



CULTURAL COLLISION

Filled with Eastern antiques and artefacts, this Danish home boasts a truly unique interior that's packed with personal charm

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Living room The family dog, Balder, relaxes on a Berber rug produced in Morocco for the homeowner's company, Wilson Thun. Decorative touches include flowers on the windowsills and tassels from a Marrakech souk, which adorn an 18th-century lacquered Chinese cabinet from Copenhagen antiques store Green Square. Finds from the homeowner's travels in Egypt are displayed on the coffee table; the painting on the wall is by Danish artist Balder Olrik **Stockist details on p223** >



Entrance hall The grand double-height entrance hall lies at the centre of the house, overlooked by a first-floor walkway leading to the bedrooms. Original architectural niches have been filled with decorative plaster reliefs that help to absorb sound and retain heat. A lacquered antique Chinese table from Green Square is covered with books and unusual objects, including Chinese lanterns and an 18th-century papier-mâché Burmese Buddha **Stockist details on p223**

East meets west and old blends with new in Vibeke Wilson Thun's enchanting Danish home, which is filled with furniture, artefacts and decorative ideas from a host of different countries and eras. But despite this rich mix of cultural styles and influences, the sensation that greets you when you step through the front door is one of cohesion and calm. In many ways, this brave, unorthodox style is a reflection of the ideas behind Vibeke's company, Wilson Thun, which produces beautiful handcrafted throws and rugs in designs and colour schemes conceived by Vibeke. 'The idea is to combine ancient knowledge and techniques with bright Scandinavian colours and simple geometric designs,' she says. 'We produce luxury rugs that bridge the gap between old and new while supporting the lives and traditional skills of the Tibetans and the Berbers.'

Vibeke regularly travels to Morocco, Egypt, Nepal, India, Vietnam and Tibet for work, picking up objects and furniture, but most importantly ideas, along the way. Yet the 452 square metre house she shares with her husband and three sons, which overlooks the sea to the north of Copenhagen, feels distinctly Danish. Designed for a tobacco merchant in 1926, its elegant architecture acts as the perfect display cabinet for Vibeke's ever-evolving collection. 'We've purposefully stuck with a neutral palette to highlight particular things within the space,' she says. The original walls, floors and plasterwork have been carefully restored, and the modernised kitchen and bathrooms are refined and minimalist in style. Only the double-height entrance hall received a radical makeover, with the addition of Arabic-inspired moulded arches and screens that improve the heating and acoustics of the room. 'I got the idea when I was visiting The Red Fort in India,' says Vibeke. 'It's my favourite space in the house because it's at the very centre of the building, and the glass ceiling means it's illuminated by both the sun and the moon.'

Throughout the house, imposing lacquered tables and cabinets – the antithesis of the pared-back Scandinavian norm – stand out against the white walls and wooden panelling. 'I love Eastern pieces, especially antique Chinese furniture, because they're simple and functional, yet also very powerful and masculine,' says Vibeke. 'I'm crazy about the lacquered pieces, which date back to the 17th century and have layers of old varnish that I find beautiful.' The bulkiness of these items is alleviated by the addition of decorative personal touches, such as the tassels that hang from drawer handles, books piled high on shelves, and throws and artefacts thoughtfully arranged across almost every available surface. And despite the exotic influences, there's an overwhelming feeling of *hygge*, a Danish concept that means warmth, comfort and cosiness. Fresh flowers adorn the windowsills, and there's an open fire where the family gather in winter. 'I've tried to create an atmosphere that expresses harmony, balance, peace, quiet and intimacy,' Vibeke explains. Mission accomplished, we think.

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'The house is a true mix of old and new, but everything has a story and everything is authentic'

Study This room has views across the Øresund, the stretch of water separating Denmark from Sweden. Paper lanterns from Tibet top an antique cabinet: together with a Vietnamese kimono, round boxes from Burma and peonies in bloom, they add dramatic splashes of colour to the mainly monochrome scheme
Dining area Chairs upholstered in white linen by Designers Guild are dramatically offset by dark flooring and a black lacquered table **Stockist details on p223** ▶




Kitchen A Bulthaup kitchen with stainless-steel work surface is a practical modern addition to this 1920s home. Black 'Tolomeo' lights by Michele de Lucchi and Giancarlo Fassina for Artemide (try Geoffrey Harris) stand out against the white units, while plants add a welcoming burst of colour **Stockist details on p223 >**



'This house feels different in every season, but it's always a beautiful space. I've tried to create an atmosphere that expresses harmony, balance, peace and quiet'



Bedroom The mix of European, North African and Asian pieces found throughout this house continues in the bedroom, where a Hästens bed is covered with a Nepalese cashmere throw by Wilson Thun. The Tibetan wool rug is also by Wilson Thun; the slippers were picked up at a souk in Fez. Travel finds are displayed on an antique Chinese console from Green Square. The 'PH 2/1' wall lights are by Poul Henningsen for Louis Poulsen (try Skandium) **Stockist details on p223** 



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