

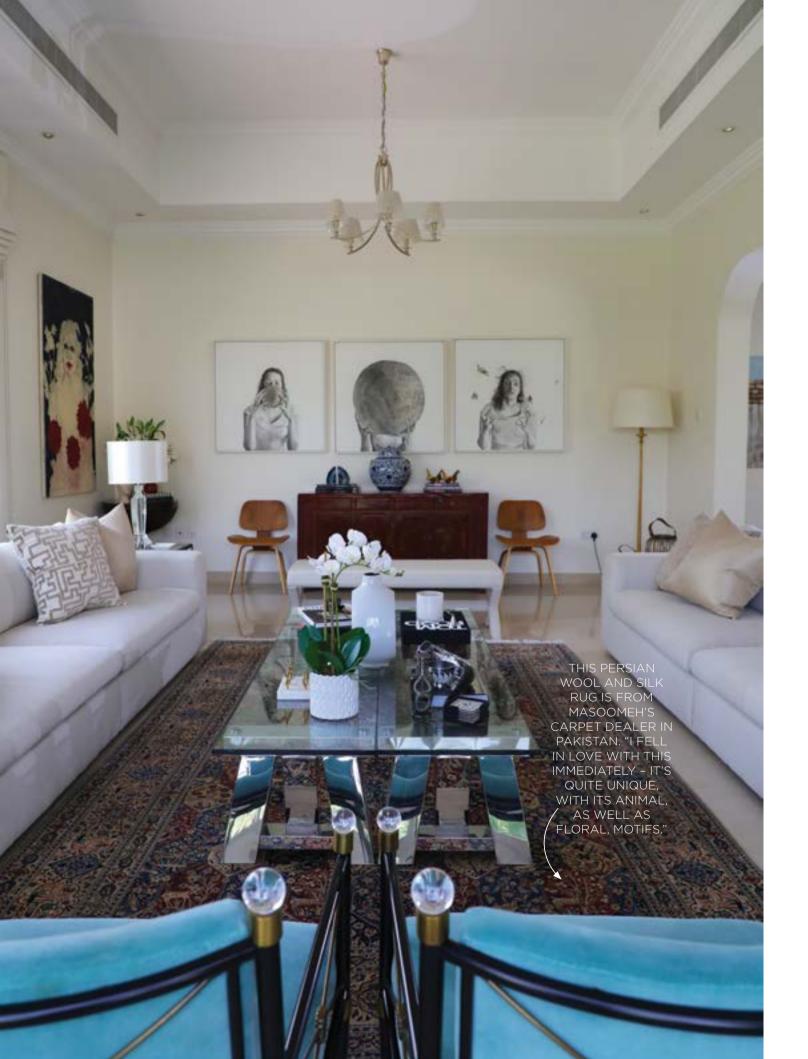
sense of METRY

This bright Al Barsha villa is styled for a balanced and calm feel

"As soon as my husband, Badru, and I walked through the gate, we knew this was the one," enthuses interior designer Masoomeh Hilal, referring to the lightfilled, spacious single-storey villa that the couple share with their two children, 13-year-old Laila and 10-year-old Saif, plus their cat Jinx and Maltese dog Trixi.

Having previously lived in Dubai for seven years before moving to Beijing for three years with her family, Masoomeh was looking for a different experience to their initial Dubai life based in Arabian Ranches. "As the children were

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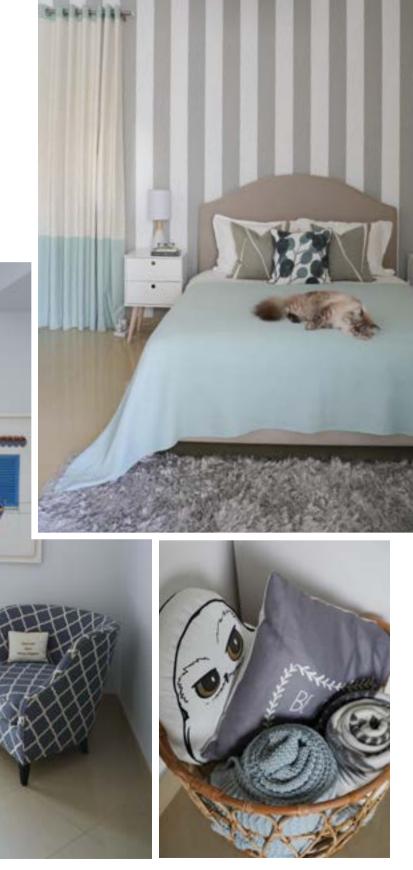


older, we thought we could live in an independent villa that isn't located in a gated community on our return – and I liked the idea of not being part of a cookie-cutter neighbourhood." The villa ticked a lot of boxes: it's located close enough to Badru's workplace in Downtown Dubai; it's near to Mall of the Emirates; and its spacious layout, with its wraparound garden, offering privacy, reminds her of houses from her home country, Pakistan.

Masoomeh started collecting contemporary artworks when she married 15 years ago, so these are often the starting point for styling each room. "I choose art that I fall in love with, and never with a particular space or style in mind." Much of her modern art collection is colourful so she keeps her

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sofas and much of her furniture neutral to allow the art, rugs and accessories, which she picks up during travels, to stand out. "I love playing with soft colours, and it's always more fun using them in plenty of space."

With her soft colour scheme, artful mix of clean, modern lines and vintage pieces, plus her use of symmetry, Masoomeh has created a strong sense of flow between the living spaces, dining area and TV room. "I like having two sofas and two armchairs to complete a seating arrangement," she says. "You can play around with other pieces in a room that don't have a balanced look, but I like symmetry for a calm effect."

