

It's de-lovely, it's de-lightful, it's de Vera

TUCKED AWAY ON A SIDE STREET, somewhat removed from Union Square's high-end stores and luxury hotels, is Federico de Vera's second namesake home furnishings shop. Here, East meets West, old meets new, and the handmade meets the machined. The 1,500-sq-ft. store, which de Vera designed, reflects the owner's love of materials and his affinity for the work of architects Carlo Scarpa, Pierre Chareau, and Tadao Ando.

Having trained as an architect in his native land, the Philippines, de Vera renovated the space to its present pared-down, gallery-like incarnation. "I think it's best," he explains, "to show these very decorative pieces in an undecorated setting. It's easier to see things in a clean space." Although the shop has an open, loft-like feel, de Vera planned it as a sequence of loosely defined rooms and alcoves. "I divided the space without dividing it," he says of the sporadic partitions, freestanding furniture, and architectural elements that create a meandering path through the store and invite one to explore and discover its many treasures. Glass, gold leaf, zinc, mahogany, blackened steel, wenge, aluminum, and ash are among the many materials that de Vera used for the sculptural tables, vitrines, and other custom display pieces.

As for de Vera's stock, the store offers little mass-production merchandise, focusing mostly on one-of-a-kind objects that are timeless and often unidentifiable, but always interesting. An inveterate collector, de Vera says he buys items for the shop regardless of material, age, origin, or value. "It's not about selling," he concludes. "It's about things I would like to own."
— *Julia Lewis*

Federico de Vera's shop near

San Francisco's Union Square invites

visitors to discover its Zen-like calm and surprising collection of decorative objects.



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