

Interview with Nate Berkus

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Last month, Nate Berkus—the Nate Berkus, Oprah’s Nate Berkus—unveiled the 2009 spring/summer collection of his home furnishings line on HSN.com. We chatted with this designer and television personality about his new gender-neutral line of towels, sheets, pillows and more—plus his love of all things “scape.”



What is the inspiration for your new line?

Everywhere I look I find inspiration. I notice everything. The color of a certain spice at a market in Thailand might inspire a shade for my sheets, or the deep blue of the sea might end up becoming a towel color. The things I see inform my decisions as a designer. Each detail has a reference for me and gives a bit of history to what I design.

Was it important to create items that appeal to both men and women?

It is true—I always tend to strike a balance. Just when you think a blanket is decidedly more masculine, we add a color that softens it. Or, something that might seem a bit more feminine strikes a different chord when you add chocolate or charcoal gray. Strangely, it isn’t that I make a conscious decision about who will like it. For me, it’s always based on what the design calls for. That’s what I use as my guide.



What is your favorite piece in the collection?

I love my sheets. And I can’t wait to show off my new towels. They’re made with African cotton, which is really special to me—knowing that my towels are supporting industry in that region. But, right now, I’d have to say that I’m obsessed with my [tablescapes and bathscapes]. I have one for the bathroom and three different ‘scapes’ for the rest of the house. I get e-mails asking what objects or collection of items people should put in their homes. It’s like math, finding the right equation or mix of pieces. So I decided to make it easy by pulling together ‘scapes.’ This way it’s all mapped out and you can get the finished look you see in design magazines. It’s a real solution for the surfaces in your home.

How have you incorporated these pieces into your own home?

I sleep on my sheets each night. I have my pillows all around my house. I design what I love, so I’m first in line waiting for them to arrive so that I can bring them home.

How do you refresh your home for the warm-weather months?

Each spring, I give my windows a good cleaning. Wiping them clean lets the sunshine in. Then, I swap out my bedding. It’s time to put the heavy duvet away and break out something a bit brighter for the season. And, I love to put out new pillows on my sofa and chairs. It just changes the whole look of the room.