

Contemporary craft
 Individuality is key for London stylist and craft couturier Sania Pell. Eschewing mass-produced pieces, she injects pure originality and zest into each room, seamlessly mixing handcrafted pieces with vintage and industrial objects. Instead of settling for symmetry – where items perfectly mirror each other – an apparently haphazard arrangement gives instant impact.



Set and mismatch

Sania mixed Eames chairs around her dining table. For a variation, try 'Family' stick-back chairs, which are sold in sets of two complementary design styles. Design House Stockholm 'Family' chairs by Lina Nordqvist. Pairs are (above, from left) 1 & 2 and 3 & 4, \$995 a pair, from Vincent & Vincent, (03) 9585 0130.



You can reap crafty rewards from Sania's creativity with her book *The Homemade Home* (\$39.95, Cico Books/Hardie Grant). Turn to page 85 to see five of the 50 charming projects she covers in the hardback.

INSIDER'S GUIDE TO ... DECORATING 101

With her industry know-how, Sania shows how to transform a room into a designer space without breaking the bank:

Q. When you decorate a room, where do you start? "I usually begin with practical points – if you already have a large piece of furniture that can't be changed, work from there. Also, look at the walls and see what they lend themselves to – will an existing painting work and at least give you a design direction? Not everything you love will necessarily fit into every home; some things will need to be put away or updated with a new colour or fabric."

Q. Where do you start when putting together a colour palette? "I think you should select similar tones in differing textures throughout a home, uniting the interior and making it flow. But that's not to say there can't be exceptions to the rule – there could be a contrasting wall colour for a surprise. Opt for wild accessories, instead. They can be updated, changed and revamped whenever you fancy a quick change."

Q. Any other tips to avoid making any big mistakes? "I always begin with magazine tearsheets. Some I have collected are from years ago and still have elements I love. I put them in piles for each room. After a few pages, you realise that you're drawn to certain colours over and over again, and that the same flooring keeps popping up. You do need to take some risks, though – sometimes a little 'wrongness' is just what a room needs to stop it feeling too safe."

IN DETAIL

ideas from the Pell home

3 really great

UTILITARIAN BEAUTIES

Vintage utility items add character throughout the house, as witnessed with Sania's collection of graphic letters, numbers and measuring tapes. When positioning objects such as these, experiment with shape and colour combinations to create a beautiful balance. "Remember to retain some clear space," says Sania. "For example, if you have one wall with lots of frames on display, keep the other walls minimal."



1. Vintage **flowerbed markers**, \$54 each, from DavidmetNicole, www.davidmetnicole.com. 2. **Printers' block artwork**, from \$295, from Duck Egg Blue, www.duckeggblue.com.au. 3. Old **scrabble tiles**, \$3.50 each, from DavidmetNicole, as before.

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