

# Spanish style design & colour

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## Spanish architecture

Spanish design is best described as a 'Rustic Mediterranean Style'. Homes and buildings are influenced in the south of Spain by the Mediterranean coastline and often have whitewashed walls, tiled flat roof and a central courtyard. In the wetter, northern region there is a strong Celtic influence with thick stone walls, pitched roof and arched walkways to give protection against cold and rain.

The 'country weekend' has led to many city-dwellers buying up modest country houses impelled by a desire to escape the consumerism and commercial aspects of inner city living. Getting back to a simpler lifestyle, surrounded by the natural vegetation of olive groves, cypress trees, orange and fig orchards and lavender fields. Popular colours for building materials are white, pale grey, terracotta with black timber beams or ironwork.



## architecture

Historical architecture - the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans and Moors all left traces of their style on the landscape of Spain. Modern architects have built on this to create a

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colourful city landscape. Colours are drawn from the white stone, old blue and white tessellated tiles, colourful stained glass, intricately painted ceilings and the handcrafted combinations of stone, iron and ceramics - collaboration between architects, craftspeople and artists.



### modern architecture

World renowned Spanish architects such as Gaudi, Calatrava and Bofill have designed modern and sculptural buildings in Valencia, Madrid and Barcelona such as these examples above.



### outdoor living

Many of the homes were built with internal courtyards, others had arched walkways and flag-stoned paving or terracotta tiles. This style can be enhanced by adding potted plants, striped fabrics and cushions, terracotta pots that had been previously used for storing olive oil, iron lantern or lights and heavy wooden furniture studded with steel nails and corner pieces.



### beach life

A holiday in Spain conjures up the beach lifestyle, Ibiza and Majorca, where many of the rich and famous have holiday homes on these islands in the Mediterranean.

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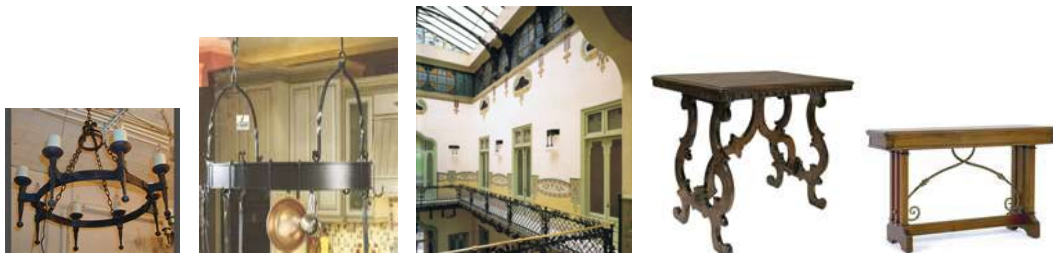
The dark blue sea and sky of this part of the world contrast with the white plaster buildings on the coastline. The villa shown on the previous page is constructed with old Moorish style bricks and white plaster walls. The blue and white theme is taken through to the striped deck chairs and sun umbrellas.



### colour inspiration

The colours from nature have a huge impact on the colours people choose for home interiors and fashion. Shades from flowers, foliage and soils are often transferred into paint colours and fabric design. Warm ochre yellows, deep rusty reds and dark olive green are popular for furnishing interiors in Spain.

Also the food markets of the region, vegetables such as peppers, pimentos and aubergines. And fruit like oranges, figs and olives, the brightly coloured packaging of tins of sardines or spices and bottles of oils and vinegars.



### design in iron

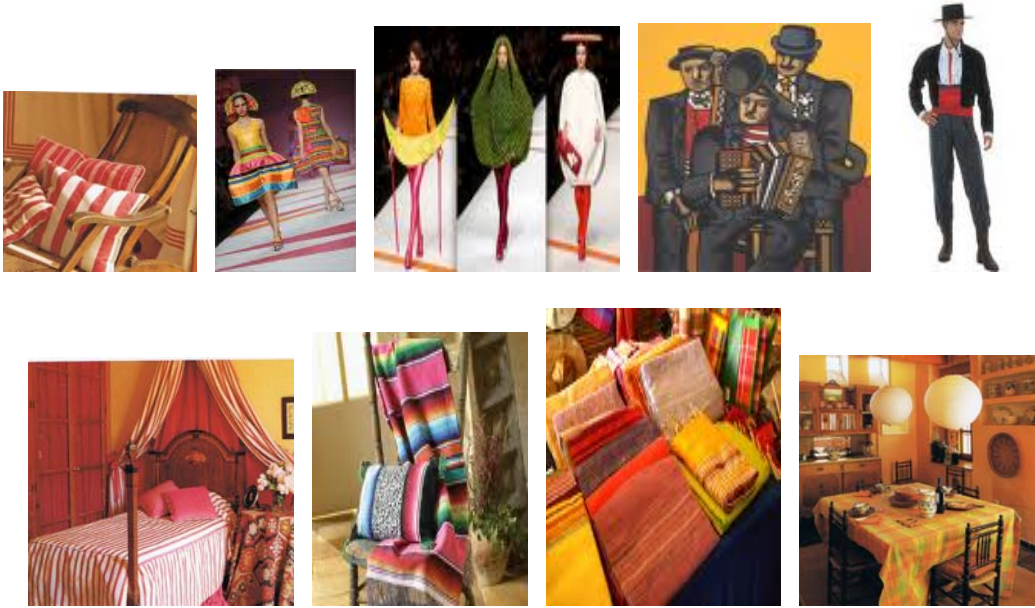
Ironwork is commonplace, both as window grilles and ornamental balustrades on the exterior of buildings, or as lighting or furniture on the interior. Combinations of ironwork and timber are also popular for furniture and fittings. The front-doors of homes are often heavy timber with black iron knocker and decorative studs.



### furniture

Rich timber, sometimes combined with iron or studded leather, gives a rustic feel to furniture. Accessories and artworks or posters help to finish the look. Floors, spartan concrete or stone, with a rug added to anchor furniture or add warmth and comfort.





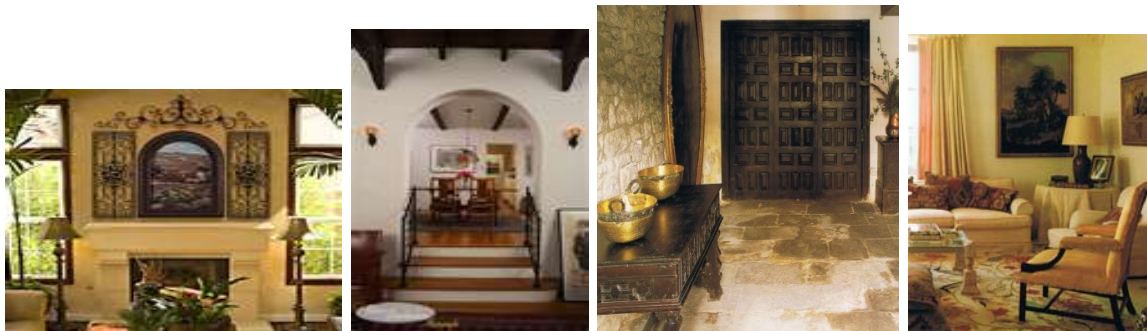
### fashion + interiors

There is usually a strong connection between fashion colours and furnishing fabrics. Colours of yellow, red, pink, green, black, turquoise and orange.



### living rooms

Day beds are well liked, often furnished with simple striped cotton fabric. Another popular fabric is woven in rustic Aztec designs such as that on sofa and cushions to the right.



Because of the warm climate, living rooms and hotel suites are quite exotically furnished with decorative arts and textiles. The room to the left is colonial while the one to the right is more contemporary. Colours are fairly neutral, pale terracotta, cream and olive with black accents. Black accents are also seen as timber beams, balustrades and doors.



### bedrooms

The colours for bedrooms are usually restrained to black, white, olive or ochre yellow. Bed canopies add a little drama over the bed. Red can be added to bring in a bit of excitement to the room. Bedrooms often have doors opening out onto the courtyard.



Bathrooms may be quite natural and spartan, or elaborate and colourful with decorative porcelain and tiles. The example shown has a stone pedestal handbasin and open travertine shelving, with tiled floor and white-washed walls. To the left there are more colourful examples of bathroomware.



### kitchens

The whitewashed walls and pale olive green works with the natural elements of bleached timber, rattan and concrete. The country kitchen is usually simplistic and cosy.

This kitchen is again quite simple in design, with thick and chunky benchtop and open shelves. The walls are whitewashed, and the decorative beam above bench adds interest and colour.







It is often the accessories that 'tell the story' in a room and help to create the theme. Above are some old irons originally used to print pattern on fabrics by hand in Spain. The cane bulls head references the bullfighting, while the iron grill on the window to the right creates the style as well as helps with security. The tile on the bottom left is typical of Spanish colour and pattern.



carnival colours and earthy colours



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