



Been Around the World

MAKE YOUR HOME A LUSH GLOBAL GETAWAY WITH TIPS FROM DESIGNER SAUDAH SALEEM
By KYM ALLISON BACKER

Vibrant Persian rugs, textured tribal prints on walls and furniture, chinoiserie accessories that add delicate splashes of color everywhere—global decor has gone mainstream, and we're loving it. Even national retail chains are providing a dazzling variety of options, many sourced from indigenous artisans. But with all the choices available, how do you harmoniously blend your prized kente armchair with a hand-painted Japanese screen?

According to Saudah Saleem of Baltimore-based Saudah Saleem Interiors, keeping a few guidelines in mind will allow you to

seamlessly create an area with international intrigue. "Just a hint of global pattern can add visual interest to a space. An on-trend and easy way to incorporate these elements at home is by introducing exotic pattern textiles via area rugs, throw pillows, window treatments or upholstered pieces," she explains.

Whether you're picking up striking souvenirs on your own world travels or indulging your penchant for cross-cultural goodies at local stores, Saleem adds that combining your picks and focusing on color can result in a unique personalized space. "Blending decor from different cultures make for an interesting and collected look," says the designer. "You can pull different global elements together using a common color found in each object."



OPPOSITE PAGE: 1. Elephant Animal Print (\$18; etsy.com) **ABOVE:** 2. Gold Quatrefoil Lamp (\$99.99; worldmarket.com) 3. Oriental Weavers Kaleidoscope Rug (\$180-\$1,099; rugsusa.com) 4. Cocoa/White Stitched Leather Ottoman (\$186.99; overstock.com) 5. Elmwood Ming Tall Chair (\$759; houzz.com) 6. Small Chinoiserie Double Gourd Vase (\$199; frontgate.com) 7. Murano Glass Chandelier (\$3,352; dwr.com) 8. Leela Blue Box Coffee Table (\$287.09; overstock.com) 9. Moroccan Carved Armoire (\$2,975; chairish.com) 10. Carved Teakwood Relief Art Panel (\$149.99; etsy.com) 11. Maat Wax Print Floor Pillow and Iris Purple Ankara Pillow (\$129 and \$79; reflektion.com) 12. Medina Mirror (\$325; importfrommarrakesh.com) 13. Ikat Pad Printed Bowls (\$8 each; westelm.com)

CRAVING CULTURE? Saleem says:

- **DO** put some thought into it. Each region of the world has its own unique decorating style. First, identify what you like about a particular region. Is it the bold use of color? The craftsmanship? The intricate patterns used? Once you've decided on what speaks best to your design senses, start looking for decor items that share those features.
- **DO** mix elements from various cultures. The fusion of modern design with pieces that reflect specific cultures results in a juxtaposition of decor aesthetics that is both genuine and telling about the person who lives in the space.
- **DO** decorate with pieces that have sentimental value to you. Your home shouldn't feel like a museum; it should be an authentic reflection of your style, what you love and how you live.
- **DON'T** attempt to pull off an entire look at once. Build it slowly by incorporating one or two pieces at a time, which will give your home a carefully collected and well-traveled feel.
- **DON'T** focus so much on the objects. Concentrate instead on the feeling you want to evoke in the space. As you look around, each furnishing should remind you of why you selected it, create conversation or evoke a special memory.
- **DON'T** use global elements only in traditional ways; try modernizing them. Mounting a piece of African mudcloth in an acrylic frame, for example, is a distinctive way to display your find and combines established styles. The room will still retain an African aesthetic but will also feel fresh and contemporary. The combining of design styles creates more flexible and updated looks.