

# Essences of Bali at Hermitage

Posted on



A perfect form of a horse composed of pieces of wood



Stone carving used as garden decor

Hermitage launched 'A Bali State of Mind', its latest collection of Balinese furniture and home décor at the outlet on Gower Street, Colombo 5.

The latest selection consists of a vast array of wooden furniture as well as decorative pieces crafted from wood and stone. Sourced directly from Bali in Indonesia, Hermitage's collections are hand-picked from a host of retailers and wholesalers, ranging from small-scale roadside vendors to large-scale suppliers of Indonesian decor.

One of the central pieces on display was the fabulous creation of a larger-than-life wooden horse. Despite being newly crafted, it was made entirely and very uniquely out of pieces of old wood and fashioned into the perfect form of a horse. Although it is easier to attain perfect profiles when a work of art begins from a block of wood, one needs to be remarkably artistic to reach that perfection when putting together many small pieces of wood.

Another rare display were the sides of a traditional canoe. Seldom found even in Bali, this was an exquisitely carved embellishment of painted floral and wing-like patterns on wood.

Well-crafted products of exquisite and detailed artistry, stone carvings, and painted or gilded wood as well as stone products are characteristic of Balinese craftsmanship. Mostly made of teak, the Balinese furniture would have the standard wood finish with carvings, or they may be adorned with colourfully painted carved motifs, or the entire item may have a painted finish.

Balinese sculpture uses various types of stone such as granite, lava stone, limestone, sandstone as well as cast stone (made of natural stones, sand or a cement mixture). Often, cast stone carvings are innovatively painted or gilded, and given a vintage look to make it very pleasing to be placed as decor within the house.

Excellently carved granite carvings are also available at Hermitage. Stone carvings of the Lord Buddha as well as Lord Ganesh are highly sought after by Hermitage's regular clientele. Also popular are images of animals such as elephants, lions, monkeys as well as horses.



Exquisite and rare sculptures used to decorate a traditional canoe

What has flourished today into the well-established Hermitage began 18 years ago when the highly passionate co-founders Safiya Hussain and Yasmin Akbarally pursued their hobby by holding one-off exhibitions. A few years later saw the setting up of Hermitage.

"We started with Indian furniture, particularly from Rajasthan," explained Safiya Hussain. "The elaborately-designed, brass or copper inlaid products with an ethnic look appealed a lot to our clientele. Then we found the stone carvings in Bali, which we placed on sale as an add-on to our furniture. Over the years, we found our clientele shifting to a different kind of

art. It applied to furniture as well. We still have products from both countries, but have gone ahead more with Balinese furniture this time following the preference of our clientele.”

***Opening Hours: 9am-6pm daily***

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