

Flying Solo

A wall painted in
Jotun's Masala 10428
shade complements
the blue scheme



Harf Noon Design Studio creates a stylishly serene bachelor pad

BY **NISHANT D'SILVA**

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY **NISRINE EL LABABIDI MOGHRABY**

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hat do you think of when someone says, 'bachelor pad'? The stereotypical leatherette recliners, propped in front of large screen plasma televisions, right? Well, this particular bachelor pad, decorated by Nisrine El Lababidi Moghraby of Harf Noon Design Studio, stylishly smashes all those stereotypes.

Commissioned to transform this home, for a client who had recently bought a house and decided to settle in Dubai, Nisrine has created a warm, inviting space, with not one recliner or large-screen TV in sight.

"My client has been working in the States for over 15 years and living in rentals. When he finally relocated to Dubai through his work, he decided that he will no longer rent but will buy an apartment to put down roots. He finally feels settled and at home here," Nisrine tells us.

The client had made some initial changes – completely revamping the bathrooms and the kitchen. He had furnished part of the apartment with the help of another designer. However, he was far from happy. He still felt that the results lacked the cosiness and warmth of a home that he



The living room furniture was sourced from ID Design, Crate & Barrel and IKEA

sought. “He wanted the apartment to reflect his personality. The decor had to be an ode to Palestine, his home country, in a modern, subtle way.”

Nisrine walked us through the challenges and intricacies of decorating a pied-à-terre for the stylish man about town. “Well, for starters, the colours need to be skewed towards manly tones, without too much fussy decoration or embellishment. The pieces I chose, whether for furniture or for accessories, had to be more streamlined and hard wearing.”

Nisrine opted for materials that are rougher in texture – like concrete, stone and metallic accessories. As the client travels quite a bit, the scheme had to be clutter free and low maintenance, allowing the apartment to be easily cleaned. She also chose functional pieces and plants that do not need to be watered often.

Mixing practicality with creativity, she opted for dried flowers and faux plants as well.

For a special touch, Nisrine commissioned calligraphy artist Racha Al Abbas to do a Kufic Arabic canvas, based on the verses of the homeowner’s favourite poem. These paintings hang on the wall behind the dining

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**Nisrine El Lababidi
Moghraby**



Racha El Abbas created
the beautiful Kufic
artwork on the wall







In the guest bedroom, the bed from West Elm is dressed with bedding from Matalan and a Palestinian cross-stitch pillow

In the master bedroom, art from Home Centre hangs over the bed from West Elm



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table, creating a stylish conversation point of their own.

The creative concept was inspired by the idea of bringing the Dubai Marina inside. “The apartment has such a gorgeous view of the Marina, so I tried to bring in blue in all its tonal gradations,” Nisrine elaborates. The scheme features blue-greens to mid-night blues and grey – on the walls, curtains, cushions, accessories and additional furniture. While too much blue can feel depressing, the mix of materials and the occasional pops of sunshiney yellow add energy. Nisrine also painted a wall in Jotun’s yellow-toned Masala shade.

Nisrine’s favourite part of the project is the balcony with its scenic

views. “I furnished it to be comfortable and used every inch; incorporating a seating area for larger groups and a mini breakfast area for that early morning coffee with a view. The colour scheme is consistent with the rest of the house.”

Nisrine’s biggest challenges was the time she had to pull it off. “When you have just bought an apartment and spent all summer trying to furnish it, you can become quite frustrated. Hence when I came into the project, the client wanted it done by yesterday! I tried to finish it within three weeks during his many travels. Other than that, my client was very trusting and loved all my ideas which made the project quite enjoyable.” ◀