

WRITTEN BY
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From Asia with Love



Two large silver elephants greet you in silence as you enter the store; peacefully welcoming you to a treasure trove of Eastern and Western art and accessories. The store, catering to interior designers, second homeowners and locals alike, offers an exclusive array of new, reproduction and antique pieces from around the world. The impressive selection includes furniture from India—beautifully inlaid with camel bone, mounted antlers from the Black Forest, intricate hand-woven pots by Panamanian Indians, lacquered boxes from Vietnam and antique lions from a temple in Thailand.

Store owner, interior designer and avid traveler Brenda Van Der Mije handpicks each item directly from artisans and tradeshow on her journeys through Asia, India, Europe and Central America. Van Der Mije, who makes several trips a year to source pieces for the collection, counts Asia as her favorite destination to visit on her world travels. Born in Colorado Springs and raised in Palm Beach, she studied photography at the Rochester Institute of Technology before returning to Florida. Surrounded by creativity from a young age—her mother was an interior designer, too—Brenda went on to work

as a highly successful professional decorator in Palm Beach for 20 years before moving to New York. During her time in the city, she worked for Ellen McCluskey, styling interiors for some of her prestigious clients such as the Waldorf Astoria and Lowel Hotel Group. She returned to her roots in 2001, buying a ranch in Colorado Springs and setting up a design firm. Five years later, she ventured farther West, settling in Telluride with the vision for her next business firmly in mind.

Her love of travel, eye for aesthetics, craftsmanship and design was the perfect combination for East Meets West, where the emphasis is on refined, understated style for the modern mountain home. There are already plans to expand the gallery space, as well as an upcoming collaboration with the Ah Haa School for the Arts that will see the store hosting a monthly “gallery night,” featuring artists from Santa Fe, Florida and New York. Brenda also plans to launch interior decorating consultations and styling services to the discerning homeowner. Stop by 240 East Pacific Avenue and take a look. Perhaps the beautiful horse sculptures or the beautiful Western art will catch your eye. Whatever takes your fancy, it will be hard to leave empty-handed. ■