



# TURKISH RUGS FIND GOOD HOMES

By Sophia Markoulakis

Move over, hygge: Bold colors, historical textiles and repurposed materials are replacing the cleaner, streamlined look of last year's popular Danish design trend. Two new local businesses — Revival Rugs and Turkish Modern — focus on Turkey and its vibrant artisanal products and reinterpret them for today's consumer.

"Turkey is one of the epicenters for rugs, and given the reach of the Ottoman Empire, there are different influences that have made these rugs so unique," says Ben Hyman, co-founder of Revival Rugs based in both Oakland and Istanbul. His new direct-to-consumer e-commerce company sources vintage rugs throughout Anatolia and uses a network of artisans that give them new life by mending, shearing and sometimes overdyed them.

"Our customers are able to connect to the region's history and past while still getting something that is modern," he says of the rugs.

The variations of kilims, which refer to any flatweave rug, are endless. Many of Revival's rugs come from remote regions of Anatolia like Mut in the south. Traditionally, these rugs carry a bold geometric pattern and have goat and/or camel hair woven in with the wool.

The cleaning, processing and photographing take place in Istanbul, and after passing through the port of New York, land in the company's Union City fulfillment center. Revival's clever shipping box with handle makes it super easy to receive and return, if necessary, and Hyman stresses, "We wanted to make it just as convenient for our customers who live in a five-story walk-up or in a home in suburbia."

Revival's customers are coming not just from large, metropolitan areas but also from the middle of the country, where there isn't easy access to rug



Alyssa Rosenheck Photography | @alysसारosenheck

**Magic carpets:** Marin designer Jen Macdonald, above, adds "wow" to a Peninsula home with a red rug (top left) from Noe Valley's Nomad Rugs. Top right: A rug from Revival Rugs, based in both Oakland and Istanbul.

## Turkish rug resources

**Revival Rugs:** [www.revivalrugs.com](http://www.revivalrugs.com). Visit lifestyle showroom Batch at 1648 Pacific Ave., S.F., or [www.visitbatch.com](http://www.visitbatch.com) to view a sampling of Revival rugs.

**Turkish Modern:** 4011 18th St., S.F. [www.turkishmodern.com](http://www.turkishmodern.com).

dealers, Hyman says. Companies like Revival, which can operate on two continents, make it easier for consumers to obtain an iconic Turkish rug, which in years past was either obtained only via untrustworthy domestic rug dealers or by traveling abroad and picking one out at a bazaar.

"Our overdyed and stretched rugs have a monochrome look that fits well in a European, minimalist style; and

our more traditional rugs fit well in an American eclectic home that might have accents from travels abroad. It really depends on the particular rug that the person chooses," he says. Pictures shared by customers support the notion that these timeless pieces of craftsmanship work in a variety of interior spaces.

Both Pantone's (Ultra Violet) and Benjamin Moore's (Caliente Red) picks for color of the year for 2018 can be found in ancient and contemporary Ottoman textiles and ceramics such as Iznik tiles. Silicon Valley interior designer Mark Cutler confirms that Turkish elements play well with this year's attention to bold colors and textures.

"A renewed interest in color and pattern seems to be sweeping the country, and the time is ripe to embrace Turkey. Its unique geographic location makes it the perfect melting pot of Western sensibilities and ethnic flavor," he says.

Layering, another key trend for 2018, is more interesting when periods, styles and colors are mixed, Cutler says. "A Turkish textile like an antique Oushak rug, with its natural dyes and elaborate patterns, easily fits in to a master design, whether it is modern or traditional."

Marin designer Jen Macdonald often uses vibrantly hued kilims as anchors in her clients' homes. She's known for her modern farmhouse aesthetic and is drawn to the textile's color saturation and graphic patterns. For a recent Peninsula project, Macdonald found the perfect red rug at Noe Valley's Nomad Rugs.

"My clients are both Stanford grads, and I needed just the right red. I love working with red kilims in modern farmhouse projects because they give a room the graphic punch that it needs," she says. "It also allows me to keep the rest of the decor more neutral, which then allows the architecture of a

space to shine." Although Macdonald tends to shy away from trends, she does appreciate the emerging use of more genuine elements and organic materials like plaster walls and wood-toned cabinetry.

The Castro's Turkish Modern, which opened in late 2017, is the brand's first location outside of Istanbul. Although the store carries a wide selection of Feyz rugs, which are reinterpretations of traditional Anatolian kilims, its handcrafted wood furniture highlights Turkey's deep woodworking history.

Husband-and-wife team Alexander Carter and Seyda Dogan Carter offer several different midcentury modern versions of traditional Turkish wood pieces, including divans, benches and daybeds, made from reclaimed Black Sea oak sourced from 100-year-old structures. Alexander Carter notes that working with this wood poses unique challenges, but the end result is worth it.

"Over the course of a hundred years or so, the wood has dried and taken on a unique character, texture and color that would be almost impossible to duplicate with other woods. These imperfections tend to add beauty to a piece," he says.

San Francisco's natural beauty and creative energy, in addition to friends who settled here, attracted the couple to the city, and the physical similarities between it and Istanbul are apparent. "San Francisco reminds us of the parts of Istanbul that have remained relatively untouched by development. Both have iconic bridges, you see water everywhere, and there are these little wooden houses. The summer homes that dot the Prince Islands evoke the Victorian-era homes of San Francisco," he says.

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## MEET MYLO — A NEW LEATHER

Bolt Threads in Emeryville has launched its second lab-grown fabric with Mylo, grown from mycelium.

Bolt Threads, the Emeryville biotech company that wants to change the way the world manufactures textiles, just launched its second lab-grown fabric with Mylo, a leather-like material grown from a dense web of mycelium, the root structure of mushrooms.

The company has partnered with New York's Ecovative Design, a biomaterials company, to bring the textile to market. And, like the gold-hued spider silk knit that designer Stella McCartney fell in love with and used in last fall's Museum of Modern Art exhibit, McCartney recently used Mylo for her Falabella Prototype 1 bag, which is part of London's Victoria and Albert Museum's exhibit, "Fashion From Nature," on display through January 2019.

Bolt Threads' CEO and co-founder, Dan Widmaier, explains how, with optimal growing conditions, billions of tiny branching cells form a 3-D mesh on a micro-scale. "These cells form an interconnected mass that can be made to be almost any size. After that, we use a natural tanning process and compress the mat to be as thin or thick as we'd like the final material to be. At this point, the mycelium is no longer growing. The last step in the process is to imprint any desired pattern onto the mat, which gives us the final material."

Although McCartney's prototype bag is a one-off for the exhibit, Bolt Threads is launching its own limited-release bag very soon.

The Mylo bag, designed in-house, will be available for pre-order in June. Widmaier says that, "unlike some leather-tanning processes that involve toxic chemicals, the Mylo material for the Bolt Mylo Bag is finished with English Breakfast tea in a small-batch process. The natural tannins make Mylo more durable while imparting a soft, translucent brown color."

— Sophia Markoulakis