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## TALKING CLEAN SPACES AND INTERIOR TRENDS WITH BROOKLYN BASED INTERIOR DESIGNER LEONORA MAHLE





Leonora Mahle owns a full-service interior design studio located in Brooklyn, New York. A native of Brazil, Leonora brings a creative approach to each of her projects, combined with a cultural sensitivity gained from a life-long interest in history and travel. We chatted with Leonora about her style, how she approaches interior design and what emerging trends she's loving.

Nidhi Mohan: **Describe your style.**

*Leonora Mahle: I like spaces that are clean and uncluttered, whether modern or traditional. I really appreciate craftsmanship and quality of materials. While you sometimes have to compromise based on budget, it is always great to stare at things well made, however simple...and it takes a lot longer to get tired of them.*

*I love traditional rugs and pillows -and the occasional antique- with modern furniture.*

*I have a hard time finding accessories just to “fill in” space. Usually when designers go accessory shopping for clients, it looks so obvious. What is in the space should relate to those living there, and that rarely happens when someone else does all the shopping. The quirky acquisitions made by clients on trips -or the elephant pottery collection- seem a lot more genuine.*



**NM : What are some of your favorite emerging trends on the interior decor scene?**

*LM: Lighting designers are doing some beautiful things with LEDs and wood.*

*Not exactly the latest trend, but I'm seeing more and more integrated washbasins and tubs in bathrooms, as well as slab shower floors and walls, and those can look really good.*

*I also think switches, wallplates and the like have come a long way...there are far better looking options out there now. While changing old wallplates, outlets and switches throughout can seem like a minor change that's costly, it can have a big impact on a space.*



**NM : What are your favorite types of jobs? Do you prefer remodels, decorating brand new spaces, etc.?**

*LM: In New York there are a lot of remodels. I'm happy to work with clients' existing furniture pieces as long as their scale is appropriate (or borderline). Starting from scratch can be fun too, as long as clients are involved in the process and available to provide feedback. If you're working with a designer, timely feedback is key to avoid getting on the wrong path.*



**NM :** When designing a room, what is the most important factor for you?

*LM:* How the room will be used, what it should convey, and the scale of the furniture.



**NM: Describe how designing in New York is different than other cities.**

*LM: In New York almost everyone has space issues. You can spend vast amounts on real estate and still have to deal with some pretty odd constraints. Many clients are also quite design-savvy, but may not have the time to do the legwork and pull their space together.*