



ASIAN FURNITURE

The delicate and timeless beauty of Asian furniture is currently experiencing an unparalleled popularity in American interior design.

An Overview of Asian Furniture

The name “Asian Furniture” is a general term, describing all home décor products - including art and furniture – from the countries of China, Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, Japan, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and often India. It also includes the (now antique) items crafted during the British occupation, mostly of furniture from India and Burma, including contemporary reproductions in this style.

Although very similar in basic design, each of these countries produces furniture and art that is specific to its own culture. For instance, while the Shoji screen originated in China, it was then reinvented in Japan and is now considered a wholly Japanese export. Feng Shui design philosophy is singularly Chinese, while Southeast Asian furniture often displays Hindu-influenced carvings over very dark wood.

Origins of The Oriental Style

Also known as “Oriental Furniture”, Asian-styled furniture is very often crafted from teak wood, and is usually based on the Buddhist principles of living simply and in harmony with one’s surroundings. Asian furniture is a blend of form and function, where art and design are intended to be both beautiful and purposeful. In the interest of blending Western and Eastern styles, it is increasingly popular to find Shoji screens that reflect traditional Western tastes. More colors are becoming available, and designers have begun to take liberties in creating more daring and expressive fusion pieces.

Perhaps the most famous Asian décor item is the Shoji screen. Made from latticed wood and rice paper, it is becoming increasingly common to see Shoji doors, Shoji lamps, and Shoji room dividers, even in traditionally Western homes and offices. Other popular Asian furniture items are cabinets and accessories, typically ornamented with striking mother-of-pearl inlay.

Asian Furniture Today

Today the largest markets and manufacturers of Oriental furniture are Korea and Taiwan, although much is also manufactured in the US, Europe and Australia. The top importers of Asian furniture and home décor are the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Japan and Canada.

Whether you are creating your very own “Dojo”, crafting an intentional meditative space, or if you are simply drawn to the beauty and craftsmanship of Asian furniture, you are certain to find inspiration in the timelessness and transportive qualities of this truly dazzling style.

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