

# A NOMADIC Spirit

India Mahdavi blends chaos, drama and femininity to create spaces and designs that are infallibly vibrant

Words **KARINE MONIÉ**



**S**ome people are true citizens of the world. Paris-based interior architect and designer India Mahdavi was born in Iran and raised by a Persian father and Egyptian-English mother. She only spent her first year and a half in her country of origin and has gone on to live in the USA, Germany, England and now, France. With such a diverse background, it is no surprise that Mahdavi continues to travel the world in order to nurture her creativity. Her taste and style reflect the eclecticism and complementarity of her references, which include Le Corbusier as her favourite architect and the Luis Barragán house in Mexico City among the places she is most fascinated by.

Though only half of 2017 has elapsed, Mahdavi's work this year can already be described as prolific. Launched during Salone del Mobile in April, the 'Talisman Table' for Louis Vuitton's *Objets Nomades* was inspired by the nomadic traditions of the Middle East and

*India Mahdavi is one of the busiest women in the business. Ladurée in Beverly Hills (left), the 'Talisman Table' (below left) and the new rattan collection (below right) are testament to her unique style*

features a portable, leather-covered base that unfolds like a book, as well as a removable tabletop. In Berlin, the women's designer floor at famous department store KaDeWe is adorned with curves and graphic lines that borrow from the Bauhaus style, made of black, grey and white marble with touches of soft pink. Ralph Pucci's new Los Angeles showroom, also designed by Mahdavi, features her furniture collection. And famous French tea room Ladurée opened in Beverly Hills—yet another Mahdavi project—based on her unique “Marie Antoinette goes to Hollywood” concept.

While her studio and two showrooms are located in a quiet street of the 7th arrondissement in Paris, Mahdavi confesses to her love of chaos—it reminds her of her roots. In all her projects—which she always selects very carefully and which include the patterned and quirky Maison Thoudieux boutique hotel, the Art Deco-inspired Café Français and the bold Café Germain in Paris, restaurateur Mourad Mazouz's pink-bathed Gallery at Sketch in London and the floral-themed Condesa Df hotel in Mexico City—Mahdavi pays great attention to three things: the place, the client and the function. Always thinking of how she can make a difference, Mahdavi “listens” to the place and observes every detail. “I work like a doctor, a surgeon of spaces,” she says.

