



## Openhouse

by Silvia Bombardini

Sometimes all it takes is just the right place. Andrew Trotter had no plan in mind when he first drifted towards Barcelona, drawn by its swollen sun and the effortless warmth of its people. Ambling up Calle Notariat in the upper Raval, in the amber haze of a Spanish afternoon, he suddenly fell in love. It was a space for rent—with a hidden, intimate garden, and high whispering walls like frottage paintings. To Trotter, it gleamed with potential. A few weeks later, it became Openhouse, a style and design concept store.

Trotter's dreamy imagination and innate talent for discovering beautiful things were honed from working with the likes of Anouska Hemple, Yohji Yamamoto, Michiko Koshino, and Persuade in Bilbao. They taught him enough to build his dream.

Describing Openhouse, Trotter said: "It's not just another shop; it is a place to feel more like a home in which everybody is welcome, a place in which once you have gone through its doors you can sit and talk and feel comfortable, and when leaving, be able to take a pack of candles in paper bags or a Jasper Morrison sofa."

While that kind of retail atmosphere already exists in cities like London and Berlin, Trotter says it was absent in Barcelona. Openhouse's homey, relaxed allure is furnished with a tasteful and refined collection of furniture, kitchenware, clothing, artworks,

photographs and plants. Trotter calls it "a shop of design, but with a natural unique feel, not over-designed."

The products are carefully selected from around the world, with items for every budget: woven lamps from Korea, drawings from the Basque country, Dutch tiles, Swedish jewelry, Japanese paper bags, Parisian candles, Pakistani hand-made blankets, and even a black melamine table set by Zaha Hadid for Alessi. Trotter also designed a few pieces himself—simple, custom-made tables with a traditional feel and a range of lamps currently produced by local company Lobster's Day.

Openhouse is a dreamlike, concrete space that aims to support creative dreams. It could be described by borrowing the words of French philosopher and poet Gaston Bachelard: "*If I were asked to name the chief benefit of the house, I should say: the house shelters daydreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace.*" (The Poetics of Space, 1958).

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