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behome

Emily Davidow traded
New York city for an interiors
store with ethics in Wellington

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Most people know Miramar as the home of Sir Peter Jackson's award-winning Weta studios. But interior lovers are increasingly beating a path to the windswept peninsula to visit Behome, one of Wellington's newest interior stores.

Owner Emily Davidow opened Behome just over a year ago to showcase beautiful products from around the world. And while the setting might be a little incongruous – a concrete garage that was once fashion designer Ashley Fogel's factory – the American import has turned it into a treasure trove of one-off pieces you'd be hard pressed to find anywhere else in New Zealand.

"My aim was to create a temple of beauty with quality products that connect with people, that are made with love and, where possible, are organic," says Emily, in an accent worn smooth by six years in the capital.

The day *Your Home and Garden* visited, for example, Emily had just unpacked a collection of pastel rattan headboards and tables from Indonesia.

"I've met the family who harvest the rattan and weave it into this amazing furniture," says Emily, whose commitment to sustainability stems from travels in Tibet and Bhutan with academic Robert Thurman (father of actor Uma Thurman).

Behome also features the fruits of Emily's many visits to India, including the table runners and patchwork quilts hand-made in Rajasthan from vintage silk and cotton saris. "I'm a big fan of upcycling wherever possible, and sari fabric is so beautiful, it's a great way to re-use it."

Opposite The peacock is a motif throughout Behome's interior and product designs. Top right Emily Davidow with the latest shipment of hand-loomed wool rugs from artisans in Rajasthan. Bottom left An embroidered cushion designed by Melbourne-based Sarah Quin and hand-crafted in India. Bottom right A mahogany dining table for eight illuminated by iron-wire lamps designed by Ajush Kaeliwal in conjunction with birdcage artisans.



"I'M A BIG FAN OF UPCYCLING WHEREVER POSSIBLE"





"BEHOME BRINGS TOGETHER MY PASSIONS FOR DESIGN TECHNOLOGY AND TRAVEL"



Also from India are the oversized black metal lampshades made by artisan birdcage makers.

"When they outlawed caging native birds in India, the cage makers turned their skills to making these beautiful pendant lamps."

Behome is also known for its exquisite hand-painted Japanese silk scarves and chunky jewellery from Wellington jeweller Sadie Hawker as well as pieces from Hawke's Bay designers Monica Martin and Nga Waiata.

The jewels in the Behome crown, however, are the colourful rugs that are stacked around the space. Hand-picked by Emily on a trip to India, they feature a range of textures, colours and vintages.

If you'd told her 10 years ago she'd end up opening an interiors store on the other side of the planet, Emily would have looked at you sideways. Back then she was running her own website design company and living in New York's trendy West Village. But after 9/11, and with a burgeoning interest in all things spiritual, Emily became disenchanted with life in the big city and moved to New Zealand in 2008.

When the mother of a 15-month-old son couldn't find the right rug for her house, she decided to open Behome. Having grown up working in her parents' Kansas City furniture store, and with a stint designing textiles and furniture to her name, Emily knew the industry and the kind of range she wanted to offer customers both in-store and via her online shop.

"Behome brings together my passions for design, technology and travel. It's a joy to work towards creating a more beautiful world, both for our homes and our planet..."

Top Vintage and upcycled furniture pieces hand-picked by Emily on her travels through India complement new designs, all softened by hand-block printed cotton textiles and hand-loomed wool cushions. Bottom left A peacock cabinet topped by Rhinds' tiffins next to a rattan rocker chair. Bottom right Intricate botanical window drawings by Car Auburn echo the curves of the Lila peacock bedhead which comes in a range of colours.

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