

A SPARKLING YEAR FROM EAST TO WEST

by Antonia Stewart



“WE ARE EXPECTING INCREASED ENERGY and sparkle in 2010 as we move away from the cautious themes that dominated 2009. With a focus on a return to natural products and colours and with the ongoing emergence of the East this year, consumers will be demanding quality products which combine high tech performance and hand crafted quality – with green credentials.

As manufacturers are forced to think about the environmental impact of the production of fabrics, so the interiors market is seeing a rise in the demand for natural textures: cottons, linens, leathers, mohair and silks. Combining these luxurious textures with naturally sourced dyes, this year's colours will be much more earthy; expect to see mineral blues, mossy greens, amethyst purples, coral reds and sunflower yellows. More subdued than their acidic chemical predecessors, the colours in 2010 will nevertheless retain a rich and opulent quality which will lend themselves to be used either in layers on their own or as surfaces to decorate.

Multi-cultural and multi-coloured elements will be visible as the West adopts details of the thriving new cities of India and China. Thus we will see fabrics adorned with jewel-like beads, sparkling metallic threads and many, many glittering sequins which will give fabric surfaces a beauty and hand crafted uniqueness on a scale on which they have not been seen before. Imagery also continues to be a key item for fabric embellishment. In addition to the influence of nature in the forms of botanical, tree and bird designs, world culture will be dominant in shaping the design and colour of interiors. Several of this year's printed fabrics feature influences of these far-away eastern cities, with Japanese dolls and Chinese writing evident amongst the more traditional Indian prints.



As the economic climate means that we are entertaining more at home, so we wish these spaces to reflect our personalities, tastes and travels. Whether in furniture or fabrics, the desire across the board is for design to become more personal and as a result many furniture manufacturers are now opening their doors to making bespoke pieces as they try to tailor their products for customers who increasingly want to break away from a mainstream look. Added to this is the recent move to 'Buy British'; British furniture makers and companies are experiencing an up-turn in business as people turn to support the flourishing home industry and talent. With the feel-good factor that comes with buying a British designed and made piece, it is unsurprising that long established heritage wallpaper manufacturers such as Cole & Son have joined forces with designers such as Vivienne Westwood, and companies such as MARK (Product of Cornwall) have sprung up with the promise that their products will deliver on all environmental, social, ethical and economic levels.

As environmental concerns top the agenda, consumers are actively working to make their homes more ecological, and less expensive to run. Whatever the requirement, whether to improve insulation, use organic or water-based paints, or to collect heat using geo-thermal methods for warmth – the number of green practices available is simultaneously increasing and reducing in price, making them more accessible to a wider audience. With the government introducing incentives such as reducing VAT on energy saving (building) materials, and phasing out the old style light bulbs in favour of energy efficient versions, the responsibility is with us all to tackle one of the biggest contributors of climate change: our homes.

We are looking forward to our projects in 2010 and to combining fabulous fabrics and products influenced from around the globe with the knowledge that we will also be actively involved in the move to greener living.”

Antonia Stewart
Interior Design
Unit 4C Coda Centre
189 Munster Road
London SW6 6AW
Tel.: +44 (0)20 7386 0110
www.antoniasstewart.com

