

LIVING

# India Mahdavi, the Interior Designer Behind London's Restaurant Sketch, Debuts a Line of Rugs

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by MADELEINE LUCKEL



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Photo: Courtesy of La Manufacture Cogolin / India Mahdavi

There are interior designers whose rooms blend into Pinterest boards, and those whose work stands out. India Mahdavi, the woman behind The Gallery at London's Sketch, Beverley Hills's Ladurée, and countless other spaces, exemplifies the later group. And it's probably because Mahdavi, whose career is in full-swing, uses color unlike anyone else.

“I choose colors according to what I am trying to say with a space,” Mahdavi explains. “For instance, pink at The Gallery at Sketch was chosen to contrast with the provocative and whimsical art of David Shrigley, and the large cube-like interior. Most of the time, I decide very quickly and trust my intuition.”

Since Mahdavi made that particularly intuitive choice, The Gallery at Sketch has become a reference point within the interior design community. Velvet, Pop-inspired, furniture is now more ubiquitous than ever, as is, of course, millennial pink.

Unsurprisingly, our recent conversation with Mahdavi (which took place on a particularly rainy day) had much to do with color—not on the walls of her latest restaurant commission but of those she masterfully applied in the design of her new line of rugs, manufactured in partnership with La Manufacture Cogolin.

“I am very inspired by craftsmanship,” says Mahdavi of the recently released collection. “It has always been part of my work. When La Manufacture Cogolin asked me to design this collection, *Jardin Intérieur*, I was honored to have the opportunity.”

The enthusiasm was mutual. “These carpets perfectly translate the complete understanding that India has of our production techniques, including the way we mix and match colors,” says Sarah Henry, managing director of La Manufacture Cogolin.



Interior designer India Mahdavi.

Photo: Claire Israel

For her own part, Mahdavi had a clear vision of the colorscape she wanted to create. “I chose colors that breathe life and reflect nature,” Mahdavi says of the carpets. “Bright colors on the floor bring light, energy, and joy to a room.”

However, as is true in any space, this continues well above the floor. “The most beautiful way to use color in an interior is to use it everywhere without moderation,” Mahdavi says.

This begs the question, would Mahdavi classify herself as a color maximalist, as much of her work implies? “I like saturation. . . . And it’s true that I’m rather maximalist,” she concedes. “I like working with layers, and I like when colors start having a conversation—when they insult each other.”

It’s that type of unique thinking that others may find difficult to replicate. But as Mahdavi points out, “The danger with color is to be afraid of it.”

For many, that's exactly what happens. So to mitigate this risk, Mahdavi suggests using a minimum of three colors in every room. Not that Mahdavi is picking favorites. "I don't make a hierarchy between colors, I like everything," she says. "It's mostly about finding the right tone that's associated with a material or another color. Today, for example, I am in love with milky orange."

There is, of course, additional significance behind each and every color, which Mahdavi is well aware of. Asked whether she believes color has the ability to affect mood, the designer replies, "Yes, I do. I think color brings a form of joy if you use it in the right way." She also relies on a color's ability to conjure associations. "For Ladrée in Geneva," Mahdavi gives as an example, "I used the colors of a garden, green and lilac, because I defined that space as a garden of delights and sweetness." Delightful, indeed.

*Above, take an exclusive first look at India Mahdavi's new collection for La Manufacture Cogolin, in showrooms through 2018.*





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Photo: Courtesy of La Manufacture Cogolin / India Mahdavi



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