

COCOONING is the new year's first big interiors trend as the biggest freeze for 30 years drives us back under the duvet or back to the duvet after the struggle home.

That's a cue for down duvets, mohair throws, merino blankets, lambswool rugs and cuddly cushions. If you didn't get to work you can get on with creating the chic and cosy look by going internet shopping. When the deep-pile throws and warm colourful blankets are on the beds then turn up the ambience with lamps and firelight, wax candles and fragrant winter scents of cinnamon, ginger, orange and pine.

AU NATURELE

Snuggle up in the natural fibres nature designed. Wool throws or blankets may cost three times more than acrylic or polyester "but people will pay it for the warmth," says Jo Riley of Atlantic Blankets. "Our throws and blankets come from small family firms with traditional mills – they will be heirlooms." There is cashmere from Scotland at £430. Donegal tweed blankets from local sheep are £185. Alpaca comes from Devon llamas (£185) and Irish mohair (from £50) from goats. Call **Atlantic Blankets** on 0845 658 5194, or visit www.atlanticblankets.com.

Gingerlily's silk blankets, costing from £149, are light, soft and sumptuous yet cosy. They are a natural insulator. Call **Gingerlily** on 0870 116 1368, or visit www.gingerlily.co.uk.

DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Snow geese from the freezing heights of the Russian Altai mountain have yielded down for best-selling duvets at John Lewis – although a super king size costs a suitably cool £1,000. People are also buying knitted chunky mohair throws (£50), cableknit wool (£78) and cashmere (£225).

Call **John Lewis** on 0845 604 9049, or visit www.johnlewis.com.

Specialists the Austrian Bedding Company in NW6 is good value, with a super king-size duvet in best Polish down reduced to £335 in its sale. Call **Austrian Bedding Company** on 020 7372 3121, or visit www.austrianbedding.com.

Meanwhile, more than a quarter of a million American "Slankets" (a giant sleeve and blanket hybrid, 60in by 95in) have sold nationwide from internet sites such as www.prezzybox.com, www.firebox.com and www.lakeland.co.uk. They are like a back-to-front dressing gown and though you are swathed from the neck down, the sleeves leave hands free for eating, laptop use, phoning or remote control flicking. Price is about £30 and the fibre is polyester, however they are not the most glamorous of looks.

TAKE THE SMART ROUTE

London interior decorator Joanna Wood has a smarter take on London winter warmth. "Our Victorian and Edwardian period rooms are ideal for a cosy look."

Reflect light with mirrors opposite

MAKING YOUR HOME WARM AND COSY



Hamish the Dachshund will keep the draughts at bay (£103.50), from www.amara.co.uk (0800 587 7645)

DRAW ON DRAPES

One week is all it takes for **John Lewis Express** to make you a thick pair of curtains (from about £150 for a small window). Or ready-mades (at most good stores) are about half the price.

Add densely woven blackout lining to combat cold, says curtain expert Joanne Cassebois. Her *Prêt à Vivre* shop in Fulham has a stash of sale curtains ready to take away. Call **Prêt à Vivre** on 0845 130 5161, or visit www.pretavivre.com.

Or trawl the Chelsea curtain treasures of The Curtain Exchange, with second-hand designer drapes, all inter-lined. Be sure to bring your track measurement and desired "drop". Call **The Curtain Exchange** on 020 7731 8316, or visit www.thecurtainexchange.co.uk.

CLEVER ECO IDEAS

Winter brainwaves include Thermilate, an insulating powder to add to emulsion paint. It roughens (and may lighten) the surface slightly, and costs £15.80 for five litres. Call **Doctor Energy** on 0844 778 0074, or visit www.doctorenergy.co.uk, and for *Homes & Property* readers, add code HP to your order for a 15 per cent discount on energy-savers.

From Nigel's Eco Store comes the Chimney Pillow (£18.99), which inflates to block draughts. And the Radiator Booster, a small fan that re-circulates the hot air into the room (£19.99). For the same price an Ecoflap fits over your letter box.

Call **Nigel's Eco Store** on 0800 288 8970, or visit www.nigelsecostore.com.

