

Spring/Summer 2024

AED10

Better living.

The magazine of Betterhomes

How to master
Parisian
chic

STYLING TIPS

Dress a
coffee table
to impress

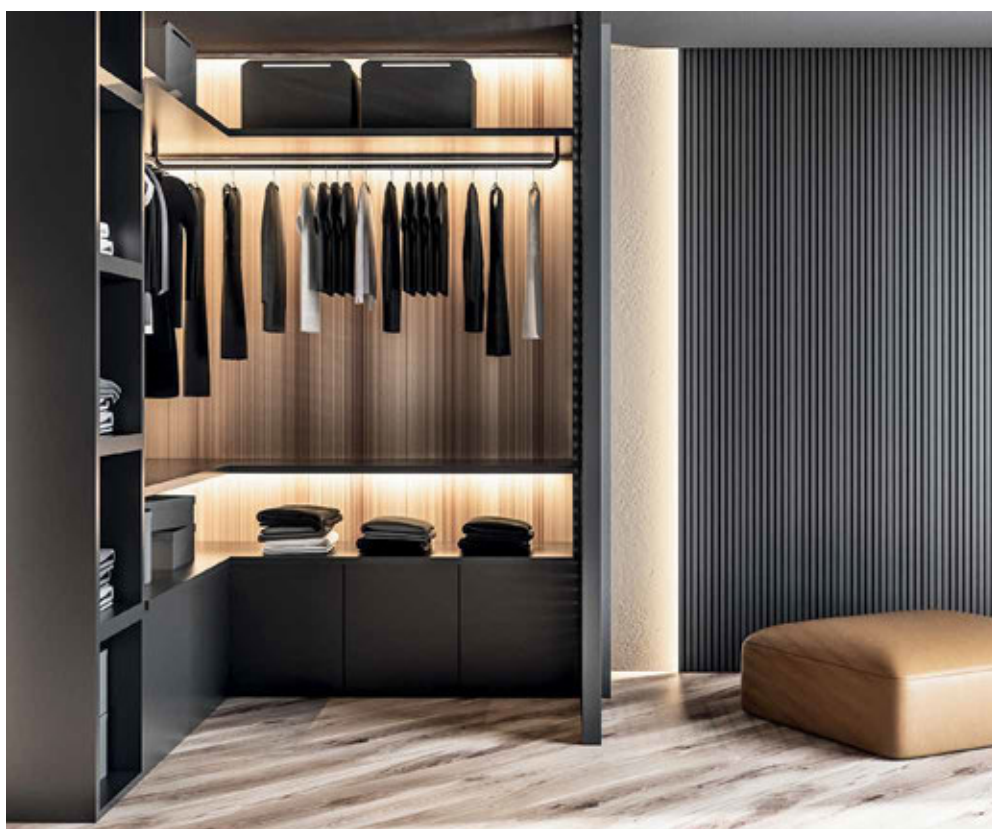
INSPIRATION

Step up your
storage

10 trends to
refresh your
kitchen and
bathroom

View from the top

Join Designsmith's Mihir Sanganee and discover a duplex
penthouse that straddles old and new Dubai





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Smart Renovation Dubai



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Welcome to the issue

We're springing into the next few months with even more 'through the keyhole' tours of Dubai's most stylish homes with four unique makeovers to draw inspiration from, plus a new Masterclass section of the magazine with insider tips and ideas from a top UAE interior design expert (page 7). We all know that house buying decisions are made based on the bathroom and kitchen, and we've cherry picked 10 global interiors trends that could sway the stay or sell pendulum if moving is also on your mind (page 16). If decluttering has been lingering on the to-do list, flip to page 22 for a step-by-step plan on how to get started, as well as some great storage ideas. In this issue we meet the team behind a stunning duplex penthouse renovation with views over old and new Dubai (page 28) and check out a vibrant multicultural villa in The Meadows (page 42). Happy reading!

Visit us at blivinguae.com and follow us on Instagram at [@blivinguae](https://www.instagram.com/blivinguae)

CONTENTS

MASTERCLASS 7-14

Explore our new masterclass section and learn how to master Parisian chic, get tips on styling your coffee table, and more.

TRENDS 16-25

Check out the latest global kitchen and bathroom trends, and sort your life out with decluttering and smart storage solutions.

HOMES 28-57

View a one-of-a-kind Japandi minimalist villa and enjoy a unique perspective of old and new Dubai from a Zabeel duplex penthouse.

PROPERTY 58-65

Our agents pick their top properties this season. Plus, Rick Waind, Group Managing Director for Betterhomes shares Dubai's current market outlook.

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Masterclass

We've teamed up with industry expert Anam Clarke, founder of The Designers' Studio (@thedesignedstudiouae) for a new section packed with tips, advice and insider information to make you the master of your home



STYLING TIPS

Replace coffee mugs and the TV remote for a front cover-worthy coffee table

ROOM RECIPE

Easy style updates to transform your living room without breaking the bank

HOW TO MASTER

Add some French design flair to your home with a tutorial in Parisian chic

ASK THE EXPERT

Tips and tricks to create the perfectly proportioned room, whatever the size

LITTLE BLACK BOOK

Anam's go-to suppliers for all things material, from sheers and natural fabrics to opulent upholstery

Styling Tips

Table Talk

Dress your coffee table to impress

Add something living for a burst of natural colour and vibrancy

Draw the eye line upwards with something tall

Create a conversation piece with a quirky object

Soften the mood with a beautiful candle

Stack some favourite books to lend height

Use a tray to define zone to hold smaller objects

Room Recipe

Refresh Your Living Space

Four ways to give your living or family room an easy style makeover without breaking the bank



Image credits: anniesloan.com; wallsauce.com; 2XLhome.com

BRUSH STROKES

Cabinets and sideboards can easily be revamped with a creative coat of paint. A DIY job for the weekend, get hands on and upgrade your favourite piece for a bold colour statement or subtle visual impact. For a no mess, no fuss option, chalk paint is the way to go with no need to sand and prime.

Check out: Annie Sloan Chalk Paint, available at artistique-dubai.co; House of Colour, official distributor for Mylands paints, mylandspaints.ae

WALL ART

Gone are the days of boring wall-to-wall patterns. Today's wallpaper designers have transformed the genre to bring in texture and designs that deliver an immediate wow factor.

Introduce wallpaper as colourful supporting feature or treat it like art to create a striking focal point with a mural that immediately draws the eye.

Check out: wallshoppe.com for removable wallpaper panels; stunning mural designs from wallsauce.com

LIGHT IT UP

The importance of carefully designed and sited lighting cannot be underestimated, and switching out existing lamps, pendants and ceiling lights will instantly transform the ambience. Add chandeliers for a sense of grandeur, thoughtfully placed floor lamps to create mood, and even battery powered picture lights.

Check out: the wall lamps and chandeliers at 2XL Home, 2xlhome.com; Ebarza's range of contemporary pendants, ebarza.com

FLOOR TALK

An easy quick fix to hide old-fashioned or damaged tiles is to introduce vinyl flooring. This isn't the ugly linoleum of the Fifties, as today's brands offer high-quality wood or tile-effect designs and finishes.

Installation and removal is also painless thanks to a click system, which means your floor moves with you.

Check out: floorworld.com for the latest vinyl click floor tile designs; and LVT flooring solutions from nordichometworx.com



How To Master Parisian Chic

WHAT IS IT?

The roots of what we now classify as Parisian interior design lie in 19th-century Haussmann architectural style, named after Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann who was tasked to modernise the city at the behest of Napoleon III. This new style featured apartments with wooden herringbone patterned floors, wood moulding, and ornate fireplaces, setting a new gold standard for Parisian interior design.

ABOUT THE STYLE

Elegance and luxury in muted natural tones set the scene for a 21st-century interpretation, which plays on the juxtaposition of classic antique and vintage pieces with contemporary furniture accents to add elevated character. Timeless rather than merely trendy, the inclusion of high-quality pieces adds longevity to this style and reflects an intentionally *laissez-faire* design approach that's all about showcasing the finest elements of

classicism with a refined twist.

HOW TO NAIL IT

Timeless palette. Think neutral colours dominated by soft, muted hues such as ivory, beige and light greys with just a hint of colour to bring balance. The Parisian colour palette includes chalky whites, soft neutrals, pastel blues, greens, muted powder pinks, and reds.

Old meets new. A key design element is the mismatch of antique and modern furniture. Achieving a truly Parisian space is about the right mix of rough and refined. Don't stick to one style but aim for a more lived-in, eclectic approach that feels assembled over time.

Decorative walls. Wall mouldings are a pillar of the Parisian style. If renting, opt for wallpaper with moulding designs, foam moulding or have a go at painting it on yourself. Bold art pieces are also a must, so dare to create that wow factor by hanging large abstract

artworks, impactful photography or illustrations.

Underfoot intentions. Flooring is also key with the use of reclaimed French oak herringbone or chevron patterns, repurposed planks and Versailles panels all hitting the mark. Complement wood finishes with oversized natural fibre rugs and faded flat-weave design wool or silk Aubusson and Persian rugs for colour, texture, and softness.

Illuminating settings. Dial up the Parisian in your lighting choices with large antique chandeliers, table candelabras and wall sconces to accentuate the decorative ceilings, mouldings and unique architectural details. As a finishing note, fresh flowers or plants add a burst of colour and life to any space.

Clockwise from top: Bouclé sofa arm chair, homecode.com; Midas bust vase, sweetpeaandwillow.com; Izzy mirror, woodculture.ae; Natalia Sandy carpet, carpetcentre.com; Violet travertine coffee table, bloomr.ae; Moulding wallpaper collection, la-belle-maison.shop

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Ramadan.



SCAN TO VIEW
CATALOGUE



DANUBE HOME

DESTINATION FOR HOME

Ask The Expert

Perfectly Proportioned Rooms

From box bedrooms to grand reception rooms, designing small and large spaces to look bigger or cosier can be a challenge. Check out our tips and ideas to create the perfectly proportioned room

What tips and tricks can make a small space or compact room appear larger?

Small can still be beautiful if thought and effort are put into working around space restrictions. Even if you live in a studio apartment, you can absolutely make it work for you. The obvious go-to is to maximise natural light where possible. For example, instead of using heavy curtains opt for soft sheers or – if the privacy aspect permits – leave the windows completely unadorned. This works especially well in living rooms. When considering colour palette, choose lighter shades for furnishings, fabrics and paint as darker colours tend to shrink as opposed to open up the space. It is critical to plan the flow of space in a small room in order to avoid clutter, which can also impact the overall liveability and make the space feel cramped. This includes selecting furniture that fits the room size and layout. Large pieces or too many pieces of furniture will make the room instantly appear smaller than it is. Finally, the use of mirrors with their reflective properties, is a fabulous way to create the illusion of space and maximise existing light.

What are the design considerations when working with a large space?

A large room may sound like a dream blank canvas, but it can be equally challenging to create the right ambience and flow. A frequent mistake is to place furniture pieces against the wall; instead 'zone out' spaces in the room to create intimate areas and settings. And in the same way that small rooms need furniture at scale, bigger spaces are synonymous with larger pieces so that everything is in proportion. Large area rugs are your best friend in a big space as they help delineate the zoning as well as add warmth. Curtains and drapery are essential as window dressing also fosters a sense of warmth and cosiness, plus an added textural element to offset plain walls. When it comes to decorating your walls, mirrors are a great space filler while large art pieces create visual impact – and a great talking point when guests visit. Lighting is often overlooked but is incredibly important. The idea of layering lighting is integral to ambience and the use of table and floor lamps for low-level atmospheric lighting is again all about





infusing the room with a cosy feel. Colour-wise, here what I always tell clients is don't be afraid to play with patterns and colour.

What role does room zoning play in creating the perfect home?

Zoning is a clever way to give different areas of your home their own distinct identity. The first step, before rearranging furniture or choosing colour palettes, is to define the purpose of the room. Is it a cosy family living space, a productive home office, or a serene bedroom? Knowing its primary function is critical in guiding the entire design process. Once you've decided on room functionality you then divide the space into specific functional zones. In the living room, for example, you might have a seating area, an entertainment centre and a reading nook. The art of zoning also means that you can make the space feel intimate and comfortable by creating one or multiple focal points within the space and clearly outlined areas to focus on. Within each zone you can create a flow and connect how people move between them. This purposeful segmentation ensures that individual areas serve their purpose efficiently and make them enjoyable places and spaces to relax, work, study and play. Zones are ultimately built around people and this starts from when you enter the home to where you choose to eat, to where you sleep. Get it right and you create the perfect space for every individual.



Image credits: Perfect Proportions

Little Black Book

Finding Fabric

Anam's top shopping picks for all things textile



Choosing fabrics for your home is exciting, with a world of colour, texture and pattern adding instant ambience, warmth and personalisation. Before you shop, give some thought to where and how the fabric will be used. You don't want an expensive raw silk cushion cover to be chewed by the dog, for example. Care and cleaning should also be factored into your final decision. Your interior designer will be able to guide you in the right direction as well as the fabric experts at the stores listed below. And always remember the 3 Ds: design, durability and (dry) cleaning!

Al Guthmi

Online store known for its fabulous upholstery fabrics, and more, with over 5,000 designs to choose from. Next day shipping is a bonus.
alguthmionline.com

York Furnishing

A treasure trove of fabric and accessories staffed by a friendly, knowledgeable team. Also retails outdoor solutions and wall coverings.
Dubai Textile City 04 364 9675, astyork.com

Al Reyami Fabrics

A staple on the fabrics scene for 30 years, check out Al Reyami for its supple leathers, high-quality synthetic leather, velvet collection, and more.
Al Quoz, Dubai, 04 346 9424

Hussain Textiles

This is the place to head to online for quality bed linens (as seen in hotels across the UAE).
hussaintextiles.com

D3 Dynamic Designs Décor

You'll find curtains, upholstery and

outdoor fabrics in every colour and material imaginable from this online Indian store. d3dynamic.com

Ultra Fabrics

From timeless drapery designs to contemporary upholstery collections, this is the home of ultra high-quality fabrics. *Dubai Textile City, 04 426 7572, ultrafabrics.ae*

Design Library

Exclusive agent for luxury British interiors brands Clarke & Clarke, Harlequin, Morris & Co, Sanderson, Scion and Zoffany.
Business Bay, Dubai, 04 361 9766, designlibraryme.com

Dubai Textile Souk

Small local vendors offering a rainbow of fabrics and fripperies. *Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood, Bur Dubai*



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Trends

Room For Improvement

Take a fresh look at the hardest working rooms in the house with 10 trending design ideas for kitchen and bathroom



SMART TECH INTEGRATION

For anyone who loves the latest gadgets, smart technology integration is taking over the kitchen, from interactive appliances and voice-controlled functionality to connected devices that can get the dinner started while you're on the way home. "Integrating smart appliances doesn't only revolutionise the way you cook, but more so the way you interact with your space. These appliances offer convenience, efficiency, and advanced functionality, streamlining kitchen tasks and offering a more connected cooking experience," says Sara Aji, Senior Designer at Al Meera Kitchens. Automated temperature monitoring as well as smart displays that track expiry dates and even help with your grocery list, are among the key benefits. Cleaning up is a breeze with apps that allow you to remotely control your smart dishwasher while Alexa-enabled devices mean you can get things done without even having to press a button.



STATEMENT SPLASHBACKS

Kitchen splashbacks are having a moment – again – and it's all about injecting your personality. Bold colours, intricate tile designs, or the use of unusual materials, are equally on show. Earthy tones and nature-inspired organic textures are a popular option, according to Amrin Khatoon, Senior Designer, Häcker Kitchens: "Biophilia in interior design is becoming more important with each passing year. For 2024 the trend is more nuanced and translates into earthy tones across all elements of the kitchen and the inclusion of textured stone in countertops and backsplashes."

ECO DESIGN ELEMENTS

The trend towards eco-friendly kitchen design reflects growing consumer environmental awareness with a surge of interest in sustainable materials. This is spilling over into demand for energy-efficient appliances, water-saving fixtures, and recycling and composting system integration. Consumers are also looking at the eco credentials of brands. "As a primary consumer of natural wood materials, the kitchen industry needs to become more active in the preservation of the environment. Häcker is a fully carbon neutral brand, and we participate in annual reforestation programs to offset our environmental impact," notes Khatoon.

MUTED LUXURY

The muted luxury trend is still gaining momentum and centres on high-quality craftsmanship and a subtle colour palette elevated with luxe elements that quietly convey an upscale aesthetic. Says Aji: "This is understated luxury, with simplicity and attention to detail key. Neutral colours such as muted greys and earth tones create warmth; and finishes like matte or brushed metals add a touch of elegance without being showy." At Häcker, a resurgence of interest in kitchen door colours such as taupe and cashmere is highlighted.

KITCHEN ISLANDS REIMAGINED

The social centrepiece for many kitchens, islands are evolving with the times. Practicality is one aspect with space for storage a trending theme, along with new seating styles. "This fusion of functionality and style is seeing islands reimagined as multifunctional settings with features such as banquette seating, split-level design, out-of-sight storage and space to tuck in appliances," remarks Al Meera's Aji. "With the rise in popularity of open-plan kitchens, we've seen an increase in demand for integrated dining tables with kitchen islands. These can be at the traditional bar stool height or lowered to create a dual height island with seating that better suits younger children and older family members," adds Khatoon.



Al Meera Kitchens



Al Meera Kitchens



RAK Ceramics

NEXT LEVEL SPATHROOMS

A room devoted to rituals, it was only a matter of time before the bathroom morphed into a full wellness destination: enter the 'spathroom'. The beauty of the spathroom is its flexibility. If space permits, centre the room around an oversized freestanding bathtub for a fully immersive soak; add a mini sauna; or upgrade with an experience shower that combines water, sound and colour or the latest must-have – steam. With ice baths all the range, an unloved corner could be transformed into a place for post workout relief. Aesthetically, think hotel spa vibes with sleek lines and classy marble finishes, textural use of stone or wood, restrained mosaic tiling, and a calming natural palette. An abundance of extra fluffy (neutral) towels and warm white lighting are softening finishing touches.

TRANSFORMATIVE LIGHTING

Bathroom lighting is often more functional than feature driven so change it up and make a style statement all your own. While brighter lighting is a must for personal grooming moments, set the mood for other bathroom visits with transformative lighting ideas. A chandelier exudes glamour and is guaranteed to turn heads (place it over the bath for instant oomph), while grouped pendants can reflect your

chosen colour palette and add overall design cohesion. Make an asymmetric mirror stand out even more with LED lighting all around to draw the eye. And, building on the wellness trend, biodynamic lighting mimics the cadence of natural light, adjusting throughout the day in tune with our own circadian rhythms.

CIRCULAR DESIGN

A thoughtful approach to bathroom design increasingly includes sustainability considerations. This can be as simple as cradle-to-cradle sourcing of your next bathroom suite with various brands making a 100% recyclable commitment for steel enamel and sanitary ceramic products through end-of-life return practices. Circular design also taps into second-hand and vintage opportunity. Repurpose an antique dresser as a vanity; give a vintage distressed mirror pride of place; add a kilim rug; or upcycle a discarded chair or medicine cabinet to complement the aesthetic.

INSPIRED BY NATURE

Colour palettes and materials that take their cues from the natural world are being applied with full effect to imbue warmth and a sense of familiar comfort in what is a traditionally practical space. "The bathroom is no longer





Cosentino



Cosentino

just a functional room. It has become a space of wellbeing and comfort. Earth tones for cladding enhance this experience by adding warmth and bringing a touch of nature indoors. Pair it up with wood and bronze accents and you have a serene sanctuary to unwind in,” advises Marta Barragan from Cosentino Middle East. Wood, ceramics, stone and marble inspired designs that focus on the innate beauty of natural materials also add visual texture and, when paired with earthy colours, can evoke happy memories of places and experiences. “We see a mystical trend in interior architecture today; one that, in its various forms, has become synonymous with harmony with nature. Light, air, neutral shades and natural finishes are some of the recurring elements and are designed to encourage contemplation with the surrounding landscape,” says Leonardo de Muro, Corporate Vice President, RAK Ceramics.

WALLPAPER YOUR WAY

Play by your own design rules is de Muro’s gambit, and wallpaper is a fantastic tool to add individuality, as he explains: “Bathrooms are the perfect place to go a bit over the top and showcase your personality by using wallpaper as your hero piece. There is so much fabulous paper in the marketplace that there’s truly something for everyone, from small, classic prints, exotic toiles and florals, to mural-like papers.” Bring the outdoors in with vibrant large-scale botanical prints dressed with real plants for a verdant contrast, or inject some trending peach and coral-based patterns to uplift a cookie cutter space. Alternatively, meet somewhere in the middle and go with bold prints in muted tones to avoid overwhelming the overall design.



RAK Ceramics



Q&A Expert Eye

Fallen in love with a current interiors trend? Marco and Cinzia from Smart Renovation explain why timeless design is the way to go

Why is choosing to adopt a current hot interior design trend not recommended?

The latest trends are often the ones seen on social media, in coffee shops, or restaurants, which, by definition, means they frequently change or are updated. Copy and pasting designs that you see on Pinterest or elsewhere can result in a house that is lacking your personalised touch, and a soul. If you see a design that you like and connect to, try to adapt it to reflect your unique personality and lifestyle.

Aren't all trends simply reiterations of past styles?

It's not as simple as that. Trends are cyclical in nature with elements from past styles being reinterpreted and adapted for modern tastes and reflecting new technologies but, overall, interior design trends are a mix of old and new. While they draw inspiration from the

past, they are not simply reiterations. They evolve and adapt to fit the needs and preferences of modern living.

What is your definition of timeless design?

Speaking from a client's point of view, a timeless design is one you never get tired of. It should reflect your soul and be something you work on together with your designer rather than copy from somewhere. Customise as many elements as you can because, at the end of the day, the redesigned house should feel like a home.

How can you adapt a trend to make it timeless?

First you need to form a timeless and classic skeleton for your house with the layout, furniture and flooring based on functionality and personality. Then see what draws you to a particular trend and incorporate the elements

you truly connect with in the design; adding trendy touches with accessories such as pillows, wallpaper, rugs, lights, etc. Make sure to incorporate pieces that have personal meaning such as artwork, furniture or family heirlooms.

If you have a space that is outdated, how can you refresh it without a complete renovation?

Small changes can make a big difference. If you feel like your house doesn't need a complete makeover but still want to update the style, you can always give it a fresh coat of paint, update hardware like knobs and lights, customise a bespoke cabinet, refresh rugs and pillows, rearrange furniture, reupholster old pieces, declutter and organise the rooms. New plants always add a fresh touch.

For more information, go to smartrenovation.ae



Crafting Emotional Connections

MHY Homes Staging sets the scene for buyers and sellers in Dubai's booming real estate market



Understanding the significant role emotions play in people's decisions, especially when it comes to investing in a home, MHY Homes Staging specialises in crafting spaces that deeply resonate with buyers.

The company takes an innovative approach to presenting homes, bringing something new and exciting to the local real estate market and turning ordinary properties into dream residences for sale.

"Purchasing a home is more than just a transaction, it's a deeply personal choice fuelled by dreams, ambitions, and emotions," says Israa Mirjan, Founder and CEO. Her expert team fully comprehends the profound emotional connection that shapes the home-buying journey, as she explains: "Our mission at MHY Homes Staging is to tap into these emotions, designing spaces that captivate buyers and enable them to envision their ideal lifestyle within the confines of the property."

In today's fiercely competitive real estate market, where buyers can be overwhelmed when seeking their perfect abode, the significance of staging cannot be emphasised enough. Recent studies indicate that staged homes tend to sell faster compared to their unstaged counterparts. MHY Homes Staging is dedicated to providing real estate agents and homeowners with a competitive advantage by transforming listings into irresistible showcases that stand out in the market.

"Our objective is to enhance the selling experience for both homeowners and real estate professionals," Mirjan emphasises. "By metamorphosing properties into dream homes, we not only expedite the sales process but also unlock the true value of each property."

With its groundbreaking approach to home staging and steadfast commitment to excellence, the company is on a mission to set new benchmarks in the Dubai real estate landscape. Whether clients aim to expedite the sale of their property or enhance its market appeal, MHY Homes Staging offers the expertise and ingenuity necessary to achieve remarkable outcomes.

For more information, go to mhyhomes.com or contact the team on 054 709 2917, info@mhyhomes.com

Seasonal Feature

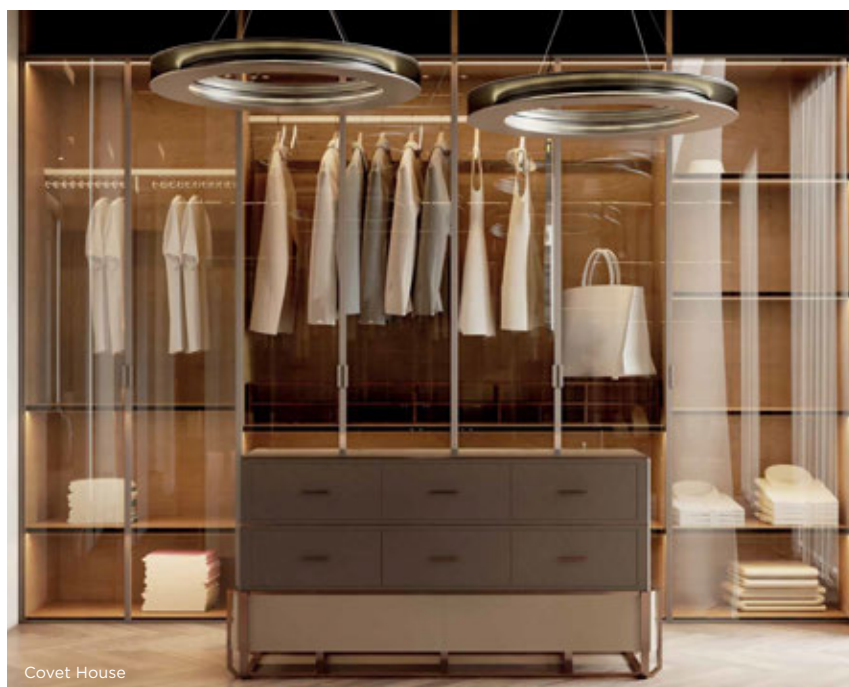
Sort Your Life Out

Are your closets overflowing, kitchen cabinets groaning and kids toy boxes bulging? It's time to clear the clutter and step up your storage game



It may be at the top of your to-do list but the thought of spring cleaning our home and getting on top of storage woes can be a daunting task. Professional home organisers point out that as well as making our lives easier and everyday possessions

accessible, getting cupboards, drawers and bookshelves shipshape also reduces stress-induced illness, encourages healthy habits, makes us more productive, and could even boost social interaction by eliminating messy house shame.



Declutter 101

Before you invest in swanky new storage solutions, Shelina Jokhiya, Founder of DeCluttr Me (@decluttrme) tackles the thorny issue of decluttering.

To get the ball rolling she suggests doing a mini declutter. “You’ll never start if you’re feeling overwhelmed. It’s not about decluttering the whole house in a day, so don’t take on everything at once. Instead, break up what seems like a mammoth task into smaller achievable goals,” she says.

Shelina suggests putting aside 20–30 minutes regularly to tackle a specific space or area in a room, starting with the one that stresses you out the most. “Then, crank up your favourite tunes or listen to a podcast and get into some comfy loungewear to keep you motivated.”

Once you have decluttered the area, categorise items to be kept into similar categories.

Kids’ rooms

Get the kids involved and encourage them to get rid of toys that are broken, or they no longer play with (and donate them). If you treat it like a fun game that is also benefiting others, they’ll be more enthusiastic about it.

Categorise the kept toys into groups like Lego, dolls, dinosaurs, cars and action figures, then put them into boxes with the help of your little ones. Label the boxes using

fun pictures for easy identification and to (hopefully) encourage them to put them back afterwards.

Junk drawers and storerooms

We all have a drawer where we dump things we don’t quite know what to do with. Do a mini declutter then put items in small box organisers so you can easily see what’s what. Remove items that shouldn’t be there to store in the correct place.

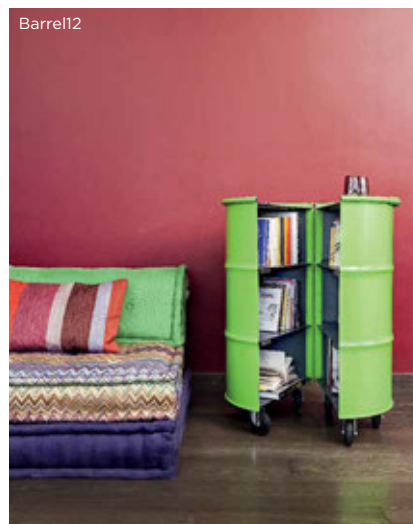
Storerooms need a little more effort, so dedicate a few hours to decluttering. Focus only on the items you don’t need such as empty boxes, bags, unused and broken items. Then spend another day organising everything else into categories.

Sentimental stuff

This is a tough one! Think about why you are holding onto things and address any emotional issues that are preventing you from getting rid of them. For items like baby clothes, take pictures so you still have a keepsake, then donate them. The same with children’s artwork – snap a picture then discard.

For cards and letters, review them every so often. Remove the ones from people you no longer connect with and keep the ones you want in a memory box. For everything else, do a mini declutter.

Barrel12



Heavenly Homes and Gardens



Tidy Books



SHELINA'S STORAGE HACKS

Closet organisers. Use material boxes in closets where you don’t have enough shelf space to keep items visible and organised.

Velvet hangers. They take up less room, are light and keep the shape in your clothes.

Heavy duty shelving/ weatherproof boxes. Great for storerooms and garages and where your seasonal decorations, sports equipment and tools can be neatly squirreled away.

Cable boxes. Tuck away unsightly wires and cabling for good.





Storage made simple

Decluttering done, the next step is to sit down and think about the solutions you need to suit your home and lifestyle. Luiza Jodziewicz, Regional Interior Design Lead for IKEA, shares tips and ideas for smart storage.

Storage is needed in every corner of the home from perishable foods to bathroom toiletries, garden furniture, keys and mobile phones. “These all have different storage needs, so find the right kind of storage for the right item at the right time and in the right place,” she notes.

Luiza recommends adapting solutions to specific items and the people living in your home. For example should it be open or closed? Solid doors, glass doors or drawers? High or low, and deep or shallow? “Often, a combination of different types of storage is required to solve as many needs as possible and to create solutions that are functional and appealing to each of us.”

Small storage

Interior fittings make great wardrobe, drawer and cabinet space savers, with ease of access a bonus.

Pull-out drawers are also easy access and ideal for heavy items stored in deep cabinets or closets as they have a handle to grasp.

Hang-on rails provide extra storage for lighter objects and can be placed inside a closet or over a door.

Multifunctional storage

Multi-functional solutions like a coffee table with storage underneath are handy for tucking away small things you use frequently.

Turn storage units into tables. For example, a storage unit on castors can be used as a bedside table.

Picture rails as shelves are great for displaying favourite items such as cookbooks and plants.

Soft storage

Soft-sided boxes and reinforced zipper bags with handles are perfect for storing seasonal clothing like ski gear.

A clear textile or plastic organiser instantly lets you see what's inside, making things easy to find.

Small, soft sided compartmentalised storage boxes let you sort your socks, lingerie, jewellery, and more; ensuring your drawers won't get out of control.

KITCHEN Q&A

With Mahsa Rastegar,
Kitchen Designer at Kaiser

What's important when planning kitchen storage?

First of all, make an audit of what you need to store. It's a step many people forget about. Then map out the storage zones you need and communicate with your kitchen designer who will advise you on the best internal storage mechanisms for each area. Examples of zones could be: crockery, cooking equipment, spice storage, cooking agents, etc.

Which space-maximising options work best?

Anything that maximises corners is a must in kitchen design. This could be a carousel, Kaiser's LeMans pull-out, or a magic corner to ensure you don't lose a centimetre of space in what used to be a hard-to-reach corner.”

What is currently trending?

“One of the most popular additions is what's casually known as an ‘appliance garage’. Tabletop appliances are one of the main sources of clutter in a kitchen, so plan for adapted cabinetry that includes sockets so you can easily store them out of sight when not being used. These cabinets generally come with standard doors, roller shutters, or bi-fold doors.”



Kitchen Design 360

Linda Daoud, designer at premium German kitchen brand Kaiser explains why it's in your best interest to appoint a specialised kitchen studio to design and manufacture the heart of your home

Trust the Specialist

A home renovation is a symphony of countless parts. While sometimes there's harmony, many times it is utter cacophony. A strong contractor plays an essential role in tying the project together but, when it comes to kitchen renovation, appointing a specialised kitchen studio to work alongside them is always the recommended route to ensuring you get the best results.

Experience is Essential

"The kitchen is the highest traffic area and the most complex room in the entire house," says Daoud. "There is little room for error when it comes to designing, manufacturing and installing this space." The kitchen design process is complicated, but it can be made easier by an experienced designer who creates new spaces every day. From understanding a family's lifestyle to planning the perfect storage solutions, a specialised kitchen designer will ask questions and bring up topics that many people wouldn't think of, to ensure

that the new space fits perfectly into your home – and life – and improves day-to-day functionality.

Unmatched Quality

While ordering a kitchen from a European brand may mean slightly longer lead times, the difference in quality is worth the wait. Germany in particular is renowned in the kitchen manufacturing industry. Using high grade-materials, precision engineering, and the latest technology, German kitchens are high-quality and guaranteed to last.

"Many people underestimate how important the quality of all the kitchen components is. At Kaiser, our cabinetry is 'tropicalised', which means it has been treated to survive in hot and humid climates. This treatment stops wood from swelling or warping in the UAE's temperatures," says Daoud.

Installation Mastery

Installation experience is also key when it comes to ensuring a successful kitchen renovation. Kitchen studios



have refined the art of installation due to the high number of projects installed each year. "With over 100 installations a year, our technicians are true masters. Kaiser kitchens are also 'rigid kitchens', which means they arrive already assembled from Germany as opposed to flatpacked versions, which need to be fully assembled on site. Receiving the kitchens pre-assembled from the factory

further minimises the possibility of installation error,” explains Daoud.

Timeless Design

A kitchen is an investment that should last anywhere from 10 to 20 years, and thus timelessness in design is a key consideration. While a kitchen designer keeps a keen eye on market trends, their experience helps steer clients in a direction that will deliver an evergreen design.

Says Daoud: “We see a lot of Pinterest trends in our line of work, and while some of them work very well, others will look dated within a few years. Because of our experience, we can separate the two quite easily and redirect the client to a similar look that will stand the test of time.”

Ergonomics

The workflow of a kitchen is the most important consideration, and a poorly planned kitchen can become a nightmare. While a general contractor may be able to create a layout that looks good, opting for a kitchen specialist guarantees a customised design that maximises functionality and aesthetics. With expertise in layouts, cabinetry, appliances, and storage solutions, a kitchen designer creates tailored spaces perfectly suited for modern life and, more specifically, for your life.

Prioritising Safety

As with any wood products, formaldehyde emissions are a concern when it comes to kitchen design. Formaldehyde is a colourless, odourless gas that can cause irritation or lead to more serious illnesses if there is long term exposure. As the kitchen is the room where your family spends so much time, understanding the safety standards that your kitchen manufacturer abides by is incredibly important.

“At Kaiser, we go beyond standard European requirements, and our products are CARB II compliant, which is among the most rigorous emission regulations in the world,” shares Daoud.

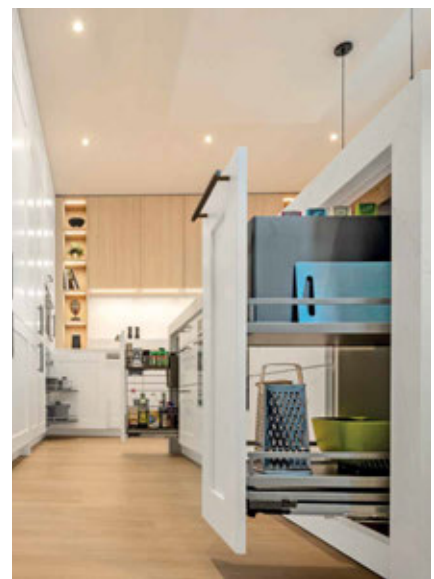
Seamless Experience

While it may seem more straightforward to hire a single



general contractor to carry out a full home renovation, it can actually prove less stressful to assign specialists to key areas, as Daoud explains: “Clients regularly tell us that while their entire renovation was a nightmare, the kitchen installation with Kaiser was a breath of fresh air. I attribute this to our dedicated installation management team who keep the client informed every step of the way and ensure that the project goes smoothly.”

A kitchen renovation is one of the highest value changes you can make for your home, and choosing a branded kitchen from a specialised provider will ensure this investment is worthwhile and enjoyable.



Kaiser German Kitchens has a team of experts ready to help you design, manufacture, and install your dream kitchen. Head to kaiser.ae to book a consultation or visit our Barsha 1 showroom on Sheikh Zayed Road.

High Flying Design

Straddling old and new Dubai, we explore a duplex penthouse in Zabeel

LIVING ROOM

Designed with formal entertaining in mind, the expansive double-height space offers panoramic city views and intriguing art pieces. Living and dining areas are delineated by a statement open-style dark wood room divider and united by a muted colour palette embellished with pops of grey, red and subtle gold accents.



“

The area has a special place in our hearts; and the views from here encompass both old and new Dubai

”

HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

Mustafa Firoz, MD, My Perfumes lives here with his wife, their two daughters, 16 and 12, and toddler son.

THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom duplex penthouse in Zabeel

Handed over as shell and core, Mihir Sanganeer from Designsmith already had a strong relationship with his client having worked together on a number of commercial projects; and also had a good understanding of Mustafa's personal style.

"I travel extensively and wanted to be able to come home somewhere relaxing and peaceful but also modern, functional and suitable for entertaining," says Mustafa, who is an active member of Dubai's Dawoodi Bohra community. "It was also important that we developed spaces around the kids' needs," adds Mihir (@designsmith_studio).

The location, with dual perspectives over Zabeel Park and Dubai Frame in one direction and DIFC in the other, was a nostalgic bonus, as Mustafa explains: "We were brought up on this side of the city, so the area has a special place in our hearts; and the views from here encompass both old and new Dubai."

Occupying the top two floors of the 28-storey residences, and with floor-to-ceiling windows in the upper floor living and dining space, the play of natural light was an anchor point for the design. The day-to-night transition in more formal areas has been thoughtfully considered with the use of contemporary upsized lighting pieces specifically chosen to enhance the generous proportions.

Ribbed wooden panelling was also introduced in the 28th floor entryway and dining room to create an eye-catching feature out of a bulkhead ceiling that houses vital MEP services. "At dusk when the soft lighting is switched on, together with the wooden room divider this adds a wonderful sense of warmth to such a grand space," says Mihir. This is further enhanced by a water vapour electric fireplace with orange flames casting a dancing orange glow.

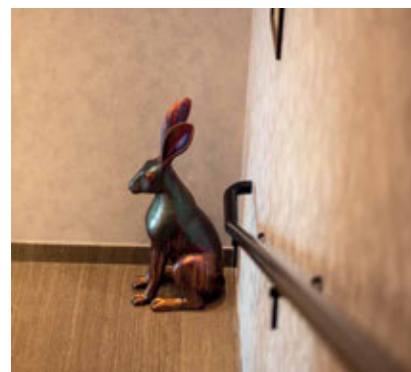
“
I wanted
somewhere relaxing
and peaceful but
also suitable for
entertaining
”



DINING ROOM

The sunken marble-topped dining table was purposely designed to celebrate the Dawoodi Bohra tradition of communal eating at floor level. Red accents seen in the adjacent living area are carried through in the ultra-modern chairs, creating a cohesive, culturally influenced space.





FAMILY DINING ROOM

The lower floor is dedicated to family relaxation with an open-plan dining space leading into the living area. Dinners together around the table are a casual affair and this is reflected in the refined simplicity of dark brown and beige tones matched with a stunning yet practical marble tabletop. A humorous trio of playing card prints and stylish director's lamp add a fun element.

FAMILY LIVING ROOM

Chilled out evenings on the deep-seated tan leather sofa while watching a movie together is the ambience in the adjacent living area. Comfort is fused with style with the space also housing a convenient pantry corner for on-hand snacks.





OUTDOOR SPACES

With 11,500 square feet of indoor and outdoor space to play with, the penthouse comes with wraparound balconies, terraces and al fresco space in abundance. Areas devoted to outdoor entertaining with views out to DIFC and along Sheikh Zayed Road are one aspect with the family gravitating towards the jaw-dropping infinity pool and landscaped terrace overlooking Dubai Frame. Says Mustafa: "Being so high up we tend to catch more breeze, and in the cooler months we love to make the most of the different spaces."



MASTER BEDROOM

Maximising on the room's energy and layout, the unusual addition of a low separating wall in front of the bi-corner window has instant impact. Made from easy-to-maintain Italian porcelain, it has a certain poetic quality, especially juxtaposed with the strong contrasting style of the headboard. And the choice of low-hanging textural, light wood lampshades lends a soft playful note. The pièce de résistance, however, has to be the walk-in wardrobe, which is the couple's favourite room. Riffing on the Hermès palette, it has a decidedly high-end retail space vibe with impeccably organised serried hanger rows and a central glass-topped island with an infinite array of multisized soft closing drawers and compartments. The addition of a leather bench at the end completes the look.



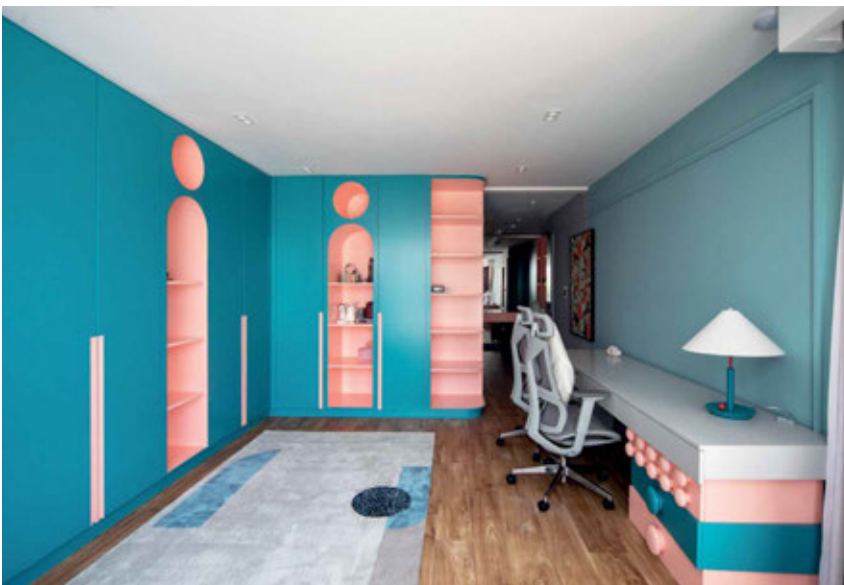


TEEN BEDROOM

The 16-year-old wanted pink as the foundation theme, which was elevated through the use of more sophisticated shades and the addition of grey notes elsewhere. The feature half-wall was a bespoke Designsmith element with the team producing the 3D textural wall covering in their in-house design studio. Both rooms feature custom bed frames featuring a brass wrap. “We all know how quickly kids grow and their style evolves, so this is a super durable and cost-effective solution,” notes Mihir.

GIRL'S BEDROOM

Mihir and the team created a semi-private area for the couple's two girls and designed a duo of bedrooms that they can close off from the rest of the family in a self-contained 'wing'. Both daughters were actively involved in the creative brief with the younger's love of blue hues explored in numerous ways from a custom fabric feature wall to the carpet and bed linens. Feminine pinks were added for contrast while finishing touches like the butterflies added unique personality.



PLAYROOM

An unexpected sight and something really quite out of the ordinary, both the client and Mihir are (rightly) proud of the girls' playroom-cum-closet. The visually bold design takes their favourite colours to the no holds barred extreme to create a space that is fun, whimsical, uplifting and functional. A deliberately wonky chest of drawers, closet doors with an outline suggestion of female forms, and ample space to craft, study and simply hang out come together to deliver a wow factor.

Island Inspiration

Japandi minimalism with soul defines
this Palm Jumeirah home



LIVING ROOM

A grand living space framed by gently curving windows and soaring 10-metre ceiling, bespoke seating mirrors the architecture with the client's choice of terracotta anchoring the colour palette and dressed against calming beige tones for a striking yet inviting space.



The living spaces were really important because the family entertains a lot; the end result was everything they imagined, and more



HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

A French family with two young children who like to entertain

THE PROPERTY

A five-bedroom Palm Jumeirah villa

A light-filled, open plan home rooted in Japandi minimalism, but with a warm and inviting ambience, was the client vision for this Palm Jumeirah villa designed by Ludmilla Quirin of LT Design Architecture (@ltdesignarchitecture).

The tight four-month renovation deadline saw the team swing into action by removing several interior partitions in order to introduce more natural light and enhance overall spatial flow. Originally a four-bed villa, she was also tasked with creating a fifth bedroom which was achieved by reconfiguring the master and splitting the square footage to add a cosy guestroom.

A family that loves to entertain, the living and dining rooms required particular attention to detail to ensure spaces suitable for quality family time that also worked for dinner parties and social gatherings.

Locally sourced bespoke design features prominently throughout, from the sofa and chairs by Al Subaiha to dining room furniture from Home Figures. Ludmilla also has her own little black book of preferred interiors stores with the living room rug from Bloomr, coffee table by The Loom Collection, and Luxxe Lighting among the on-show brands.

Earthy, rich terracotta, a favourite of the client, makes a powerful statement in the living areas as well as the powder room. The smallest room in the house packs a punch with terracotta used to full effect on the vanity wall and carried through to the cabinets below, offset with a black mixer tap and pendant lighting with black accents.



The full terracotta wall in the powder room creates intimacy and makes a strong statement



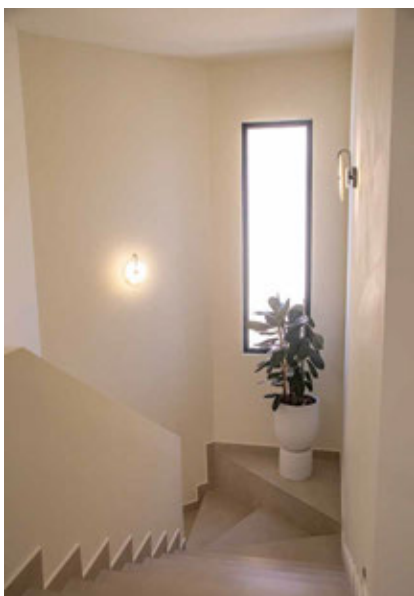


DINING ROOM

Fluted cabinetry and dining table detailing add a dynamic textural element with a solid slab of polished beige quartz adorning the 10-seater table. Black upholstered chairs in trending bouclé complement the largely neutral palette. Curves are a recurring theme, subliminally signalling cosy intimacy as seen in the living room with ultra-contemporary lighting fixtures in tune with the upscale minimalist thread.

BALCONY

Step out onto the master bedroom balcony and be instantly transported to Zanzibar or some other exotic island. This tiny space has been cleverly designed as a reading or meditation spot with natural fibre accessories delivering zen vibes. "We also chose these materials as they're weather resistant," notes Ludmilla. The original balcony guardrail has also been replaced with modern glass panelling.

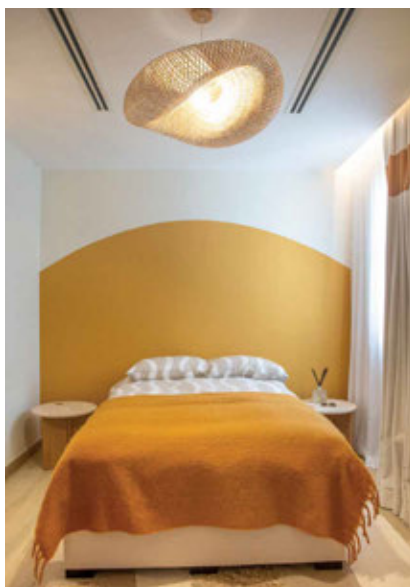


STAIRS

The introduction of additional light was a priority for the grand staircase and entry hall with a single small window swapped out for a larger one in keeping with the scale of the double height atrium. This was brought together by the choice of a neutral colour palette to add warmth. An abstract table sits centrally under the rotunda to focus the eye while family items like the guitar add much-needed personality.

HALLWAY

The hallway sets the tone for the home with its fluted wooden door (a feature repeated in the dining room furniture) and glass side panels opening into a light space enlivened with terracotta and cream details. The choice of cream chairs and high console table speak to elegant sophistication with the low bench a lively pop of colour. Gently looping lights, wall sconces and a duo of arched mirrors collectively diffuse the functionality of the space making it a welcoming gateway to this stylish home.



BEDROOMS

Individual but cohesively designed to play with elements of curving fluidity seen elsewhere, both rooms fully embrace colour. Existing wood panelling in the first room was painted in a relaxing shade of sage green and accented with East African inspired woven plates paired with a black natural fibre lampshade. Step into the cosy adjoining room (the newly created fifth bedroom) where mustard yellow makes an eye-catching statement and the headboard is a vibrant trompe l'oeil.



POOL

A space that doesn't need much window dressing, thanks to the Palm Jumeirah perspective, the exterior lamp choices again tap into the Zanzibar-esque island idyll and pair beautifully with the neutral tiles and vivid blue pool waters. The zigzag sunbed cushions provide a cheeky distraction.



KIDS ROOM

Mums take note. This fun jungle-themed bedroom is all about hidden storage, from boxes under the steps up to the elevated play platform, which does double duty as a second bed with storage space for a spare mattress cleverly concealed behind the child's desk.

Home Is Where The Art Is

Cinzia and Marco Tedeschi take us on a cultural design journey to The Meadows



LIVING ROOM

A relaxed and vibrant family space with a large picture window that celebrates the natural beauty outside, artworks collected from exotic travels are used to create a talking point with the central 'painting' a cleverly disguised TV screen.



“

To merge the beautiful garden with the inside interiors was really important, and the large picture window was a focal point

”

HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

A busy professional couple, who love to travel, and their two boys

THE PROPERTY

A five-bedroom villa in The Meadows

Home to a family of four with roots in India and the UK, an eclectic collection of global art was the inspiration for a design aesthetic that marries modern British with France's Côte d'Azur, and a touch of cosmopolitan Dubai.

"We connected with the client by chance. They were at a dinner party in a house we had renovated and fell in love with the basin in the powder room," explains Cinzia. The Smart Renovation (@smartrenovationsdubai) *modus operandi* has cultural design as the anchor for every project with the Tedeschis passionate about creating interconnected spaces that reflect the client's personality and pieces.

The first step for the duo was to open up the interiors as much as possible, with the 4,000-square-foot villa lacking a harmonious flow. Says Marco: "The original footprint was based on successive rooms that didn't have emotional connectivity, and we decided to enlarge the openings between the various living spaces to foster a sense of natural progression and connection." This was further enhanced by creating picture windows to let in abundant natural light and foster a more synergistic connection between the garden and interiors.

Existing furniture pieces were refreshed and repositioned to complement different spaces. In the dramatic powder room, for example, an Oriental cabinet belonging to the family was repainted and repurposed as a vanity. "We added the distinctive ceramic basin, juxtaposed against the white countertop, as a focal point within the space," notes Cinzia. The overall effect evokes images of Rajasthan's colourful palaces.

A bold colour palette infuses warmth throughout this happy home and ties the living spaces together while giving a nod to some of the hues and shades linked to memories of family travels.

“
The distinctive
ceramic basin,
juxtaposed against the
countertop, is a focal
point within the space
”



BAR CORNER

Functional and visually intriguing, a small corridor was opened up and softened with an archway to connect the living and dining rooms, adding depth and perspective. The idea to construct bar shelving around the arch gives the space purpose and interest – and makes the extra-large wine fridge appear less intrusive. The use of dark green is both a framing device and also a calming colour choice for a busy household, clearly defining the area as a place for leisure.



HALLWAY

First impressions count and the hallway was an anonymous space with no real identity. The perspective has been changed completely simply by introducing an oval ceiling feature with recessed lighting that casts a warm, welcoming glow. Slab stone flooring and light, bright walls really open up the space, complemented by a blue statement wall mid-staircase and collection of polished wooden consoles and tables accented by blue and white Asian influenced pottery.

PICTURE WINDOW

By opening up the floor-to-ceiling windows on two sides of the dining room, this allows the light to stream in and connects with the natural beauty outside. The room décor is kept deliberately simple to make the views the star. As the garden is not overlooked, this negated the need for curtains or sheers, which Marco and Cinzia felt would diminish the visual wow factor. A rustic dining table and chairs also played on the natural theme, accented by a retro hostess trolley and eclectic artwork.



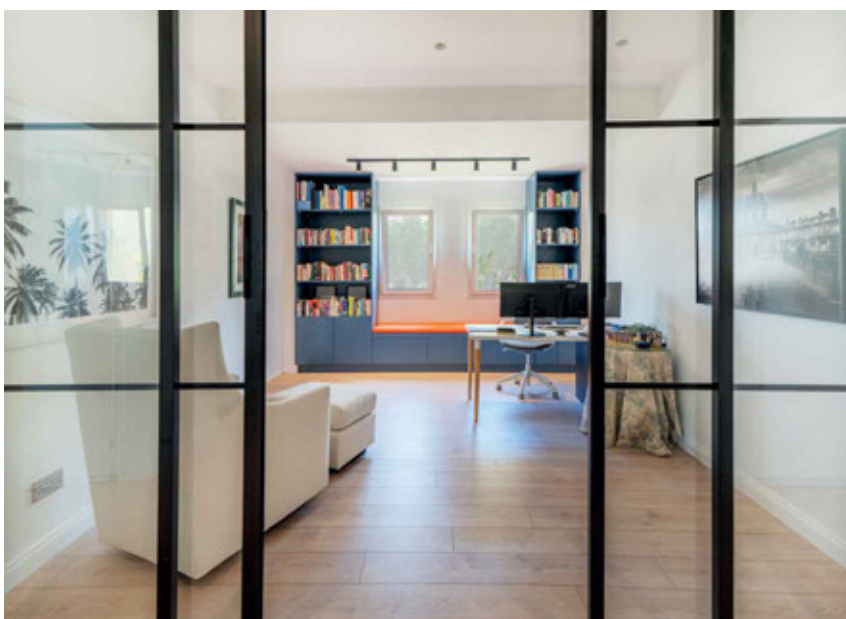


WALK-IN CLOSET

A practical his and hers space where functionality was the focus, the use of simple, clean lines keeps the aesthetic clutter-free with the beauty in the smallest details. Closet handles with an unusual colonial-inspired deliver a stylish counterpoint. The wrap-around closet on three walls also features glass-fronted doors as a design point of difference. A small desk vanity completes the room.

MASTER BATHROOM

A summer's day in St Tropez is translated into a playful yet sophisticated bathroom. A brace of vivid blue brick tiles in complementary shades were custom cut to decorate the bathtub back and vanity mirror area, with the neutral colour palette elsewhere allowing the colour to truly pop. The upmarket Mediterranean ambience is also reflected in the use of matte gold for the mixer taps and other hardware. Hidden storage is found under the vanity as well as in the toilet space.



WORKSPACE

An empty space on the first-floor landing was transformed into two hugely practical areas connected by a sliding door. The workspace, which is decorated in energy-giving shades of denim and orange, again features custom shelving. The window overlooking the calming garden features a cosy banquette seat for welcome moments away from the pressures of deadlines. The other half of the space has been designed for use as a gym or workout studio.



KITCHEN

More Mediterranean influences are seen in the kitchen with the Italian island of Sicily informing the style. The backsplash has hints of Dolce and Gabbana and adds an upscale rustic note to this contemporary space. The blue in the backsplash tiles is similarly echoed in the kitchen island. A busy family kitchen, the smart decision to incorporate a sliding door gives the freedom to enjoy an extended perspective out to the garden when standing at the kitchen island or, close it off when formal entertaining is on the menu.

DINING ROOM

The kitchen leads through to the dining room with custom-built bookcase shelving repeated as a connecting device, but this time painted in an elegant shade of Tiffany blue.

Gently Does It

Neutral hues transform this family home in The Springs



LIVING & DINING ROOM

Space maximisation was key with a sliding barn door opening into the zoned living-dining space, completed by bifold doors into the garden. The white custom sofa is dressed with textural cushions in neutral shades, which is also carried through in the high-quality SPC flooring and wooden dining table. Bold black accents seen in the dining chairs, mirror, door and lighting create a grounding effect while touches of faux greenery brings the outdoors in to unite the space.



“

We love to use natural wood as it immediately speaks to quality, as well as being beautiful and long lasting

”

HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

A young family with newborn and toddler sons

THE PROPERTY

A three-bedroom villa in The Springs

A

A summer renovation project, the client gave Yusra Ravat and Nazmira Goga of ReFive Design House

(@refivedesignhouse) carte blanche to transform their newly purchased but extremely dated Springs villa.

"The brief was simple, they wanted the design to be very natural, light and open and incorporate some bold touches; essentially leaning towards the bohemian but with a contemporary feel," says Nazmira.

"With an open book brief and the client requesting all-new furniture and furnishings, we were able to deliver a turnkey design from spatial planning to furniture sourcing and finishing touches," adds Yusra.

Working within existing structural limitations, the duo's first task was to remove a number of internal walls downstairs in order to open up the existing compact footprint. This created a larger living area that also integrated the kitchen with the living and dining space, which completely eliminated the slightly claustrophobic atmosphere that characterised the original layout.

A major design consideration was the fact that this is home to young children and safeguarding spaces, as well as thinking about durability and practicality was critical. "We made a point to avoid placing smaller decorative items or bigger pieces to eliminate hazards that small children may face," remarks Nazmira.

In terms of colour palette, light and neutral was the aesthetic foundation with black accents as well as textural elements used to break any unintentional uniformity. Custom pieces were commissioned alongside living, dining and entryway pieces from West Elm, Home Kode and Home and Soul, with lighting and accessories from Pottery Barn, The Loom Collection, Zara Home and H&M Home. The sofa and kids' bunk beds were custom made in-house.

“

They wanted the design to be very natural, light and open and incorporate some bold touches

”





HALLWAY

The original entry hall was quite dark and unwelcoming. A second barn door and light wooden SPC flooring, plus a mirror over the console table were used to brighten the space. A pair of neutral pouffes, jute rug, rustic textural pendant lights, and pops of greenery add warmth and individuality.

STAIRS

A glass panelled staircase was the client's original wish, but the team suggested a more family-friendly solution and chose to use metal slats for a practical as well as artistic design motif that also echoes statement black accents elsewhere. "This was a gamechanger in terms of creating an illusion of space, and is a design feature not often seen here," explains Yusra. Much-needed storage was also incorporated, with understairs push-pull cupboards



KIDS' BATHROOM

Bath time-loving kids was the catalyst for the design with the duo sourcing a bathtub that could squeeze into a purposely designed wet area to create a 'splash room'. A shower was installed over the bath for flexibility. Slate grey floor and ceiling tiling helped zone the area. The bathroom walls feature a specialised paint treatment with five layers applied for a fully waterproof finish.



BOY'S BEDROOM

A room that a child can grow into was the idea behind the white, grey and blue-toned design where the fun element is evident in the choice of animal inspired artworks and storage baskets. All eyes are, however, on the super cool custom bunk bed.



MASTER BEDROOM

The client's request was for a peaceful bedroom that exuded calm, without any visual distractions or stimulants. "Subtle and understated, it does exactly what it needs to do as a place for rest," notes Nazmira. Purely neutral hues are used throughout with the merest hint of black detailing, while blackout blinds ensure a good night's sleep.





THE CHALLENGE

A multigenerational living area and pantry makeover in an ageing rental home where light, space and layout were an issue.

THE SOLUTION

Maximising the available space, which was on an upper floor, and refreshing a pantry nook with additional storage, were subject to rental property restrictions with aesthetic changes the way forward. A minutely executed layout was the starting point to figure out the max space available for the family's much-loved furniture pieces. Placed in niches within the room, they were given prominence without impacting

flow. The work was also phased so as to not disturb elderly relatives using the adjacent bedrooms. Time was saved by pre-designing and ordering the joinery work for the new storage cabinets and media unit. Pantry wall tiles and cabinets were upgraded using wrapping with new brass-gold handles and pulls, which completely changed the look. Issues with ancient wiring meant we had to replace in some areas, with new, sleeker designed sockets replacing original plug points.

Insider insight

- The architecture of the space was front of mind with the design aesthetic relatable to the surroundings.
- More light was introduced using light sheers instead of heavy drapes.
- Walls were painted in Benjamin Moore's Simply White with an eggshell finish to bring a sense of cosy warmth. Mouldings around the arched passageways were given a matte finish for added definition.
- Sofas were upholstered in a dark user-friendly high-performance fabric offset by swivel style neutral armchairs.
- A large rug holds the design together and also hides parts of the old flooring.
- The replacement of old hardware such as knobs, door handles and switches made a big difference.
- Relocating switches and sockets was a priority to eliminate unsightly wires and ensures a flawless overall look.
- Chandeliers, table lamps and profile lighting built into the media unit created pockets of ambience.
- Coffee tables in the same wood colour were selected to match the family's own furniture.

The Designer

- Anu Kewalram of Anu Kewalram Interiors (@akewalram)



Before



THE CHALLENGE

A top-to-toe renovation with emphasis on living spaces, which required meticulous attention to detail.

THE SOLUTION

A less is more aesthetic was key with minimalist design defining the entry hall, living and lounge areas using natural and earthy tones. This supported the seamless integration of the outdoor environment with the interiors. Partition walls were also removed to open up the living spaces for a more contemporary feel, and a thematic bar was incorporated to create a unique

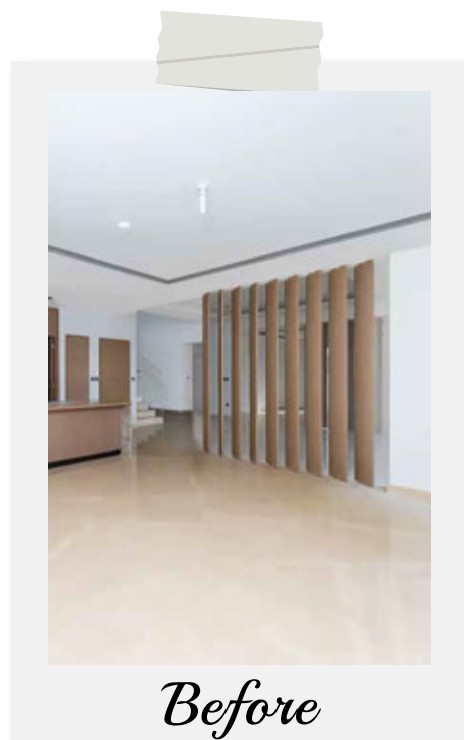
point of difference while holistically complementing the overall design. Kitchen space was redesigned to offer a spacious semi-open format. A trio of washrooms were refreshed with the powder room reflecting the colour and styling of living spaces. A gym was introduced in a former bedroom and en suite added to another room. Major exterior landscaping was also executed with a pool installation and Balinese inspired design.

Insider insight

- Project success involved end-to-end collaboration with a highly skilled team of third-party contractors.
- The client's love of minimalism was blended with minimalist boho and contemporary styles in a curated design that harmoniously combines organic shapes and clean lines.
- Arches were introduced across various elements such as the entry hall, power room access and bar.
- The bar features a unique combination of organic-shaped shelves finished with a high-quality veneer and featuring backlit LEDs to reflect the textured wall.
- Internal lighting was used to highlight the exquisite Patagonia quartz granite bar counter slab with its organic collage of colour and shape adding warmth as well as creating a stunning talking point.
- Veneer panels were also strategically placed to emphasise key areas in the living room to continue the narrative. This was further enhanced with a wooden planter that serves both as a decorative element and semi-partition between the lounge area and living space.

The Designer

- Shalini Srinivasan of Sol Haus Interiors ([@solhaus_interiors](#))





Property The Betterhomes Perspective

The Dubai real estate market broke all previous records in 2023, with over 120,000 properties sold and prices surpassing the previous peak set in 2014. Internationally, Dubai's reputation for lifestyle, safety, and strong returns has ensured plenty of investor activity. Domestically, more and more residents are taking the plunge and buying, motivated by higher rents and a longer-term view on making the UAE home. Last year Betterhomes reported that 'end users' represented 44% of all sales, up from 29% in 2019. This suggests a level of maturity and stability in the market not seen in previous cycles.

With a surging population, rents in 2023 rose on average 26% year on year, with villas and townhouses seeing some of the highest increases. Dubai saw over 120,000 new residents move to the emirate, but only 34,000 new homes were delivered, resulting in upward pressure on rental and sales prices. The delivery of new homes is expected to be again around 35,000 in 2024, far lower than current market and population trends require, so there is unlikely to be much relief for tenants this year.



Indeed, it seems unlikely that we will see the significant supply of new homes delivered that is required to bring rents down until the second half of 2025.

A key trend set to continue is the explosion of branded residences that we have seen impact the market over the last few years. Dominating the luxury and premium off-plan segments, residences that carry the brand names of hotels, restaurants and fashion houses have become increasingly prevalent. With the promise of luxury services, lifestyle, and amenities associated with a particular brand, these developments tend to attract a premium; although potential buyers should be clear on the benefits the brand association brings before investing.

One thing prospective buyers will be keeping an eye out for this year will be interest rates, which rose sharply in 2023. The increase in rates from 0.5% to 5.25% certainly put a squeeze on affordability for mortgage buyers yet did little to dent buyer appetite. With inflation in the US back down to sub-3% levels, we can expect interest rates in the UAE to start coming down at some point, possibly during the summer, which is likely to add to the already high levels of demand.

The outlook for Dubai's real estate market looks strong for 2024 and the years ahead. Cranes dominate the skyline once again as Dubai builds for the future population growth as outlined in the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan. We can only hope that the advent of flying cars to ease traffic congestion becomes a reality sooner rather than later! The emirate's Roads & Traffic Authority commitment to the development of Dubai's infrastructure over the next few years is definitely set to revolutionise the way we move around, further opening up our city.

Richard Waind
Group Managing Director
Betterhomes

Market Snapshot

Want to know the current value of your property? Considering a buy-to-rent investment? Check out our latest market snapshot and find out which communities are current Dubai hotspots

VILLAS & TOWNHOUSES	AVERAGE SALES PRICE (AED PER SQUARE FOOT)	% INCREASE (OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS****)
Nad Al Sheba Villas	1,280	80.70%
Motor City Villas	1,178	75.58%
Jumeirah Islands	2,986	73.29%
Palm Jumeirah Fronds - Garden Homes	6,278	43.09%
Dubai South Townhouses	1,000	40.39%
Jumeirah Village Circle Villas	818	33.57%
Jumeirah Park	1,443	29.20%
Dubai Investments Park Villas	996	28.89%
Arabian Ranches	1,647	28.17%
Jumeirah Village Triangle Villas	1,266	26.79%

SALES

APARTMENTS	AVERAGE SALES PRICE (AED PER SQUARE FOOT)	% INCREASE (OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS****)
Dubai Production City	892	49.60%
Discovery Gardens	722	33.89%
Bluewaters Island	4,963	31.50%
Emirates Living Apartments	1,393	25.91%
Meydan Apartments	1,337	24.71%
Culture Village Apartments	1,353	23.82%
Dubai Sports City Apartments	758	22.60%
Dubai Studio City	783	22.20%
Jumeirah Golf Estates Apartments	1,160	22.05%
Dubai Hills Estate Apartments	2,025	20.83%

VILLAS & TOWNHOUSES	AVERAGE ANNUAL RENT* (AED)	AVERAGE CHANGE IN RENTAL PRICES OVER 12 MONTHS
Dubai Science Park (DuBiotech) Villas	287,312	68.97%
Living Legends Villas	204,188	42.13%
Jumeirah Golf Estates Villas	607,794	25.07%
Town Square Townhouses	127,546	23.70%
Jumeirah Park	296,771	22.70%
Nad Al Sheba Villas	219,500	21.95%
Arabian Ranches 2	262,648	21.72%
Emirates Living Villas	372,166	21.08%
Al Barsha Villas	305,240	20.93%
Jumeirah Islands	468,268	20.44%

RENTAL

APARTMENTS	AVERAGE ANNUAL RENT* (AED)	AVERAGE CHANGE IN RENTAL PRICES OVER 12 MONTHS
Bluewaters Island	157,584	48.01%
Dubai Creek Harbour	111,156	40.35%
Dubai South Apartments	120,450	30.36%
Al Furjan Apartments	95,013	23.05%
Meydan Apartments	129,368	19.53%
Downtown Dubai	199,430	17.44%
Jumeirah Village Circle Apartments	105,729	17.09%
Dubai Science Park (DuBiotech) Apartments	68,175	16.09%
Living Legends Apartments	45,760	15.56%
Jumeirah Village Triangle Apartments	42,356	10.73%

*Average selling prices valid as of February 2024 • **Average rental rates valid as at February 2024 • *** % increase over the last 12 months is based on average sales price per square foot • Source: Property Monitor (propertymonitor.com)

HOT PROPERTIES

Three leading agents at Betterhomes give us an exclusive look at a selection of the best homes for sale in the neighbourhoods they know and love

Meet the agents



Noa Wardman **Motor City**

"An award-winning professional with excellent negotiation skills backed by extensive market knowledge, my nearly two decades of on-the-ground experience makes me a trusted and confident client partner."



Nina Pekina **Dubai Marina**

"Honesty, confidentiality and professionalism underpin my approach to work, and my wealth of Dubai real estate experience is also my passion. My client base has been largely built on referrals, which is testament to my ethical approach to client relationships."



George Barker **Business Bay**

"Informative, attentive and personable and with six years' international real estate experience, I can easily relate to my clients and establish a swift understanding of their wants and needs."



My top picks in Motor City

To view one of these gorgeous apartments, call me on 055 174 2022

AED8.3 million

Saheel 3, Arabian Ranches

A welcoming family home with park and pool views a short walk from JESS, this effortlessly relaxed residence is immaculately designed throughout. A closed kitchen and pair of Jack and Jill bedrooms speak to practicality while the family room is all about quality downtime. **To find out more, call me quoting the reference code VI587793-2 RERA Permit No. 6510150300**

Bed: 5 Bath: 5 Parking: 2 Size: 4,909 sqft

AED15.95 million

Mirador, Arabian Ranches

A masterful blend of European elegance and modern luxury characterises this delightful British architect John Pawson-designed home. The bespoke interior features Lumibright spotlights, lavish bathrooms, a Pine Tree Lane kitchen, walk-in wardrobe, and a glass-walled pool with adjacent fire pit. **To find out more, call me quoting the reference code VI553387 RERA Permit No. 6510104200**

Bed: 5 Bath: 4 Parking: 2 Size: 5,500 sqft

“Bespoke living in a sought-after community”



AED7.5 million

Mirador, Arabian Ranches

A soon-to-be-vacated family home in an excellent location, highlights include thoughtfully designed open-plan living and dining spaces, and newly wrapped kitchen and bathrooms. A gem of a property it also offers a private pool with whirlpool, barbecue and gazebo. **To find out more, call me quoting the reference code VI507739 RERA Permit No. 6510076700**

Bed: 4 Bath: 4 Parking: 2 Size: 4,311 sqft



AED18 million

Marina Residences 1

A duplex penthouse boasting abundant indoor and al fresco terrace living spaces (one of which has 180-degree sea views), the interiors are top drawer quality and feature a cool cinema room and state-of-the-art kitchen with white goods included. A handy ground floor storage room is also part of the deed. *To find out more, call me quoting the reference code PH505722*

RERA Permit No. 7124693200

Bed: 4 Bath: 5 Parking: 6 Size: 10,254 sqft



**My top picks in
Dubai Marina**

If you'd like to view any of these apartments, call on 050 911 5617

AED12.5 million

**Balqis Residence, The Crescent,
Palm Jumeirah**

An exclusive offshore address with sweeping views of the Arabian Gulf and Dubai's dramatic skyline, this fully upgraded high floor unit comes with walk-in closets, a relaxing balcony for sunset views par excellence, maid's room, laundry and all white goods. *To find out more, call me quoting the reference code AP723938*

RERA Permit No. 7117992745

Bed: 4 Bath: 5 Parking: 2 Size: 3,353 sqft



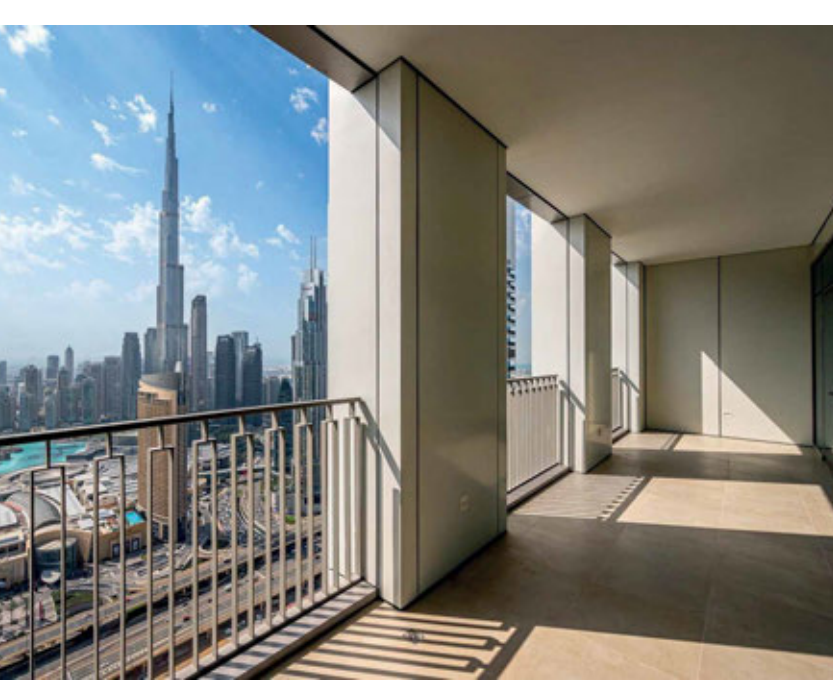
AED8.98 million

Vida Residences, Dubai Marina

A newly handed over development, enjoy the marina lifestyle in true luxury with a trio of balconies offering exciting views, a duo of en suite bathrooms, and full maid's room plus high-quality finishes and the metro/tram just steps away. *To find out more, call me quoting the reference code AP723711*

RERA Permit No. 7124693200

Bed: 4 Bath: 4 Parking: 2 Size: 2,307 sqft



**My top picks in
Business Bay**

Interested to meet me and see these places?
Call me on 058 592 0772 to discuss

AED5.2 million

Downtown Views II, Tower 2

At the heart of the Downtown Dubai action with Dubai Mall on the doorstep, this newly handed over super high-floor apartment comes with jaw-dropping panoramic views and the full complement of upscale onsite leisure facilities plus maid's room. **To find out more, call me quoting the reference code AP725092 RERA Permit No. 71262398787**

Bed: 3 Bath: 3 Parking: 2 Size: 1,837 sqft

AED60 million

Index Tower, DIFC

This stunningly renovated penthouse has some of the best views in the city while the interiors include a fitted show kitchen, exceptional selection of living spaces with multiple balconies, intelligent art lighting system, home gym with spa facilities, and smart home functionality. **To find out more, call me quoting the reference code PH552652 RERA Permit No. 301766839**

Bed: 3 Bath: 3 Parking: 2 Size: 9,350 sqft

*“Penthouse living
with a premium
Dubai address”*



AED1.95 million

**Claren Tower 1, Downtown
Dubai**

Affordable luxury in Dubai's most dynamic district is on offer within this compact apartment that has been cleverly designed to optimise the space and infuse natural light throughout. The inclusion of a study is a sought-after added feature. **To find out more, call me quoting the reference code AP570593 RERA Permit No. 7182890080**

Bed: 1 Bath: 1 Parking: 1 Size: 847 sqft

Property

Through The Keyhole

Home to the rare, the exclusive and the extraordinary,
we open the doors to a custom-built mansion on the market
with PRIME by Betterhomes



Trakhees #6544670730

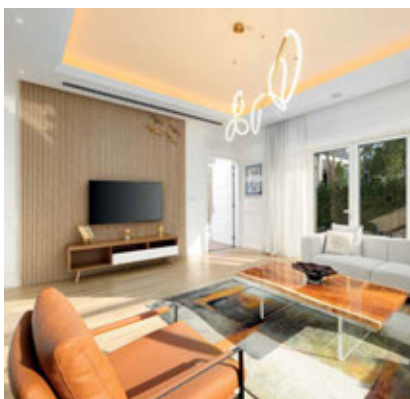
One of Dubai's most exclusive communities, this palatial custom-built mansion in Jumeirah Golf Estates offers an extraordinary lifestyle for those who love to entertain.

Located in the sought-after Wild Flower community the villa is one of just six double plots, with an elevated outlook over the greens and fairways of the Earth course, the Dubai city skyline as a backdrop and a few steps from the Clubhouse.

The bespoke aesthetic exudes elegant luxury throughout and is based on a neutral colour palette, enlivened with thoughtfully designed colour and styling accents, that seamlessly connects to the natural beauty outdoors.

Spread generously across three floors, including a fully equipped basement, the design flawlessly connects each successive area to create an uninterrupted sense of flow and harmony. Private rooms such as the chairman's office, gym, billiards room and family sitting room are juxtaposed against dynamic social spaces including a basement cinema and ultra-cosmopolitan bar fronting the expansive open plan living room.

As you would expect, the spacious living areas are complemented by a choice of two exquisite dining spaces and a light and airy kitchen filled with high-end appliances. Upstairs you will find five serenely decorated en suite bedrooms suffused with natural light with several featuring balconies.



Fun and entertainment definitely live here, from a fùßball table and grand piano to the myriad delights of the stunningly landscaped outdoor spaces. Various eye-catching water features dotted around the property set the mood with the action centered on the all-white pool with its azure waters; state-of-the-art outdoor barbecue and kitchen area, and sunken seating enclave with on-trend fire pit.



Need to know

Price: AED47 million

- 15,800 square feet
- 5 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms
- For sale fully furnished
- Prime golf course views
- Expansive living and relaxation spaces
- Chairman's style private office
- Billiards room
- Stunning landscaped garden with multiple water features
- Indoor and outdoor cinemas
- Barbecue and outdoor kitchen area
- Sunken seating and fire pit
- Home office
- Maid and driver's rooms
- Four-car basement parking



Meet The Designer

Give your home
the professional touch





Mihir Sanganee

Designsmith, @designsmith_studio

'We don't do boring' is the company motto and architect and creative director Mihir believes that great design is an art form that involves perfection and magnificence. His award-winning 50-strong team of architects, interior designers and project managers has delivered an impressive and bold portfolio of high-profile projects in the residential, F&B, retail, corporate and hospitality sectors.



Marco & Cinzia Tedeschi

Smart Renovation, @smartrenovationdubai

An award-winning design power duo with a shared passion for transforming spaces, Marco brings over 11 years of industry experience to Dubai's diverse interior design scene. His creative vision and strategic capabilities are perfectly complemented by Cinzia's Italian flair and knack for weaving together unique stylistic elements to craft dream homes that blend function, beauty, and sustainability.



Anu Kewalram

Anu Kewalram Interiors, @akewalram

The power of interiors to transform daily life is Anu's design mantra and her project portfolio is rich with unique interiors that are crisp, stylish and timeless. A Dubai Top 50 Homes 2023 award winner, she believes that every space has a beautiful story to tell and should be a blended showcase of client individuality and her own elegant, warm and sophisticated design voice.



Shalini Srinivasan

Sol Haus Interiors, @solhaus_interiors

An innate ability to transform mundane spaces into captivating environments that evoke emotion and enthuse defines Shalini's approach to interior design. She is passionate about ensuring that spaces feel cosy while delivering a strong aesthetic and her creative process involves meticulously crafting every detail to so that the final design reflects the unique personality and lifestyle of her clients.

Meet Your Maker

Loreta Bilinskaite-Monie

The independent artist and textile designer on her design process and love of woven storytelling



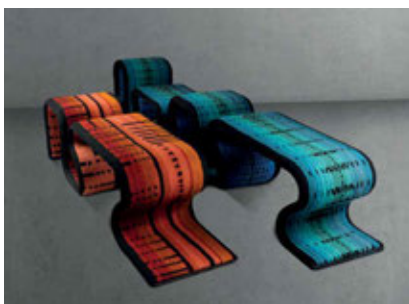
Image credits: Dipesh Suthar, The Studio Dubai

In 2003, after visiting Dubai for a holiday, I made the decision to relocate from London. The UAE was a complete unknown to me at that time, as was Emirati culture.

I grew up in Lithuania, in a family where my mum and aunts were natural crafters, from weaving to embroidery, and this helped form my own artistic and cultural identity.

In creating meaningful pieces that are not simply visually beautiful or fashionable I am honouring tradition and craftsmanship on a path between art and design and culture and history.

My inspiration comes from stories and experiences that I bring to life through my work, and which reflect the place where I am and the people around me. So in 2023, when I was approached by Al Ghadeer Emirati Crafts to design a bespoke collection to show at London Design Fair, the opportunity to present the work of female Emirati weavers



and the symbolism woven into each design was a privilege and honour.

I had already been working with the initiative for almost 10 years, nurturing a rich and colourful relationship with the collective. These are strong Bedouin women who come from humble and often harsh backgrounds, yet whose simple approach to life sustains their craft. More than just decoration, each Bedouin pattern is a masterpiece that tells a story.

I wanted to draw on their innate strength and showcase their heritage through a woven interpretation of the

migration between seasons, from sea to desert. The blue bench in the collection represents coastal life that offers respite in the long hot summers, with the orange bench a reflection of both my time spent with the ladies drinking saffron-scented tea, cupped in henna-dyed hands, and the rich colours of a desert sunset.

Natural dyes were used to colour the wool in authentic Bedouin tradition. Greens, for example, are from the leaves and branches of the ghaf tree, while black and white strands are produced from goat hair and sheep wool. The central spine of the design for the collection was based on the camel tooth pattern, which represents power and strength.

Some of the weavers I work with are 80 years-old, so these are truly one-of-a-kind pieces. Functional as well as beautiful, the benches are art pieces and markers of knowledge and culture for future generations.

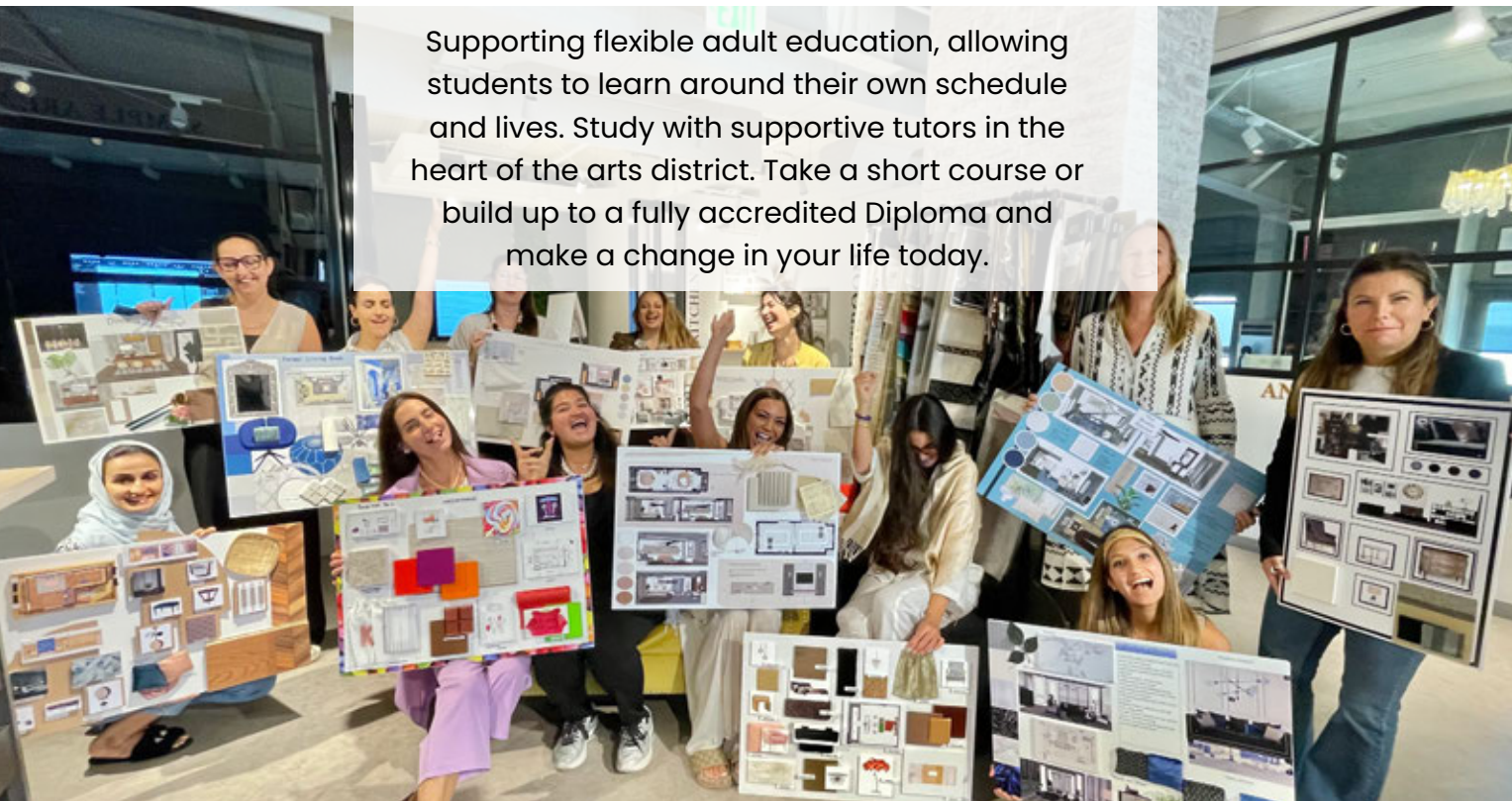
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