



## living in house

Details make all the difference.

By Fiona Golfar and Kate O'Donnell

### TAKE NOTES

Smythson's violet hand-bordered notecards and tissue-lined envelopes are more stylish than predictable letterhead. £22 for a set of 10 (020 7629 8558).

### PLASTIC FANTASTIC

As if the perfect breakfast at E.A.T. in New York were not enough, now you can buy these funky plastic plates at E.A.T. Gifts next door and give a lift to the children's dinner. \$10 (00 1 212 772 0022).

### GLOVE AFFAIR

Accessorise your garden with these sprig-print gardening gloves. £2 for three pairs, at Woolworths (01706 862789).

### GRAPHIC DREAMS

Judy Ross' hand-embroidered geometric cushions are pure art on a pillow. Put them next to a stripy throw and enjoy the effect. £160 each, at Mint (020 7224 4406).

## rita says...

Make sure you're as safe as houses

- Firstly, if you can double lock, always make sure you do, because if you don't, it takes about two seconds for a thief with a silent drill to make a tiny hole in the door, push a screwdriver through and let themselves in.
- Boys are very keen on defending themselves by whipping their belts from around their waists. My particular favourite for self-defence is Luella's plaited ribbon belt. There is just something so fantastic about defeating a burglar with satin ribbons and beads.
- For a little more Scorsese-style action in the middle of the night, I would recommend keeping the electric hand-held whisk by your bed (plugged in).
- Terracotta flower pots on all the windowsills are an extremely simple, and rather gentler, way to deter the cat burglar. They are put off because the pots fall off and make a noise when they hit the ground.
- As a form of protection, grilles are much prettier than those diamond-shaped gates that go across windows. Go for bow-fronted ones so that you still have space for window boxes. And remember, you can paint them any colour you like. They don't have to be white or black. Maybe purple?
- After a party, when the place stinks of cigarettes, you should really leave all the windows open. In order to ward off any passing burglar who fancies his chances, I pull the blinds half-way down, leave a light on and have the radio playing, so it looks like everyone is still up. This only really works if you are on the first floor or above.
- Alternatively, if you are not keen on having weapons about the house, move next door to Peter Mandelson. He always lives in nice streets and brings a bevy of policemen with him. *Rita Konig*

ILLUSTRATION: LISELOTTE WATKINS, PAUL BOWDEN

**BEST-KEPT SECRET**  
"My best tip for housework is to find a good cleaner"  
LULU GUINNESS,  
ACCESSORIES DESIGNER