



SUSTAINABLE STYLE

With so much information available on sustainability, how can you see through the maze to find what works for you? Eminè Mehmet, sustainability advocate and interior designer, knows how to get to the heart of the matter

When you ask Eminè Mehmet what the most important thing is about design, her categorical response is “sustainability and functionality”. Eminè first started her love affair with design at 18 years of age, immersing herself in the industry. Today, her portfolio consists of an impressive array of projects ranging from residential developments to serviced apartments, hotel and corporate design.

She believes great design is linked to the environment and to the people living in that environment.

“There’s no point creating amazing designs that will knock your socks off if in reality they can’t be built, are not user-friendly, cost a fortune or don’t relate to the environment,” she states.

Bottom Left “Nikki Lisle from Sala Verde showed me this amazing ‘Celebration Bowl’ after her recent buying trip to the Philippines. It’s made of tinalak, which is woven abaca, a species of banana native to the Philippines. Its fibre is sun-dried and coloured using organic dyes. It’s then hand-stitched, forming this surprisingly sturdy and beautiful piece of art.”

Below “I love it because it’s a great example of using sustainable materials indigenous to an area to create innovative and aesthetically pleasing products.” (For more information, visit www.salaverde.com.au)



Above “Laminam is a porcelain tile only 3mm thick, in 1m x 3m or 1m x 1m sizes. It comes in myriad colours and designs and is suitable for interior and exterior use on walls, floors and even benchtops.”

Left “This product is a showstopper. Not only is it fully recyclable, it reduces building waste as it can be installed over existing tiles and surfaces, plus it’s manufactured using recycled water in kilns that produce 80 per cent less emissions than standard kilns.” (For more information visit www.livingtiles.com.au)

“THE GROWING ‘GREEN’ TREND HAS CREATED A MARKET FOR SUSTAINABLE INTERIOR PRODUCTS THAT LOOK GREAT”
EMINE MEHMET

And when did her passion for sustainability begin? “I’ve always worried about the environment, taking care of my water and electricity consumption, recycling etc. It wasn’t until I started working for a corporate design firm five years ago that I really got involved in the sustainable space.”

With so much hype about sustainability, Eminè believes the only way to make it really happen is to provide the right information so everyone can work together.

“Three years ago, I travelled to northern Cyprus where my parents were born and where fresh water is a luxury. If you want fresh water, you have to buy it. It gets delivered to you in a tank. Otherwise, the water out of the tap is salt water from the ocean. Experiencing that really gave

me a reality check and made me more appreciative of water.

“On the flip side, that same trip I went to London to visit family and saw my aunt running a tap all day over a frozen chicken in an attempt to defrost it. They don’t have a shortage of water there and don’t value it as much as we do. Some of the older homes don’t even have water meters so there’s no accountability or consequence.

“When you see these kinds of variations in the way, as a planet, we view our resources, it makes it clearer to me that we need to work together and spread the same word. This can be as easy as getting online and joining the 1 Million Women SAVE campaign to reduce carbon emissions.” (www.1millionwomen.com.au)

After hearing Eminè’s views with her “sustainability advocate” hat on, we wondered what the “interior designer’s” point of view was.

“The growing ‘green’ trend has created a market for sustainable interior products that look great,” she says.

With this rich background in design, construction and project management, there is no doubt Eminè understands the creative process very well. Add to that a love of the earth, and you have a winning formula.

Eminè is a Green Star-accredited Professional and Fellow of the Design Institute of Australia. She is a past president of the Design Institute of Australia New South Wales Council and has appeared on television programs including Channel 10’s *Bright Ideas*, and *Home* on the Lifestyle Channel. ■

www.eminemehmet.com