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HOMES

LIFESTYLE MEDIA OF THE YEAR

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APR - MAY 2019



\$8.00



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A JAPANESE STORY

Guided by Japanese aesthetics and inspired by the qualities of simplicity and the beauty of imperfection, these understated lamps will give your home a calming ambience

The Japanese take good design very seriously. An awareness of the impermanence of life has shaped Japanese aesthetic traditions, cultural norms and classical philosophy based on principles and ideals which are rooted in Zen Buddhism.

Take for instance, the concept of *mono no aware*, which refers to a wistful awareness of transience. Another term, *wabi-sabi*, embraces the beauty of imperfection; while *iki* celebrates the refined qualities of simplicity and spontaneity in human nature. Together, these concepts allude to a way of being as well as a way of looking at the world. In product design, these philosophies are communicated through an appreciation of natural materials, imperfect textures and meticulous detailing. Today, the minimalist ethos of these ideals continue to bear influence on the work of art and design luminaries from Japan and around the world.

Look to the following lighting products, which celebrate elements of these aesthetic traditions:



MYSTERY EGGS

From a distance, the Gregg outdoor suspension lamps from Foscarini might easily be mistaken for floating, otherworldly eggs, while its floor lamp version appears as glowing smooth boulders in the garden. The work of Milanese studio Ludovica + Roberto Palomba, these outdoor lamps are composed of rotational moulded polyethylene diffusers set onto a polyester powder-coated zinc alloy base. Available in various sizes, these lighting pieces can help create a Zen-like garden experience.



SHAPED BY THE TRANSCIENT NATURE OF LIFE, JAPANESE AESTHETICS EMBRACE THE UNDERSTATED BEAUTY OF THE EVERYDAY



ANCIENT MYSTIQUE

The work of Danish artist and designer Michael Geertsen for Lightyears, this lamp was named after the Dogu, ancient Japanese humanoid figurines that were made during the late Jōmon period from 14,000 to 300 BC. Made of bone powder and white clay, the lamp shade harks to the figurine's ceramic form and sculptural quality. Although this lamp may not have the antiquated details of the Japanese figurine, it certainly has a hypnotic quality—its shade has a translucent quality that makes it a calming beacon of light.



ORGANIC CURVES

Japanese homes are often finished in light-coloured wood, which conveys a peaceful atmosphere. Bring a touch of that serene ambience home with the Diva lamp by Norwegian designers Peter Natedal and Thomas Kalvatn Egset for Northern Lighting. It comprises 32 strips of laminated oak or walnut plywood bent in sections to create an organic silhouette. Within the wood housing is a mouth-blown frosted glass bulb, which exudes a soft glow.



BY MICHELE KOH MOROLLO IMAGES COURTESY OF RESPECTIVE BRANDS



VOLCANIC HIGH

With a shade that looks like cracked clay, the Mountainstone Lamp pays tribute to the Japanese philosophy of *wabi-sabi*. Designed by Taiwanese studio Celement Lab, the shade is made of celement, a composite material that combines the qualities of silicon and cement; the soft, transparent material features a rough surface, is waterproof and heat-resistant up to 200 deg C. When it's switched on, the lamp appears like an active volcano, with the warm light shining through its crack lines.



ART OF GLASS

Inspired by the Japanese wood-preserving method of *yakisugi* (which involves charring timber with fire), the Yakisugi collection from Lasvit captures the beautiful textures of charred wood in glass. Designed by renowned Japanese architect Kengo Kuma, the molten glass is set against the charred wood, so the burnt bark leaves its textural imprint on the glass surface, making each lamp truly unique.



PURE FORMS

Handmade in Finland by skilled craftsmen, the Teelo 8020 is a sculptural lamp by Finnish brand Secto Design that embraces the purity of unvarnished wood in the same way as the Japanese minimalists; its streamlined design celebrates the quiet beauty of wood grains. Made of form-compressed birch, the lamp is available in either a light-coloured natural birch or a darker walnut veneer finish.



A NEW SPIN

Designed by Pierre Dubois and Aimé Cécil for Roche Bobois, the Sanur floor lamp exudes an understated rustic beauty that fits within the Japanese philosophy of *shibumi*, which celebrates simple, unobtrusive beauty. Its rough-hewn metal mesh shade is set on a metal stand and is reminiscent of traditional fishing lanterns that are made of natural weaves.



RISING SUN

The urban elegance of the *iki* ideal is conveyed beautifully in Dish of Light C, a copper-plated iron lamp by Japanese designer Kouichi Okamoto of Kyouei Design. The sleek, disc-like shades of each lamp can be rotated to control the intensity of light, which also harks to the daily movements of the sun.



PAPER WORKS

The Comodín wall lamp by Santa & Cole features an arched chrome-plated shade that discretely hides the bulb from view so that the lamp emanates a gentle, lantern-like glow. It's available in seven different finishes, which include amber red, mustard yellow, as well as soft shades of beige and terracotta. With a simple form inspired by the ridged folds of a Japanese paper fan, this minimalist wall lamp will make a tranquil addition to your home.



CELEMENT LAB & KYOUEI DESIGN

The Artling
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