

PERFECT WEEKEND | PARIS

India Mahdavi

The acclaimed architect and designer's portfolio includes the Connaught's Coburg Bar, Hôtel Thoumieux in Paris and Hotel on Rivington in New York.

Saturday mornings are set aside for catching up with my beauty routine. I'll get my hair done at David Mallett, who has the most beautiful salon in the second arrondissement, and then I might go round the corner to have a facial at Les Bains de Grenelle. However, I need to get home by midday for my Farsi lesson – we left Iran when I was just a few months old so I never learnt Farsi, and now I'm making up for lost time. I love it because it reconnects me with my past.

After my lesson, I'll meet friends for lunch. I tend to go to the same places, such as Thoumieux, which is run by Jean-François Piège and Thierry Costes. It's a fantastic location – I designed the gastronomic restaurant on the first floor and the 15 hotel rooms above it, but for lunch I like to go to the brasserie and have something simple such as salmon confit or *salade de mâche aux truffes*. Or I might go to Le Germain, on the Left Bank, and have the Germain burger.

In the afternoon, I try to get out of my neighbourhood, the seventh arrondissement [pictured], and see what's going on in the galleries – such as Galerie Patrick Seguin in the Bastille area, which specialises in 20th-century furniture and architecture. While I'm there I might check out The Lazy Dog, which sells wonderful graphic art books. Or I'll have a wander around the Marais, where one of my favourites is Galerie Xippas.

On Saturday nights I like to see my friends, so I might invite people over for dinner or go to a party. I also like going to the cinema – maybe at La Pagode, which is a really beautiful, historic movie theatre, built like a Japanese pagoda; or Cinéma Le Balzac, where I just saw *Women Without Men* by the Iranian-born visual artist Shirin Neshat.

Once a month I rent out the Germain Paradisio – a small, private cinema that seats about 25-30 people – and invite my friends to see a movie. You get to choose the film (the last one we saw was *The Party* by Blake Edwards), and we can also have a drink or dinner afterwards, so it's an ideal way to get people together.

On Sunday, I love going to the flea market at Porte de Clignancourt. I particularly like Marché Paul Bert and Marché Serpette, and I always buy a bunch of stuff. Recently I've bought a Gio Ponti armchair, some lights that look like two eyes on a tripod – very Surrealist – and a white ceramic vase. I never go looking for anything in particular; if something catches my eye I'll buy it,



but nothing is ever wasted. I like to add something I haven't designed myself into every project, just to add a different energy. The Thoumieux, for instance, is really cosy, like a country house in the middle of Paris, and it was useful to have all these unusual one-off pieces to hand.

I'll also try to get to the organic market on Boulevard Raspail to buy my fruit and vegetables, which is great fun because I always run into half of Paris. And if I've got time, I'll go down to L'Ecume des Pages, a bookshop in St Germain, to pick up a few books. They might be new titles, although I am trying to catch up with all the classics that I haven't read and I have phases when I'll just read Russian

literature or Japanese books, for instance. I also bought a series of philosophy lectures by Michel Onfray on CD, called *Contre-Histoire de la Philosophie*, which I listen to while I'm driving around Paris in my dark-blue Mini Cooper convertible.

Sunday nights are super-important: everyone in my building is very good friends and we take it in turns to host a dinner for the whole building. Whoever's around just turns up – anything from six to 15 people, and often kids too, so it's lovely. It's a great way to deal with that gloomy Sunday-night feeling.

After dinner, I'll light the fire in my bedroom and hop into bed with my book – fantastic. HILARY WHITNEY

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JEROME BONNET. ADDRESS BOOK LES BAINS DE GRENELLE, 76 RUE DE GRENELLE (+331-4222 6797). CINEMA LE BALZAC, 1 RUE BALZAC (+331-4561 1060). CINEMA LE GERMAIN PARADISIO, 25-27 RUE DE BUJON (+336-9499 3713). DAVID MALLET, 14 RUE NOTRE DAME DES VICTOIRES (+331-4020 0023). L'ECUME DES PAGES, 174 BOULEVARD ST GERMAIN (+331-4548 5448). GALERIE PATRICK SEGUIN, 5 RUE DES TAILLANDIERS (+331-4700 3235). GALERIE XIPPAS, 108 RUE VIEILLE DU TEMPLE (+331-4027 0555). LE GERMAIN, 25-27 RUE DE BUJON (+331-4326 0293). THE LAZY DOG, 25 RUE DE CHARONNE (+331-4929 9793). MARCHÉ PAUL BERT ET MARCHÉ SERPETTE, PUCES DE ST OÛEN-PORTE DE CLIGNANCOURT, 96-110 RUE DES ROSIERS (+331-4011 5414). LA PAGODE, 57 BIS RUE DE BABYLONE (+331-4655 4848). THOUMIEUX, 79 RUE ST DOMINIQUE (+331-4705 4975).

india mahdavi

show room # 3

A 3 rue las cases 75007 paris

T +33 1 45 55 67 67

F +33 1 45 55 67 77

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E showroom@indiamahdavi.com

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OPEN

monday: 10am-1pm, 2pm-7pm

tuesday to Friday: 10am -7pm

saturday: 11am -7pm

show room # 19

A 19 rue las cases 75007 paris

T +33 1 45 55 88 88

T +33 1 45 50 11 21

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E accessoires@indiamahdavi.com

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OPEN

monday to saturday: 11am -7pm

studio

A 5 rue las cases 75007 paris

T +33 1 45 51 63 89

F +33 1 45 51 38 16

—

E studio@indiamahdavi.com

—

press

A 5 rue las cases 75007 paris

T +33 1 45 51 75 12

F +33 1 45 51 38 16

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E press@indiamahdavi.com

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