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THE SWISS
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ADperspective

INDIA MAHDAVI

INDIA MAHDAVI

Paris-based India Mahdavi is acclaimed for her joyful interiors in strong colours and contrasting textures. Her latest project with designer Joseph Dirand, the luxurious L'Apogée hotel in Courchevel, France, opened in December 2013. She designs artwork furniture, like the 'Landscape' table rippling with a snakeskin patterned mosaic, for the Carawan Gallery in Lebanon, and accessories—including cushions that are embroidered in India—which are sold in her Paris studio.

"I, too, was made in India. In 1962, my parents went for a year-long tour to Nepal, India and Afghanistan, where they met the King's daughter, who was named India. So when I was born in Tehran in 1963, they named me India. When you carry the name of a country, it's a responsibility, a legacy, which has great meaning for me."

So far, she has no landmark in India. The two projects that she worked on never materialized: a department store for La Rinascence in Bengaluru, and the relaunch of the Three Hundred Club in Mumbai. "I got to stay at the Royal [Bombay] Yacht Club. All the allure of India with a view of the Gateway of India, in one of those old buildings, with furniture that hadn't been moved since the 1940s.

"I'm not obsessed by old things but I'm sensitive to the feel of places that have been abandoned. I like ruins for the same reason. And the countryside in India is so wild and unspoilt. I love Ranthambore National Park in Rajasthan," she says. And her observations on the Taj Mahal are original: "Every sense is heightened by the sound of the wind as it whispers and swirls even as it cools the tomb."

Mahdavi calls Mumbai the New York of India and visits the bazaar to "absorb the colours, crowds and crafts. I buy fabrics and jewellery; my latest purchase is a pair of long scissors." (india-mahdavi.com)



PHOTOS COURTESY INDIA MAHDAVI



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THE INSIDER

A room at the L'Apogée in Courchevel and a detail of the ceiling (inset); cushions designed by India Mahdavi's studio; the 'Landscape' table created for the Carawan Gallery; the Taj Mahal; India Mahdavi.



india mahdavi

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