

## Dispatches from the design world in Europe

# EUROPEAN STYLE

■ BY ALYKHAN VELJI

**G**oing abroad opens your eyes to different cultures, and going abroad to see a design show can be twice the eye-opening experience.

I recently got a chance to go to Cologne for the IMM and Living Kitchen design shows, and it really opened my eyes to new and emerging design trends — ones that we may never see in Canada, because the European lifestyle is quite different from ours. However, we can all appreciate amazing design. Here are my top five emerging trends that I saw making a big impact.

### Spice it up

Turquoise may be the colour trend here, but in Europe, it's all about spicy, intense colours such as cumin and chili. These rich accents work so well with modern, streamlined spaces, giving much needed character to kitchens that sometimes feel cold and austere.

### Texture

I am a big fan of texture in interiors and I try to introduce it through wall coverings and fabrics. There was a definite trend towards texture at the show, especially matte black. I saw this being utilized as a colour for cabinets, counter tops and accessories. The almost chalkboard like quality really gives interiors an almost earthy and organic quality.

Textures in wall coverings and tile were also big. Having a raised effect and almost a sculptural quality. »



Textures in wall coverings are an emerging trend.

(Opposite page) Rich accents work well with modern streamlined spaces.





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**Light Fantastic**

Lighting is key to any space and I came across a fabulous company aptly named DelightFULL. Specializing in handcrafted, unique, and stand out designs this brand caught my attention right away. These pieces with their mid-century and industrial edge are subtle in their look but make such a statement. Subtlety is key when it comes to design, to make a statement without being overtly in your face.

DelightFULL specializes in handcrafted, unique lighting designs.

**Sensational Sinks**

Most people don't think of sinks as sexy, but BLANCO is becoming the trendsetter when it comes to kitchen sinks. They are making them sleek, contemporary, and well designed. They understand that it's not only about function but form and look as well.

The Modenus was a standout for me. Made from SILGRANIT an almost indestructible surface coming in many colours, this sink declares itself as a stand out with its clean lines and perfect proportions.

The BLANCOATTIKA is another stand out for me. The lip around the sink is subtle and makes for a great design detail. I love the many components that it also comes with like the hidden faucet detail. Perfect for small spaces and clean and modern kitchens.

(Opposite page) Contemporary Blanco kitchen sinks make it a trendsetter.

**Mix and match**

The mixing of materials is something that I saw as a big hit at the show. One of the biggest was through faucets. BLANCO again became the trendsetter when it came to this mixing their faucets with their SILGRANIT collection. Creating a faucet like no other. The streamlined faucets normally coming in chrome or satin nickel now have a new dimension. Making it easy to pair them with cabinets, counter tops, and sinks. **D**

■ **Alykhan Velji** is the president of Alykhan Velji Design and has been featured on TV shows such as HGTV's Designer Superstar Challenge and My Rona Home. He specializes in both residential and commercial interior design projects.