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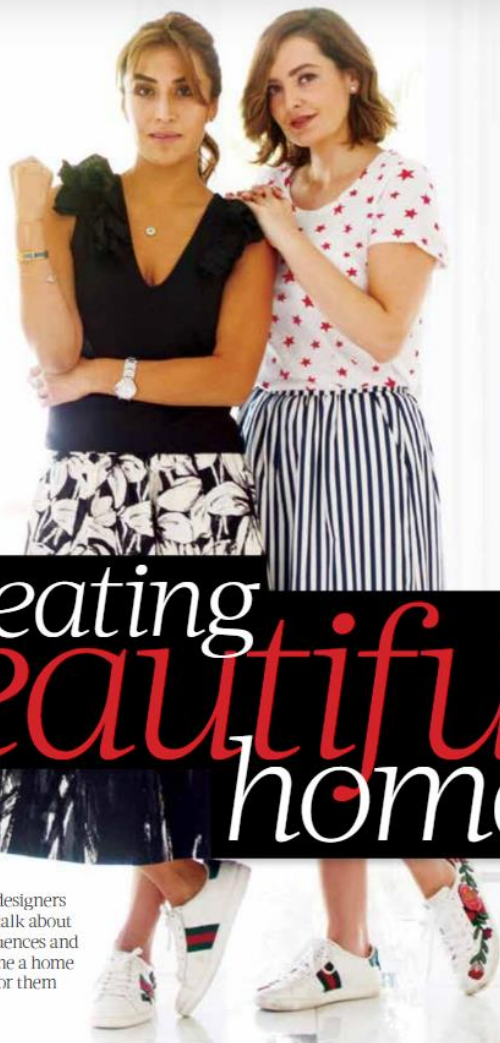
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Monica (left) and Tatiana

Columbian interior designers Tatiana and Monica talk about their early design influences and how Dubai has become a home and place of work for them

# Creating beautiful homes!

**T**here are some ideas, which are refreshing and very relatable. That's what Cest ici all about, a homegrown concept by two talented Columbia designers — Tatiana and Monica. They can restyle and redesign rooms or entire homes. They also work specifically on de-cluttering and re-organising walk-in-wardrobes and another popular service that they offer is styling dinner parties, from catering to beautiful table settings. Roma Arora spoke to the talented duo about the art of design and styling.

**Tell us something about your background?**

**Tatiana:** I am from Bogota, Colombia. I have been living in Dubai for six years and a half. Although I am a political scientist, I have a great interest and passion for art and interior design. I grew up with a very interesting mix of influences. My father is a politician in my home country and my mum is a journalist but also an artist. I have been surrounded all my life by painters, artists, writers, dancers, and architects. That defines my personality in a lot of ways.

**Monica:** I was born and raised in Bogota, Colombia. My parents wanted me and my sisters to study abroad; hence I studied law in the UK where I met my husband Emmanuel Durou. We moved to Dubai nine years ago. While my legal background has very little to do with interior design, I have always been inspired and passionate about interiors. Building my home in Dubai and our different properties around the world was the beginning of my journey. The tipping point was when my family expanded and I wanted to have a work-life balance.

**Can you remember the first space that really made an impact on you?**

**Tatiana:** The first space that made the impact was the neighborhood near my ballet lessons in

Paris. We used to live in France when I was four years old and my mum used to dance ballet in one of the most beautiful academies in Paris in Le Marais. I can still feel the smell of the wood of the old floors, the high windows and ceilings with antique chandeliers. The view from the classrooms was overwhelming. The building had an inner courtyard and I remember that there was a big old tree, which was fascinating overlooking the building.

**Monica:** My house back in Colombia. I was brought up in Colombia in a beautiful house built by my parents from scratch. The house was surrounded by one of the most beautiful forests in Rosales, located in Bogota at the heart of the city. Bringing botanicals home brings me back to my origins, which I love. My mama built and designed the house and it was something out of this world. She travelled around the world, to find every single piece and transform into a home.

**What is the best interior design lesson you've learnt?**

**Tatiana:** The best interior design lesson I have ever learnt is that paint colour really makes an impact not only in our spaces but also in our psyche. The use of colour influences our mood and state of mind, so you better choose colours that help not only to upgrade your rooms but also uplift your heart.

**Monica:** The best interior lesson that I have learnt since we started this journey is going for the imperfect look and make it personal. Perfection is definitively boring in all perspectives. If you go into a room and it's all perfect, you don't feel comfortable. A home interior is not an abstract thing, it is about people, and it's about the way you feel, the way you interact. It's about family and friends; it's the backdrop to your life.

Tatiana and Monica give a design tour of one of their favourite makeovers of a villa located in the heart of Al Safa 2. The villa belongs to the French - Sudanese expat family who recently moved to Jumeirah, and needed a significant change to their new casa in Dubai. The villa has been transformed to a contemporary edgy yet classic homely space.



*The dining area is all about whites and natural colours. The dramatic lighting is one of the highlights of this space*

## Trends by Tatiana and Monica

**Botanicals:** They are trending and are a very quick fix to space. They are also very affordable so, they will stick in 2018. Hanging plants and exotic indoor plants will definitively be a must in 2018.

**Plant accessories:** Whether is gold, copper or solid colours, retailers are getting inventive with plant accessories. We are looking forward to seeing creative pieces for greenery.

**Black and White:** They are definitively a must in 2018. While these mixes have been in trend for centuries, black and white will be coming back strongly.

**Teal:** This colour shade has been influential and we will probably see more versions of it in 2018.

**Velvet love:** We love velvet and we will be seeing more of in New Year.





*Shades of grey with a hint of cherry and rose gold accents are the highlight of this living area. It looks very edgy yet classy*

**Quick tips to transform the look of your house**

1. Painting the walls make the biggest impact in a room and is not very expensive here. The trick is to stick to one colour palette and build a story with darker and lighter tones of that palette.
2. Clean up the oldies. We love tradition, and items that are memories, but stick to the good ones and say goodbye to the old and bad ones. Decluttering your house is one of the most cost-effective exercises to transform a space.
3. Add greenery and plants accessories. This is a very nice and cheap way to change the look and feel of a home.



*The girls room looks adorable with pink curtains and snowy white beds. There's room for ample sunlight through big windows*



*Dusty rose with a hint of black and golden accents give a contemporary look to the play area*