

DECORATE LIFE

Frankfurt, Germany

July 2008

By Bridget Fabi

Cents and sensibility was the direction vendors, retailers and event organizer Messe Frankfurt were taking at the city's newest trade show Decorate Life this past July. Cleverly combining four trade fairs – Tendence, Collectione, Outdoor Living and The Design Annual – under one roof reduced the carbon footprint of multiple shows, while increasing the cost-effectiveness for all concerned.

With the terms “cash crunch” and “sustainability” ringing in everyone's ears, these factors greatly impacted product designs. Appropriate materials were proudly labelled “green”, while organic, nature-inspired designs and colours were at the forefront. Value and usefulness were huge directions, while minimalism and excellence in design were close behind. There was an obvious lack of pattern, embellishment and bold colours in contrast to past seasons. Greys, mauves, neutrals, metallics and classic black and white were the palettes of choice. **BELOW ARE A FEW OTHER TRENDS WE SPOTTED.** www.messefrankfurt.com

Euro Elegance

Calm, comfortable environments, synonymous with European design, relied heavily on soft powdery greys, mauve, mushroom and black and white in basic cottons, linens and silks.

Eco Organic

Natural wood, wood-grain patterns, sustainable materials, organic shapes, neutral colours and subtle metallic glazes influenced all design genres.

Global Nomad

Animal and African-inspired prints mixed with Asian Buddhas and eclectic Moroccan elements. Elegant and mysterious with rustic undertones.

Haute Hollywood

Vintage 1950's Hollywood with an undercurrent of tropical influences. High-gloss gold and silver finishes mixed with palm trees, crystal accents and classic black and white furniture.

Back to Basics

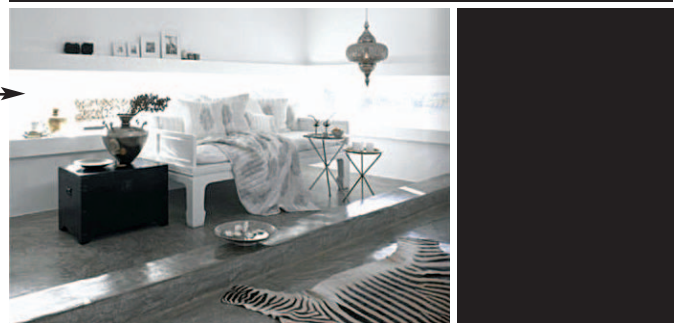
Unique, individually-designed and hand-crafted products are being revisited and appreciated. From crocheted bags to embroidered pillows and hand-blocked wallpapers, getting crafty is hot. ■



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