

EASTERN PROMISE

Brighten up the gloomy days with exotic decor from India and Morocco

ESCAPE from the daily grind in a room with exotic keynotes unearthed from India or Morocco. The more authentic the pieces, the better, says interior designer Miv Watts (mother of Hollywood actress Naomi) who loves nothing better than to mix East with West in the sumptuous rooms she creates.

As well as styling houses for the rich and famous, Miv also sources a range of exquisite, hand-made furniture, mostly from Rajasthan in India.

'I love the spiritual element to the shapes,' she enthuses. 'Also, it is my raison d'être to keep these ancient crafts alive. It gives a sense of authenticity to a Western home. One piece — like a door or a beautiful bed or shutters on a window — will initialise the room. You can then mix it with a French mirror, say, or some beautiful soft furnishings.'

Marks & Spencer is carrying the torch with heirloom pieces like the Surat range inspired by Indian heritage pieces. The bed, for example, which is £499, is made using traditional methods.

Laura Ashley has some beautiful cushions with tassels or pompoms (from £25) and you can pick up some lovely ornaments at Matalan for under £10.

Momo Interiors is a one-stop-shop for all things Moroccan, be it a mosaic fountain (£2,100) which would look fantastic in a courtyard garden or a perfume bottle with tassels, £7, to add detail to a dressing table.

Keep your eye out for wicker storage boxes and anything with a mosaic surround. M&S has a square design bath mat which would give the right feel for a bargain £15, as would the Casablanca garden lantern from John Lewis, £75.

Another way to master this look is to experiment with paint. The Mughal Spring range from Francesca's Paints (www.francescaspaint.com, for prices) has a beautiful hibiscus blue, or go for the burnt orange (Jaipuri spice) in the Indian Summer selection. Tiles can also give a hint of the East in a kitchen or bathroom — Fired Earth is always good for ideas.

CHARLOTTE KEMP



Buddha head, £8, Matalan. www.matalan.co.uk



Casablanca garden lantern, £75, John Lewis, www.johnlewis.com

Throws, Epoa Miv Watts. www.watts-wishedfor.com



Room designed by Miv Watts, www.wattswishedfor.com, 01328 730313



Settee, Epoa, Miv Watts, as before

Berber amulet wall hanging, £28.99, Momo Interiors, www.shop.momo-interiors.com



Moroccan glass bottle with tassel, £7, Momo Interiors, as before

Interiors

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