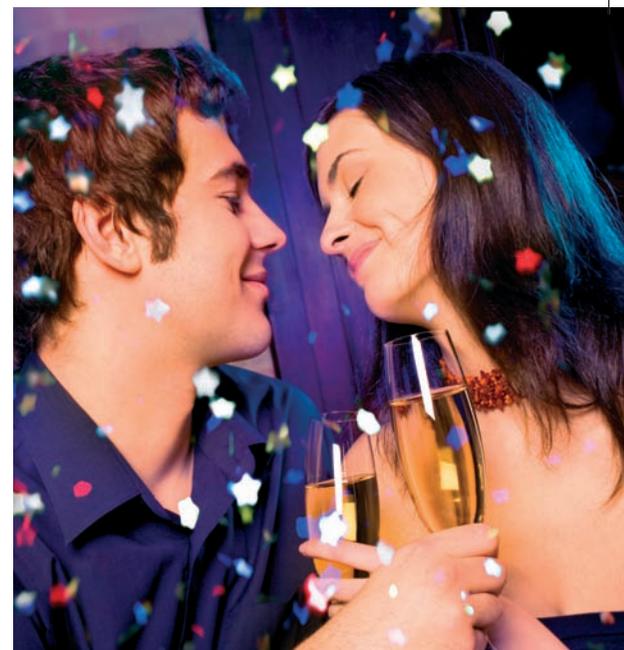
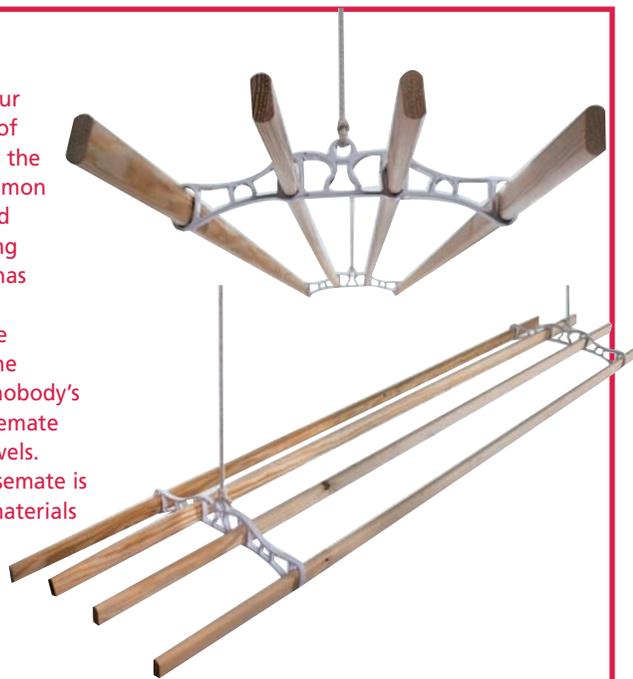
Water is the basis of life: your muscles, blood, and brain are 75-80 per cent water; even your bones have 25 per cent water! So, the quality of the H₂O you drink is of paramount importance. There are plenty of water filters on the market, but Nikken, the makers of PiMag Water Technology, say their systems not only remove impurities, but adds essential minerals, needed

by the body, back into the water. Layers of filters, silicates, mineral rocks and magnets create a cleansing process that transforms ordinary tap water into mineral-rich water. The systems remove various chemicals, heavy metals, pesticides and bacteria down to 0.2 micron. But what is 'Pi' water? During research on plant growth cycles, Japanese scientists discovered a form of water they named Pi. This water contained specially charged particles, so the scientists referred to it as 'living water', from the effects they perceived it had on plants and other growing things. To find out more, about PiMag Water Technology, including shower heads and water jugs, visit nikkenwellbeing.co.uk and click on Wellness products, then on the 'Environment' link.



High and dry

Be an eco householder and reduce your energy bill with a back-to-basics way of drying clothes. Traditionally known as the Sheila Maid, the ceiling airer was common in homes during the Victorian era, and was used for drying laundry by utilising unused ceiling space. This retro item has been given a new lease of life, now branded the 'Housemate', so grab one today and start limiting your use of the tumble drier (which eats energy like nobody's business). You can also use your Housemate for hanging pots, shoes or storing towels. Priced £42.99 including p&p, the Housemate is made with sustainable and recycled materials where possible. Visit loveyourhousemates.com. Also, find more eco-friendly ideas at energysavingtrust.org.uk.



SEASON FOR LOVE

Feng shui specialist Kay Tom shows you how to attract more romance into your life

Winter is the season for log fires, casseroles, mulled wine, and bedding down for the winter. No wonder our thoughts turn to time spent cuddled up with a loved one. Although it's a time to hibernate, you need to make full use of your senses and keep energy flowing, if attracting romance is what you desire. Follow these feng shui cures to help improve your chances of finding a special someone with whom to share a kiss under the mistletoe!

- On a sunny day, refresh the energy of your house by opening all the windows and doors for 20 minutes, to move the old energy through.
- Illuminate your front door at night with a pair of lamps on either side, at a height above eye level.
- Make your entrance hall pleasant with fresh flowers and plants. Red or pink flowers are best for romance. Keep the hall clutter free.
- Put lamps or candles in the front windows to suggest the promise of the warmth within. Using soft lighting is always more romantic than stark, fluorescent bulbs.
- Light scented candles or incense sticks. Try Christmassy aromas such as cinnamon, frankincense, nutmeg and anything spicy. Home cooking and freshly brewed coffee are also stimulating smells.
- The northwest area of your home represents male energy, so make sure it is clutter free with no heavy pieces of furniture. If you have a special someone in mind, this is a good place to have his photo. If this area is a bathroom, paint it green or place some large stones around the base of the loo to prevent male energy draining away.



Master Kay Tom gained her masters degree with Grand Master Chan Kun Wah, one of the top feng shui masters of the world and a direct descendant of The Imperial Courts of China. For more information, visit her at theenergyspecialist.com