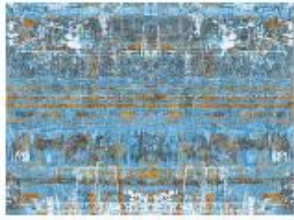


Bringing art to the floor front

Painterly rugs add unique style to any room



IMPERIAL CARPET

Forget wall art – have you heard of floor art?

One of décor's latest trends is to bring the focal point of a room all the way down to the floor with bold artwork depicted on a rug.

Think daring geometric and floral prints. Luminous colours. Reproductions of famous paintings. The night sky laid across your feet.

The folks at Imperial Carpet say the last 18 months or so have brought a range of audacious designs.

Hernando Burgos, assistant manager at Amala Carpets & Rugs in Toronto, says customers are also seeking texture to offer a sensorial experience.

Also on-trend are high-quality raw silk rugs, such as the Zee Silk line at Amala, where the silk has been hand-reeled and is untouched by machines.

Patterns: Minimalists and homeowners phobic about cluttering their spaces can opt for brightly patterned rugs that bring colour and excitement to the room without overpowering other furnishings.

Rustic landscapes: A clean, rustic feel is also trending in rugs right now. Tone-on-tone colours and simple patterns with a distressed look can anchor an otherwise bland room.

Bright colours: Monet-inspired rug designs are also leading the way to more abstract designs with up to 12 bright colours that bleed into one another to create a cohesive look that's as exciting as it is consistent.

Texture: Homeowners are paying attention to how a rug feels underfoot.



Combining materials such as soft silk with rougher nettle plant fibre is an example of this trend.

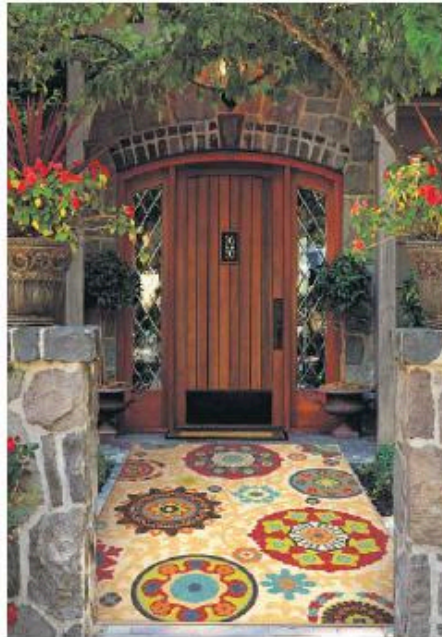
Customize: Imperial and Amala both make custom carpets for clients. There are several ways to do this and you can choose the size, colour, material, design and weave that suit your needs.

Select an existing piece from the showroom and purchase it as is or have it cut to size. Imperial has more than 100,000 square feet of showroom space and groups its rugs by price range, size and collection. Prices depend on the intricacy of the design and the size of the rug.

You can bring in a photo, magazine clipping or object (Amala once based a design on a skirt).

Select a pattern and fabric from the showroom or catalog and order a custom, handmade rug made to your size and specifications.

Designer custom rugs made to order? Time to dig out your favourite paintings and see how you can be inspired.



Stripes are a big trend in fashion and home décor this year and this striped area rug (above) brings a sense of fresh style to this contemporary kitchen-family room, as designed by Karen Sealy of Sealy Design.

Even outdoor floors are getting fashionable treatment with carpets like this Orian Veranda Tatru outdoor area rug.

5 WAYS TO FRESHEN YOUR SPACE WITH RUGS

Bijan Dehghan of Tapis Rugs & Carpet offers these suggestions on how to refresh the look of your home with rugs as the warmer seasons approach.

- 1 **Clean it:** Handmade rugs need to be professionally cleaned every two to three years. With refreshed fibres, your rug will be visibly rejuvenated.
- 2 **Change direction:** Switch the direction of your rug so you're seeing the light side (where light hits the nap) and dark side (where light hits against the nap) in a whole new light.
- 3 **Spring for a spring rug:** Mr. Dehghan says the spring 2015 collection features a light shade of grey and an interesting fuchsia/purple shade.
- 4 **Complement with a transitional:** Add a less formal transitional rug to your décor to help modernize and lighten up your space without forgoing a traditional feel.
- 5 **Go modern:** A modern rug with a simple design can transform the look of a space for the season. It can be either a muted or colourful backdrop for modern furniture.