

Treasure Hunting at Suriya

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Beautiful one-of-a-kind pieces lie waiting to be discovered

Combining traditional elements of Sri Lankan culture with modern aesthetics has helped Suriya carve out a name for itself in the world of Sri Lankan interior design.

Words Tharika Fuhrer **Photographs** Vishwathan Tharmakulasingam

As you enter Suriya, you are greeted with the refreshing scent of lemongrass followed by the smooth sounds of modern jazz. It's a welcoming note to our day of treasure hunting. Which is exactly what Suriya represents, a treasure chest filled with beautifully curated artefacts harkening to the skills of rural Sri Lankan craftsmen.

Moving through the store, my eyes gaze over the smorgasbord of delights placed strategically in their respective corners; Suriya it seems definitely understands the need for product diversity. Their store was covered with unique and striking little knick knacks. Shimmering jewel toned pillows, antique glass lanterns, wooden reproductions of temple decorations and not so traditional Sri Lankan devil masks with accents of steel instead of wood could be seen in every part of the Suriya bungalow turned showroom.

Suriya, a lifestyle store and interior decor solution provider also carries every conceivable furniture item; from chairs, beds to eclectic lamps that come in a variety of finishes and styles. Customers are given every possible option when it comes to fine furnishing and Suriya even creates custom made furniture. So just in case you wanted the same design but in a different finish; not a problem – Suriya's in-house design team can get the job done.

Established in 2000, Suriya came into being as a “made to order” manufacturer of wooden furniture as well as a retail outlet for handicrafts. Since, the store has expanded to become one of Sri Lanka's leading stores catering to the style of classical Sri Lankan aesthetics merged with contemporary elements. The things you find here will always have a quirky, off beat feel to them, created by mixing interesting details from Sri Lanka's cultural history with international influences and modern nuances.



Suriya carries a multitude of collectables that would suit many homes

It's the kind of place where you will see reproductions of antiques, intricately designed jewellery and a well stocked aromatherapy section all in one place. Basically a fabulous mish-mash of stuff capable of bringing just the right amount of coolness and interest to any household décor.

In terms of concept, Suriya, since day one, had the intention of taking inspiration from Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage, to bring back the demand for almost forgotten artistry techniques and to only use raw material sourced sustainably from Sri Lankan forests.

The store has since become a platform to champion the work of local artisans, most of whom are women from rural villages looking to support their families by producing items for the store. Their trademark is innovative design. However, the primary objective of Suriya, as a business, has always been in "sustaining the livelihood of the artisans and craftsmen of Sri Lanka" by exposing their talent to the mainstream market.

It is with this integral message and the arming of their one of a kind aesthetic that Suriya shares their products with the world. Like its name-sake the Sun, the

wonderful items found at their showroom radiate with the passion and skill of their creators. Thus, sending a message of beauty into the world perhaps even more dazzling than the products themselves.

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