



Colour is king for Yasmine Ghoniem, from the bold print of her vintage YSL jacket all the way down to her sturdy green-soled Bottega Veneta boots.



*My style signature is ...*

Nonchalantly rebellious. I'm a colour girl through and through and love layering different textures and the odd print. Matchy-matchy is a foreign concept to me.

*The most fabulous item in my wardrobe is ...*

A cropped YSL jacket that I purchased from the vintage boutique Love Story on Sydney's Oxford Street. It's made from a patchwork of applied patterns reminiscent of swirling snail shells in bold primary shades that look like flower buds from afar. The patterns are neatly contained within a classic cocktail hour red lippy-shaded trim which means I never have to bother painting mine when I'm wearing it.

*My grab-and-go staple is ...*

My failsafe talisman necklaces by Ouroboros Limited Editions that are made from vintage gold and which I swing together at all times. They represent prosperity and protection: a £1 note locked away in a glass box, plus a key. Other great staples are the cosmic earrings from Venice Rish. From her small gold hoop to her large statement dangles, every design makes me feel more balanced.

*The designers I most admire are ...*

If we're talking fashion, a current favourite is Vivetta, an Italian label that uses retro prints and directional silhouettes. Their detachable collars are wearable works of art. I also love A Kind of Guise but I shop their menswear, especially their printed shirts. If we're talking interiors, it would be the ingenious and indefatigable Eileen Grey, who produced groundbreaking furniture and modernist architectural work.

# YASMINE GHONIEM

The founder of interior design agency YSG Studio loves a cohesive clash, whether it's decor, fashion, furniture or art.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LOUISE KENNERLEY



"I have a weakness for shoes," says Ghoniem, who splurged recently on a pair of Loewe glitter-speckled hot-pink patent leather platform sandals. Right: Spencer Shakespeare's dry brushstrokes make his abstract landscapes a favourite.



I purchased a Rider-Waite [Tarot] deck ... it's nice to back decisions with a little guided reassurance.

*The fragrance I wear is ...*

Dior Oud Ispahan. It has leather, spice and rose notes with a smoky trail and reminds me of my childhood in Kuwait, Egypt and Saudi Arabia; the smell of petrified timber soaked in scented oils sitting on a bed of charcoal, just inside the front door. A quick spritz evokes memories and thoughts of return visits.

*You can never be overdressed. True or false?*

False. I gravitate towards underdressed rather than overdressed. Comfort is king in my book, which is why I own few heels. When it comes to accessories, my home seems to get more attention, but that said, I have a weakness for shoes. I just gifted myself Marni red and white platforms for my 40th as well as a pair of Bottega Veneta black boots with sturdy frog-green soles. They're perfect for site visits, but equally appropriate for client meetings.

*A great extravagance I once bought was ...*

The first of my many rug purchases: a Turkish kilim I fell in love with, given its vibrant sunset oranges and pink hues, that still sits in my bedroom. I was 23 at the time, and at \$800 it completely annihilated my travel budget. A recent splurge was a pair of highly impractical (but absolutely essential) Loewe glitter-speckled hot-pink patent leather jelly platform sandals.

*If money was no object, the artist I would collect is ...*

Adam Henein, a Cairo-based sculptor and painter who meticulously restored the great Sphinx. I'd love a collection of his small bronze, wood and granite sculptures scattered about my home. His abstract animals have a robustness that you just want to run your fingers over. He's a magician when it comes to softening angular forms.



*A young promising artist I'm watching is ...*

Perhaps not so young, but Spencer Shakespeare's paintings touch the sweet spot for me. He's from Penzance, Cornwall, and he's now painting up in the Gold Coast. The brushstrokes of his abstract landscape canvases are quite dry, adding a kind of unfinished quality which I love.

*What's keeping me busy now is ...*

We're building fantastical residences in the Middle East, decadent chalets in France, a boutique wellness retreat in Ubud and homes in Sydney, Melbourne and Byron Bay. We're converting an old ice-cream factory into a recording studio in Camperdown and transforming a heritage electrical substation in Sydney's CBD into a speakeasy and restaurant. My first rug collection with Tappeti is set to launch in a few months, which is a dream come true.

*A film I saw recently and loved ...*

Dune blew my hair back. The hybrid feudal medieval/futuristic costumes, the brutalism of its sets and booming Hans Zimmer score bored into every pore of my body and resonated until the credits rolled.

*The book I read recently and would recommend is ...*

Tarot: A Guide to Understanding Card Meaning and Spreads, by Rebecca Falcon. I recently purchased an original Rider-Waite deck. It's all new and my gut has never failed me, but running my own business, it's nice to back decisions with a little guided reassurance.

*My failsafe gift is ...*

Ceramics – a vessel of sorts that's handmade just says it all for me. My favourite store is either of the two DEA Stores in Sydney's Redfern that are bursting with treasures including Japanese and Australian pieces plus handcrafted homewares and artworks that make your heart skip a beat.

*What makes a room unforgettable is ...*

One that possesses the ability to absorb memories and build new ones. It's important a design aesthetic doesn't dominate – rather, it's the experiences you enjoy in them that should. Comfort and practicality are key, plus it should make you feel what you're seeing is something you've never encountered before. Beyond its visual appeal, it has to immortalise a mood. It has to trigger emotions.

*My favourite hotel is ...*

L'Hotel in Paris' Left Bank because it's tucked away from the glitzy Boulevard Saint-Germain. With its atmospheric velveteen bar and stone-walled subterranean plunge pool and hammam, why drag yourself outdoors?

*The city I'm itching to get back to is ...*

Seville. It's the Verona or Siena of Spain. Wander through the tiny streets on foot – don't jump in an Uber. I'll happily hop from *taberna* to *taberna*, especially the ones that haven't changed since they opened a few hundred years ago. I'm heading back for the La Feria [the Seville Fair, held two weeks after Easter] just to see the horses and carriages parading through town with the women dressed up. I'll be buying a flamenco dress and hitting the dancing festivities for nights on end. \*

AS TOLD TO EUGENIE KELLY

