

Light Up Your Life

by Merrillyn Fong

Interior lighting is often an afterthought, forgotten in the pursuit of the perfect dining-table or sofa. Here, Joe Chua of Lightcraft explains why this is a mistake.

"Lighting is not just important, it's critical," says Joe enthusiastically. "I'm serious," he reiterates when he sees my unconvinced expression, "and not just because I sell lights."

According to Joe, the selection of lighting elements and their placement in your home has a significant impact on décor and ambience. "Incorrect lighting can turn a beautifully designed space into a nightmare. Flat lighting, for example, will make your home feel like an office or clinic; it is not cosy and it's very unflattering," he says.

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Lighting style can even have an effect on the way you feel. "If the lights in your home are too bright, you can become nervous and highly strung," he warns. "Too much glare and your eyes will get tired, causing headaches."

Joe is particularly passionate about lighting technology. "I'm a trained engineer, so I am really fascinated with the latest gadgets and state-of-the-art technology," he says as his own face lights up. "I have products for people who want something different: such as fibre-optic lighting, which can create a starry-sky effect, and light-emitting diodes (LED) that change colour."

He is also happy to provide simple lighting options. "Many of our customers rent their homes, so they can't make structural changes – but this doesn't mean they can't create well-lit spaces," he explains. "In one case, our customer's overhead lighting outlet had been used for a fan, so we played with the bedside lighting and added a

standing lamp to create the right kind of atmosphere.

"Spotlights are another easy way to generate stunning effects. Making pools of light and areas of shadow by placing a spotlight in front of or behind a special item, such as an artefact, allows it to stand out," he says.

Joe is a refreshing change from the bored salesman who couldn't care less if you've decided to hang a chandelier from your eight-foot-high ceiling, as long as you're willing to pay for it. "There's so much you can do," he says. "Lighting can bring everything alive."

Lightcraft carries a range of decorative, architectural and commercial lights. Its main showroom and design team are located at 131 Jalan Sultan. There is also a showroom at #02-03 Park Mall. For more information, visit www.lightcraft.com.sg.

