



Bloxham rectangular table lamp, £199, industville.co.uk



Habitat origami mushroom table lamp, £15, habitat.co.uk

The interiors It couple of 2025 is so celebrated that, like Bennifer and Brangelina, it has its own portmanteau: Japandi (Japanese/Scandi). The warm, minimal look, with its emphasis on tactile natural materials, neutral colours, clean lines and simple shapes, is taking over the homeware collections.

Why has Japandi's moment arrived? Cate St Hill, author of *The Japandi Home: Nordic Minimalism Meets Japanese Zen* (Union Square & Co £25), says it's because it offers the perfect recipe for creating a soothing sanctuary at home, at a time when we are craving serenity.

"Japandi has three tenets — simplicity, harmony and balance — that work together to create the sense of calm that Japanese and Scandinavian interiors are so renowned for," she says. "It's not just an aesthetic but a way of living, teaching us how to live with less, appreciate what we've got and live more mindfully."

"Like its namesake countries, Japandi is quiet, humble, democratic. It would certainly be frowned upon in Japan or Scandinavia to stand out or be too loud or ostentatious."

Of course, the Japandi alliance predates this summer's high street collections. The most familiar examples of the genre are the icons designed by the Danish modernists of the mid-20th century. St Hill names three key makers: "Kaare Klint making pleated paper lampshades, Arne Jacobsen using bamboo as cladding and to make easy



Cate St Hill's Japandi kitchen extension



Timberline table lamp, £449, gubi.com



Fredericia's Seto stool is named after one of Japan's longest bridges — down to £650.25 (from £765), utilitydesign.co.uk



House of Finn Juhl Japan chair, £3,504, skandium.com

&Tradition, a Copenhagen-based company that fuses Scandinavian design and Japanese craft. These are all rather pricey pieces, it should be said. The Koshido cabinet costs £24,000, the Celine pendant £1,440,

and an Ita coffee table will set you back more than £1,000. But there are plenty of sources where you can get the look for less. The latest instalment of Ikea's Stockholm collection, launched this year, includes many Japandi must-haves. My favourite is the cabinet with rattan sliding doors (£399). H&M serves up splendid black ceramics and will be launching an elegant dark stained Isa sofa table (£149.99) in mid-August. Kelly Hoppen's collection for M&S is also a rich source for Japandi style, with an embroidered cotton and linen bedspread for £129. Several brands riff on the washi paper lantern, including Made and Habitat.

So it can be affordable, soothing to live with and achingly stylish. Is there a catch? There are two. First, elite styling skills are required to pull off this celebration of simplicity — achieving the artless tranquillity of Cate St Hill's kitchen extension, for example, is far from as easy as she makes it look. Second, though Japandi appears modest and easygoing, it is somewhat of a diva. It can't be friends with clutter. Bling is verboten. It only admits quiet, functional furniture and accessories; nothing that raises the heart rate or demands the attention. Japandi abhors brash pattern, flashiness and anything pretentious. It isn't — to be brutally honest — much fun.

So here is my one suggestion for Brits welcoming Japandi into their homes this summer: season it with a little chaos. Chuck in a chintzy cushion and a lava lamp. This may even turn out to be a new, more authentic form of Japandi. After all, the Swedes are devoted to their hideous gnomes (tomte), while Japan, the land of raku pottery and Shibori dyed fabrics, also gave us the maneki-neko waving cat.



Ikea Stockholm rattan/pine cabinet with sliding doors, £399, ikea.com

Why Japandi is this summer's hottest trend

A blend of Japanese and Scandi style is a match made in heaven, especially with big brands like Ikea and H&M on board. By **Katrina Burroughs**

chairs, and Poul Kjaerholm creating undulating Japanese-style wooden screens." We could add to that Finn Juhl's Japan chair and Kaj Franck's glassware — Franck, a Finn, travelled to Japan in the Fifties and Sixties and created the perfectly plain Kartio tumbler for Iittala.

The leading Danish exponents of this cross-cultural aesthetic are the two founders of OEO Studio, Anne-Marie Buemann and Thomas Lykke. Based in Copenhagen, they share a passion for Japanese culture and design, and have made more than a hundred visits to Japan, seeking out and collaborating with families who practise traditional craft techniques.

Lykke's fascination with Japan started in childhood. He practised martial arts and meditation as a child, and then

started making shoji screens with washi (traditional Japanese paper). When he first went to Japan, in 2008, with Buemann, "It felt like coming home," he says. "Both [cultures] share a humble appreciation for simplicity. There is a calmness and a focus on quality and detail."

OEO Studio has designed a tribute to Le Klint's pleated Celine light and the Koshido cabinet, created in collaboration with Garde Hvalsoe. During 3daysofdesign, Denmark's annual design fest, which took place last month, it created an installation for Time & Style, a Tokyo-based furniture brand that matches Japanese craft and traditional materials with contemporary designers from Japan, Sweden and Denmark. Most recently, OEO launched its six-piece Ita collection (two dining tables, two benches and two coffee tables) for

How I brought my Scandi heritage to a 1960s Bath house

Susanna Hawkins drew on her Finnish background during the renovation of her family home — which included exposed beams, green views and big windows. By **Sasha Nugara**

When she set out to move to Bath, Susanna Hawkins had aspirations of owning one of the golden-hued Georgian townhouses that the spa city is famous for. However, after checking Rightmove and her budget again, she realised her aspirations needed a slight readjustment.

And when Hawkins, 48, eventually found a house she could actually afford, it couldn't have been further from her vision. "I think when anybody moves to Bath, we all have that perfect Georgian house in our heads," she says. "I was like, 'I think I need either a different dream or a different budget.'"

Hawkins could see potential in the wooden-clad, breeze-blocked 1960s home. "I just really liked the plot and the shape of the house," she says. Hawkins and her husband, who uses the alias Mr Nordic as a play on her Instagram handle, @shnordic, bought the five-bedroom property in 2018 and started planning their renovations to start in November 2019.

"The previous owners had looked after it really well," she says. "But I don't think it had been updated since the Nineties, and the style was lots of small rooms, long corridors and walk-through bedrooms. All the windows were very high up, which was a very interesting choice when there are such nice views."

The couple completely gutted the property and created one large broken-plan kitchen/dining/living space with several floor-to-ceiling windows. The views capture the greenery of the garden in the south and the city to the north, which includes glimpses of the Royal Crescent.

They uncovered wooden beams in the main living space and stained them, increasing the natural Scandinavian vibe of the space and channelling Hawkins's own Finnish background, where she was born and lived for 27 years.

"I saw these beams and I decided that we want to have them on show. My husband was convinced that our builder was going to divorce us and never come back. But he was like, oh, I can do it," Hawkins says.

"I think that probably we [Scandinavians] are big fans of nature. So [I like] having all these big green views and the windows and the wood beams."

They added an en suite bathroom by the main bedroom suite with a window so you can bathe in the tub while soaking up the city views. New panelling, beams and flooring continue the wooden theme throughout the home.

On the ground floor there used to be nine separate rooms, three bathrooms and a guest WC. After knocking down some walls, they created six rooms and kept the same number of bedrooms.

"As a family of four we knew that we had to change the layout and I almost felt like the house could just be so much more than what it was before," she says. They went for muted tones and



ADRIAN SHERRATT FOR THE TIMES



Before



Susanna Hawkins went for Nordic black cladding outside and lots of natural materials inside

“We decided on the black exterior as it's very Scandinavian. Like a little hidden house

minimalism when decorating, allowing the green to come in and shine from the outside.

"And then we decided on the black exterior just because I think that's just very Scandinavian. Sort of like a little hidden house," Hawkins says.

While they were renovating, they rented out a little two-bedroom flat nearby for about nine months, until July 2020, when they were able to move back into the house.

Hawkins met her husband in Antigua 21 years ago, when she was living in New York and he was living in London. After two years of long-distance dating, Hawkins made the move to London.

Until eight years ago she was a scientist, but she made a career U-turn and started using social media to create videos about her Nordic lifestyle.

"When I turned 40 I think I had some sort of midlife crisis. I was just feeling like I didn't see my children enough, and my husband was travelling loads. So it just felt like we both had jobs that were taking quite a lot of time."

"I just started doing social media. I don't like to think of myself as a great artist. But I think it's less of that and more that if I have something I want to achieve, I'm not going to give up," she says. She documented their house renovations on her Instagram page, which has 1.1 million followers.

When Hawkins prepares to renovate, she starts by living in the house so she can properly plan how everything fits together, where the light flows and to gain a sense of place.

"I have this thing called aphantasia, which is an inability to form any mental images. So for me visualising and designing is sometimes quite difficult, and so I think if I live in a house then that makes it easier because you can see where the light comes and goes."

She also uses Pinterest boards and sketches to help her explain the ideas she otherwise struggles to conceptualise. "I need lots of visual aids because sometimes I kind of know what I want. But then when you can see a picture it's like, oh yes this is it, now I can really explain it."

"I think I have a quite relaxed approach to design. I'm not especially particular about things. I think the style really suits this house. But my previous house looked different and my next house is going to look different."