

DESIGN FOR SUCCESS

EAST MEETS WEST

or is it West Meets East?

ASIAN DÉCOR is big, Big, BIG as an East meets West style is exploding onto the scene. If you don't have any Asian influences in your home, now is the time to add that dramatic touch. Dial up the "WOW" factor by bringing the mystery of Asia into your life. Asian style has long represented a simpler lifestyle with a focus on mindfulness. Our crazed, action-packed daily routines have cried out for a balance and the quiet simplicity of Asian decor has made its way into our culture.

OPTIONS ABOUND

Decorating your home in an East meets West style is easier now with the entire major discount and market stores carrying

"Creating that perfect East meets West blend in your home can also be about creating the perfect blend of the past and present."

lines with Asian influences. The options are boundless at any price range. Interesting accessories, artwork, rugs, and bedding are all readily available. Furniture manufacturers are designing fascinating pieces that blend East and West. They're also making wonderful reproductions, retrofitting them for modern uses.

If you like antiques, you can find them with ease on the Internet. Start by searching the Web for "Asian Antiques" along with the name of your city.

CREATE YOUR OWN INFLUENCE

So, what does the concept "Asian inspired decorating" conjure up for you? You may envision a bygone era on some tropical isle that leans towards the British Colonials or West Indies. Or you may see ornate red, black and gold rooms with screens as room dividers; we've certainly all seen those backdrops in the movies. Or maybe you imagine a Zen-like setting with soft colors, straight lines, mats on the floor and low slung sofas – I'm sure you can easily relate to such a peaceful ambience.

However, as beautiful as all these Asian inspired visions are, they can be impractical, uncomfortable





and hard to duplicate. Now, take a deep breath, clear your mind, and recreate your East meets West dream by simply adding Asian influences to your current Western design. You can achieve a spectacular new look with a few simple steps.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Start with some research. And remember, Asia is much more than China and Japan: it includes Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, India, and the Philippines, to name a few. The design options from these captivating regions of the world are remarkable, but can be somewhat overwhelming to the novice.

“Remember your home is a reflection of your inner self.”

So I suggest you learn the differences between the various cultural designs; this knowledge will increase your confidence, clarify your likes and dislikes, and can be a topic of conversation when you share your homes new look with your friends.

How do you get started?

Use a practical approach: you don't have to undo your interior and start from scratch; your East meets West style can evolve naturally and slowly.

- Plan your purchases and stick to the strategy: mistakes can easily be made when buying on impulse.
- Create a budget: this means you buy only what you can afford.
- Take small steps while developing confidence: start by introducing one or two accessories into each room. A small picture here and a vase there will help create a rhythm that can slowly be extended throughout your home.
- Add color with the exotic fabrics, wall hanging textiles like Kimonos and amazing rugs.
- Buy big if you can – think about introducing a piece of furniture or a large piece of art. One big item can create a strong focal point; but make sure it doesn't overpower the space.

- Invest in quality. Investing in one fine piece is better than collecting several small touristy items.
- Buy only pieces you really love.
- Avoid clutter at all costs: if you want to start a collection, remember to display all the pieces together in one space.
- Remember, balance is key, and East meets West means just that. Do not go overboard: a little bit of this and a little bit of that will do it.

Historians tell us that Western European design has its roots in Asia. We've heard the stories of explorers sailing into exotic ports and the long, winding trade route called the Silk Road. Creating that perfect East meets West blend in your home can also be about creating the perfect blend of the past and present, the traditional and modern, the seemingly simple (East) and complex (West). Remember your home is a reflection of your inner self.

So, are you ready for East meets West? Or is it West meets East? Let us not forget that as the sun goes down in the west it is rising in the east. |



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