



# WONDERFUL WINTER Warmth

*As the mercury drops, cosy cocooned homes are oh, so inviting! Melanie Rosettenstein discovers the best ways to warm your home this winter.*

Here in Noosa, we are lucky not to have the bitterly cold, sub-zero winters our friends in the frozen south have to contend with. But it does get cold and our coastal homes aren't always designed for cooler temperatures.

One of the most effective ways to keep our homes warm and cosy while also reducing energy bills, is to ensure the appropriate window coverings.

Marilyn Black from Harlequin Blinds explains that naked windows without any coverings will make your house cold during winter.

"If there is nothing on a glass window, the room will be much colder because there is no barrier to keep the cooler outside air out," she says. "Uncovered windows allow the inside heat to escape when the day cools down and the glass stays cold until the sun warms it again in the morning.

"This makes a room - and a home

- much colder than it needs to be."

To avoid shivering in her house at night, Marilyn keeps her home warm and welcoming during the cooler months by closing her window coverings in the late afternoon.

"If I am home by 4pm in winter, I will close my window coverings to warm the home before the cooler air hits the glass and seeps into the house," she explains.

"Once the cold gets in, it takes a lot of energy to reheat the space."

She says that there was a wide variety of window coverings that could be used to keep your home cosy and warm.

From curtains and awnings to blinds and shutters, Harlequin Blinds has an extensive selection of window coverings that will not only warm up your home but can also be carefully selected to suit your decor.

Whether you're going for a classic look

with Venetian blinds; a clean, uncluttered look with roller blinds; or a more sumptuous layered look with some good quality curtains, Harlequin Blinds can custom-make your window coverings for your exact space.

"Adding just a basic roller blind will stop that cold air exchange and coolness permeating from the window," she said. "Curtains also block out the cold and add a depth that helps warm the room and keep it warm as the temperatures drop."

Harlequin Blinds will measure and install your blinds exactly according to the window opening, something that Marilyn says was very important.

"Fitting the blind perfectly into the opening creates a barrier between the cold air outside and the warm air inside," she said. "This barrier prevents the warm air from escaping through the glass - and the cold air coming in."

For optimal use, on sunny winter days,

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...window coverings keep our homes private and warm during winter, they look good, save energy and can keep bad luck away!

she suggests pulling up the blinds so that sunlight can be absorbed into the house.

Curtains are also very effective in keeping a room or house cosy and warm.

Not only do they stop the cold coming in from outside, but they also have a pleasing insulating effect. Plus there are some beautiful, thick fabrics that can add a luxurious, cocoon-like feeling.

"If they are good quality fabrics, and installed professionally, curtains can reduce up to 40% of heat loss when the cool night air arrives," she says, adding that shutters can also reduce the heat and cold coming in from outside by up to 50%.

While awnings typically appear on the outside of a house, retractable awnings can be adjusted to allow the sun to warm



up your home. Straight drop awnings and Zipscreen blinds are ideal for keeping an outdoor patio warm, especially at night time if you are entertaining.

"Overall, window coverings offer the most cost-effective way to warm your home," Marilyn says. "Whether cooling it down or heating it up, using them will keep your home warm and reduce your

energy costs at the same time."

The Chinese believe that a naked window brings bad luck. So, whether a curtain, shutter, or a blind, window coverings keep our homes private and warm during winter, they look good, save energy and can keep bad luck away!

Why wouldn't we cover our windows up when winter comes knocking?



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