

LIVE IT UP

Making It Personal

When it comes to the rooms we live in, mindful design choices can reveal a lot about us, says Moorea Seal, whose home decor book debuts this month

BY NIA MARTIN

IT WAS NO ACCIDENT that once Moorea Seal designed her Mountlake Terrace home, she filled the space with items that tell a lot about who she is. Best known for the rustic-chic curated collection of women's clothing items, accessories and home decor found in her shop, which is relocating this month from Belltown to downtown (1012 First Ave.; 206.728.2523; mooreaseal.com), she is also the author of the popular inspirational *52 Lists* series. In her latest book, *Make Yourself at Home* (Sasquatch Books, 2017, \$24.95), she ap-

plies her eye for design to the whole home.

Seal kicks off her book with an exploration of her living room. "The living room is the first space where people get to know you," she says. "It's very revealing and intimate while still being a very inviting space." Seal's design choices for that room represent this point of view. She incorporates global, ethically sourced handmade items: a round ottoman, a modern leather chair and a colorful mix of pillows all fit the bill. Then, there are the skulls.

A nod to nature and her family's South-west roots, animal skulls are prevalent in her living room and throughout other rooms in the home.

Seal also pulls nature into her home by incorporating plants. "Plants are the easiest way to bring life into your space," she says. There are many affordable options, says Seal, such as air plants and succulents (she includes varieties of cactus in the living room), and notes that plants are vibrant but neutral, therefore making them easier to decorate around.

Her choice of art is another way that Seal reveals herself. Because of limited



SIT BACK AND RELAX

Above: Moorea Seal lounges on the sofa with golden retriever, Lemon, surrounded by decor items that show her appreciation for nature, heritage and ethically made wares. **Left:** Seal's new book, *Make Yourself at Home*, offers personal insights on how to thoughtfully decorate several rooms within the home



DO YOUR OWN THING

Left to right: Seal carefully chose how to use her limited wall space in a meaningful way. The Andrew Bird poster by Frida Clements incorporates a special memory; making decor items, such as this essential oil diffuser, is one way to help personalize a space

wall space, she carefully selected pieces that reflect the history she and her husband share, such as the 1970s illustrated map of their hometown, Nevada City, California. Other meaningful housewares include a chest given to Seal by an elderly woman she used to care for, which she's repurposed as a coffee table, and an Oriental rug bestowed to Seal by her family; her father buys and sells them on eBay.

What you won't find in Seal's living room are screens (of the television, computer, and tablet variety). "I'm very stimulated by technology, but I also burn out on it," she says, referencing the role technology has in running her business and maintaining her social media presence. In her book, she lists suggestions for alternatives to electronic devices, such as keeping a stack of board games on hand, or investing in a record player and listening to music while crafting.

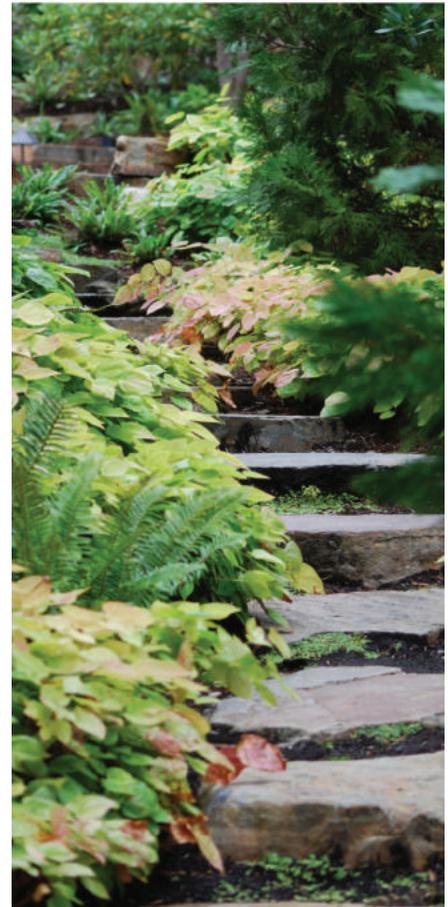
DIY housewares also personalize her space. One such piece is a ladder she crafted from copper pipe, which holds a collection of beautiful textiles. "There's such a different value to buying something versus spending time investing in [home decor]," says Seal, who wants readers to find ways to invest in their homes through their own personal history and experiences. "I don't want this to just be a book of

*Design Tips
by Moorea Seal*

- ▶ **IF YOU'RE STUCK** on how to start decorating a space, such as a living room, begin with large "clean bases" that you can build upon, such as Seal's sofa and cabinet (both from West Elm).
- ▶ **WITH LIMITED ROOM**, prioritize. If space is tight, make deliberate selections of pieces whose aesthetics speak to your history or interests.
- ▶ **USE WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE**, such as a book collection. Seal displays books that reflect her current state of mind; green and blue covers to reference nature with titles that contain more contemplative stories.
- ▶ **PUT A PART OF YOURSELF IN YOUR SPACE** with DIY projects; Seal suggests projects by room.
- ▶ **NOT SURE IF YOU'RE MORE BAUHAUS OR ART DECO?** Check out the chapter "At Home with Vintage Eras," which matches different period trends with moods (example: Art Nouveau = "formal, poised, complex").

pretty," she adds. "I want it to be a space where people can see the truth within a space; the struggles and triumphs within your home." **S**

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