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*Your little slice of Zen haven is
more accessible than you think*

SOULFUL LIVING



IN THE FAST PACED HUMDRUM BEAT

we call life, there is always room for some peaceful moments. Very often we find ourselves going outside of our routine to find those elusive quiet times, when the simplest answer is to create our save havens within our immediate environs. "The design of our homes, studios and offices can so easily be transformed by the right choice of colours and style best suited to our very own personalities," explains Bhavna P Talwar, a design and style consultant.

The use of Buddha as an image or an icon is a great way to initiate the process of converting your space into a zen-inspired area. The 21st century has seen the Buddha become the most stylish icon of peace and serenity, although its origin dates back to the 6th century BC in Nepal. "This concept became international with the inception of the Buddha Bar - a hotel and restaurant franchise started by restaurateur Raymond Visan and DJ and interior designer Claude Challe, which originally opened in Paris in 1996," says Bhavna.

The fact that cultural influences from Nepal can be embraced in France shows that elements of design can harmoniously transcend through cultures and time zones, creating integral parts of luxurious lifestyle.

Creating your stylized lifestyle with a touch of soul therefore can't go wrong by beginning with incorporating a little Buddhist zen icon in your space. "A white, grey or silver Buddha, for example, is a great way to accentuate a metallic or a



Stock List

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Local Flowers @ KShs100, General Mathenge Drive, Lounge gown and accessories, Samskaras Collection, available at Coco Chic, Level 1 Village Market, www.samskarascollection.com; Spiegel Vase, Spiegel Interiors, Mobile Plaza first floor, Muthaiga Rd., +254 0724 552 941; Tea light candle holders, Mr Price Home, Yaya Centre ground floor, Argwings Kodhek Road/ Ring Road Kilimani, +254 0719 614 995

neutral space," explains Bhavna. "Add a bit of blue or purple in your furniture or soft furnishings to complement it." Another way to add dimensions to this space is to incorporate the modern feel of silver cushions and the statement of mixing textures in a monochromatic scheme.

A space with these metallics and nudes can also lean towards harshness, if not softened with pretty flowers. While flowers are the staple accessories of any relaxing spot, flower arrangement may not be everyone's cup of tea. Instead of skipping the agony of arranging flowers or buying a readymade arrangement from a florist, embrace a little creativity and innovation. "Just once a week, you can spend as little as KShs100 on a bunch of roses, break the

petals off, making sure to throw away the rose core, and float them in your vases all over the house," says Bhavna. "You will be surprised at how beautiful an impression it can make."

With just a little bit of an effort, one can create rooms dripping decadent glamour and style, from your garden to your dining table and even your bathrooms. "Use lots of scented candles and seductive incense to feel like you have brought your spa to your very own door step," adds Bhavna. "How about trying a bergamot, ylang ylang or a simple lavender?"

Beautiful, well-chosen items are a wonderful treat for someone special, or a guilty pleasure to bring home just for yourself.

