



Condé Nast Traveller

THE WORLD MADE LOCAL

MIDDLE EAST EDITION

Stylish settings

DESIGN-FORWARD HOTELS, INSIDER SHOPPING TIPS
AND FASHIONABLE FINDS FROM PARIS TO TOKYO



Plus

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON
KENYA'S MASAI MARA
SAMPLING PALERMO'S
SEDUCTIVE CHARM
THE MIDDLE EAST'S NEW
BRAND OF BOUTIQUE HOTEL
CREATING BEAUTY FROM
CHAOS IN BEIRUT

Contributors

WE ASKED OUR WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS WHERE THEY GO FOR DESIGN INSPIRATION

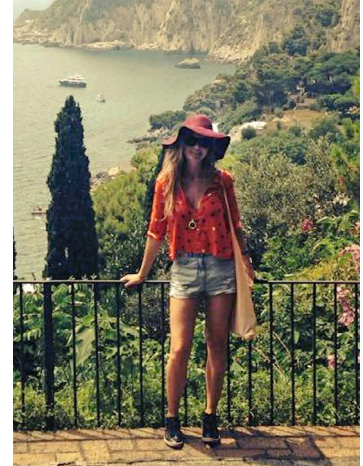


SHAMILEE VELLU
The Neighbourhood, p140

“My recent visit to Allapattah, Miami’s emerging arts neighbourhood, was incredibly inspiring. Nestled among the area’s modest, low-rise residences are diverse museums and galleries like Rubell Museum, Superblue, El Espacio 23, KDR, Andrew Reed Gallery and my favourite, Esquina de Abuela, a vibrant artist collective inspired by founder Fabian Martinez’s Cuban guerilla grandmother.” *Shamilee Vellu is a Singapore-based travel and lifestyle journalist who writes for Condé Nast Traveller, The Telegraph and South China Morning Post*

CLAIRE CARRUTHERS
Modest fashion, p70

“My dream is to retire in Greece – the Cyclades or Saronic Islands – and just live the simple life in Hydra, Spetses, Paros or Milos. If I have a view of the ocean and that transcendental sunset, I’ll be happy. Of course, the simple blue and white architectural Pantone is a major pull, but it’s the people who make it: genuine, unpretentious, often joyful and at times downright rude, they have this spirit, an honesty, that just feels so comforting.” *Based in Dubai, Claire Carruthers has worked in publishing for more than 20 years*



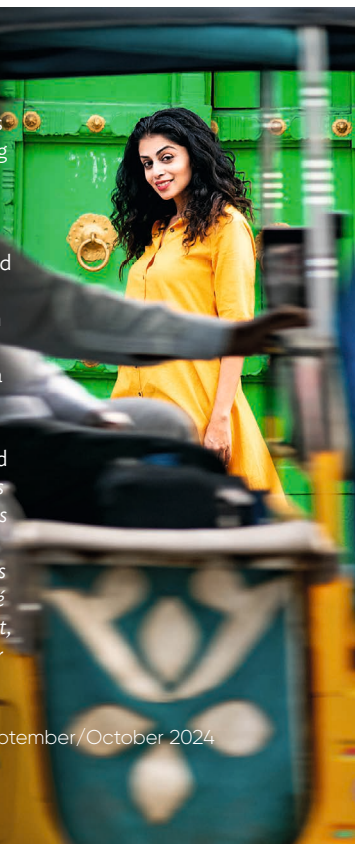
TAREK MOUKADDEM
Beirut, p76

“I’m mostly inspired by the region – the streets, the food, the life and culture. The nightlife of Beirut, the old streets of Damascus, the busy markets of Marrakech, the chaos of Cairo... they represent a myriad sensorial feelings, a mix of flowers, spices, people and chaos you can’t find anywhere else.” *Tarek Moukaddem is a visual artist, designer and fashion photographer in Beirut. He has shot for Vogue Arabia, Architectural Digest and L’Officiel, and his work has been exhibited in more than 30 countries*



SARAH KHAN
Cape Malay, p24

“A highlight of my four years in Cape Town was immersing myself in its vibrant design scene, which encompasses the city’s singular mix of African, European, Indian and Malay influences. My New York apartment is filled with finds from there: a beaded vase from Ananta Studios, a shweshwe skirt from WAG and an ostrich egg painted with Arabic calligraphy found in a market.” *Sarah Khan has reported from seven continents for The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. She is a contributing editor at Condé Nast Traveller and Robb Report, and editor-at-large at Further*



FIFI ABOU DIB
Beirut, p76

“I find inspiration everywhere. The poem *Ithaka* by Cavafy; Ehden, a Lebanese mountain town with sunsets framed by pine trees; the vast white sands of Tyre’s 12km beach; the historic Albergo Hotel in Beirut, a place of timeless charm and unexpected discoveries; everything Bauhaus, from volumes to typography to colour palettes; as well as the architecture of Lina Ghotmeh, the sculptures of Henry Dakak and the bold yet minimalistic jewels of Oliver Aoun.” *Beirut-based journalist and fashion editor Fifi Abou Dib is the former editor-in-chief of L’Officiel Levant and contributes to L’Orient-Le Jour and Arab News*



Clockwise from this picture: artist Thania Petersen; an amuse-bouche at The Happy Uncles; the dining room there



SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

CAPE TOWN'S ARTISTS, DESIGNERS AND CHEFS ARE HIGHLIGHTING THE CITY'S CAPE MALAY HERITAGE. BY SARAH KHAN

TO SEE WHERE CAPE TOWN'S COOL KIDS HANG OUT, stop by the Pot Plant Club. Set amid a row of Victorian houses on trendy Bree Street, the boutique, cofounded by Salik Harris in 2022, doubles as a social club for locals, who linger at the shop's café, or rifle through racks of oversized jackets and denim. The emporium's collection includes emerging labels such as Asa Sadan, the Paint Company and Yarns Worldwide, alongside Harris's own streetwear brand, Leaf Apparel. All were founded by talents from the Cape Malay community, a South African ethnic group with a huge impact on the city's cultural life.

"I always found Cape Malay people to be so creative," says Harris. "We resonate with black people, we resonate with white people. We're in the middle of all the chaos." Cape Malay is something of a misnomer, a blanket name assigned to a layered identity unique to the tip of the African continent that developed as the result of Indonesian and Malaysian exiles mixing with Africans, Europeans, Indians and Arabs over the centuries. "The term Cape Malay is used to describe a Creole community, a community that is completely mixed," says artist Thania Petersen, who explores her heritage through photography, painting, textiles and performance. "We don't exist anywhere else in the world."

For most visitors, brushes with Cape Malay culture are limited to Bo-Kaap, a warren of rainbow-bright houses and mosques on



Igshaan Adams surrounded by his artwork. Right: *Rampie and Layer II*, a textile by Thania Petersen



Jephta amassed global accolades for her 2020 Afrikaans comedy, *Barakat*, which follows a family gathering for Eid. And South Africa's best-known rapper, YoungstaCPT, often dons a fez in his videos and imbues his lyrics with Cape Malay references. "His songs are focused on repositioning Cape Malay culture within the context of South Africa," says visual artist Imraan Christian, who has collaborated with the rapper to direct provocative music videos like *Young Van Riebeeck*.

Art is the discipline for which Cape Malays have amassed the most acclaim, at home and abroad. "I think the rest of the world has realised that African art is not just about traditional masks," Igshaan Adams observes at his atelier in Cape Town's celebrated Zeitz MOCAA museum, as he nears the end of a seven-month residency. His *Salat Aljamaeat Min Bonteheuwel*, a pastiche of timeworn prayer mats from his hometown in the Bonteheuwel township, was one of the most striking installations at the inaugural Islamic Arts Biennale in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, last year.

A few floors above the Zeitz MOCAA at the Silo Hotel, lift doors slide open at the 10th-floor penthouse suite to reveal a striking photographic collage: Petersen, the heritage-minded artist, swathed in a voluminous red dress, documented herself in 25 poses from the Indonesian dance of 1,000 hands. Amid the hotel's landmark collection of contemporary African art, this work commands a moment of repose and wonder. "I tried to teach myself this dance to reconnect with our history, as a way of literally and physically facing our past," she says. But Petersen's oeuvre speaks firmly to the present: "You cannot come to Cape Town and not smell us, see us, taste us. I mean, we are embedded in the DNA of what Cape Town is today." 📍

the slopes of the iconic Signal Hill. Tour buses regularly choke Wale Street to disgorge passengers for quick selfies or to sample koeksisters, plump pastries steeped in cardamom and dusted with coconut. But the scale of influence this community has had on South Africa is often overlooked on the tourist circuit.

Pot Plant Club's streetwear brands may be rooted in Cape Town's current sartorial moment, but they have strong ties to the city's past. For generations, Cape Malays were, as tailors and factory workers, at the forefront of a once-booming textile industry. "We never owned the businesses, but we were the hands that grew these businesses," says designer Imran Mohamed in his studio in Woodstock, a suburb that's emerged as a creative hub. "We never saw people like us in this space. I wanted to portray our people in that luxury-fashion context." In 2021, the Central Saint Martins alum launched Asa Sadan, a high-end streetwear label named after his grandmother and inspired in part by Cape Malay silhouettes. This year, his work was included in the Africa Fashion exhibition at London's Victoria and Albert Museum.

Today, creatives across Cape Town are exploring their complex identities through fashion, art, cuisine, film and music. In an unassuming industrial space in the Salt River neighbourhood east of the city – once a hive of textile factories – chef Anwar Abdullatief artfully reimagines Cape Malay staples in an eight-course tasting menu at The Happy Uncles, Cape Town's first halal fine-dining restaurant. Filmmaker Amy

PHOTOGRAPHS: ERIN JANE NELSON; THE HAPPY UNCLES; AMIN GRAY; NICODIM GALLERY