

Beauty from the Bosphorus

The decor — and what it symbolizes

The Turkish empire is rising again — in home decor, that is. And while Turkish design is all about influences — Byzantine and Ottoman, Middle Eastern and European — its eclectic and multicultural look fits with most decor. Robert and Arzu Benavides, owners of the Turkish modern boutique Distant in Los Angeles, and USA Today look at the latest in Turkish home delights.

By MARY CADDEN, Gannett News Service

Turkish talisman

Turkey takes its evil eye seriously. “You will see the eye everywhere, in the offices, in the houses, in the cars. It is a good luck charm, a protector,” Robert says. Hang it from the main door to keep negative wishes out and allow positive ones in.



Fusion glass evil eye, GEV0036, \$39, on sale \$33.15 from yurdan.com.

Mad Mats Oriental Turkish rug, 8x10, \$85 at 3rliving.com.



Tufted velvet ottoman in espresso, \$1,199 at brocadehome.com.

Traditional meets modern

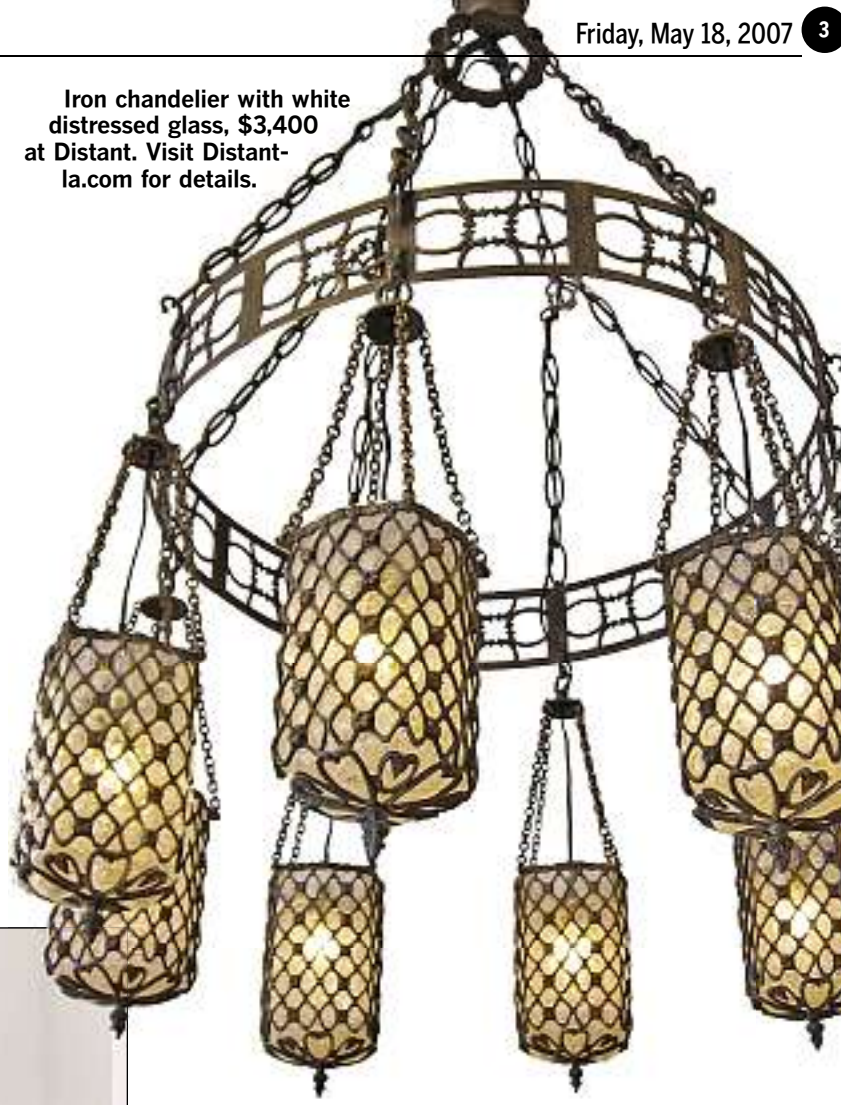
Turkish rug styles vary with the nation’s geography. “While geometric and floral patterns dominate,” Arzu says, “every region has its own ethnic print and colors.” Want a modern twist on the age-old tradition? Try a modern melamine plate with a Turkish design or a rug made from recycled plastic.

Mideast opulence

Inlaid mother-of-pearl was a popular Middle Eastern motif, “and it was Ottomans who brought that style to Turkey,” Arzu says. “Even now, in Turkish art, you will see a lot of influence from Middle Eastern countries.”

A reproduction of an antique-style chest with mother-of-pearl inlay is available for \$2,735 at Wunderley.com.

Iron chandelier with white distressed glass, \$3,400 at Distant. Visit Distant-la.com for details.



Lap of luxury

Lush, upholstered ottomans hark back to palaces of old, but they are still central to Turkish homes. “No matter what your social standing, luxury, comfort and relaxation is a huge part of the culture,” Robert says. Adds Arzu: “The ottoman’s design is a part of that. You can picture yourself lying back and relaxing.”

Cultural crossroads

Turkey is culturally and historically rich, lending itself to infinite interpretation. Designed by Arzu, this one-of-a-kind chandelier with handblown distressed glass was influenced by “Byzantine ironwork and the round and pendant shape of chandeliers in Islamic mosques.”



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