



# THE TIMES

INTERIORS

## Tastemakers: Dara Huang

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Dara Huang: "I try to avoid cream walls. I think it looks dated"  
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The architect and designer Dara Huang, 34, has worked in cities across the world — from New York to Basel to Tokyo. Equipped with a master's from Harvard university, she founded the architectural and interior design practice Design Haus Liberty in 2013. Her commissions include residential and commercial projects, and her studio work has been exhibited at the Venice Biennale. When not at her office in Clerkenwell, east London, you might find her at home in Fulham, southwest London, or out hunting for a shabby-chic warehouse to turn into her dream space.

### Your biggest source of inspiration?

Experiences. I travel a lot and try to see different things. Architecture is not only about looking at pretty things; it is about how you experience them.

### Chintz or minimalism?

Minimalism, I enjoy simplicity. I love a space that takes your breath away without having to fuss over colours, patterns and stripes.

### Your design essential?

Light. It can change your emotion very quickly; you can take a space, light it differently and it will feel like something else.

### Favourite interior design "quick fix"?

Can lights (also called hidden lights), which you put under a plant or along your curtains to create drama.

**The next big interior design trend?**

My style is very monochromatic, but I am experimenting more with heritage colours and mixing dark blues, maroons and greens, instead of black with white.

**The design pitfall to avoid?**

I try to avoid cream walls. When skirting, walls and cornicing are all cream, that is scary to me. Some people love it, but I think it looks dated.

**If you could live in anyone's house whose would it be and why?**

Richard Rogers (Lord Rogers of Riverside, the modernist architect). I went to his Georgian terrace in Chelsea recently, and spatially it was amazing. He had completely gutted it and created a huge double loft space inside.

**When decorating what do you splurge on?**

Art frames. The art itself does not have to be worth much, but if you can spend more money on the framing it makes a big difference — it sets the tone more than the artwork.

**What would you save on?**

Craft pieces. You can find beautiful things in places where you would not normally go.

**The best piece of design advice you have received?**

Be patient and do not expect everything to happen at once.

**What is your favourite thing about your home?**

I painted my bedroom walls in a colour called Raisin Black. It is a midnight black, but it looks almost like a dark blue or grey, and the contrast of the artwork against it is beautiful.