

> HOT HOME PRODUCTS



Vicky Sanderson

Spice Route takes your table in new direction

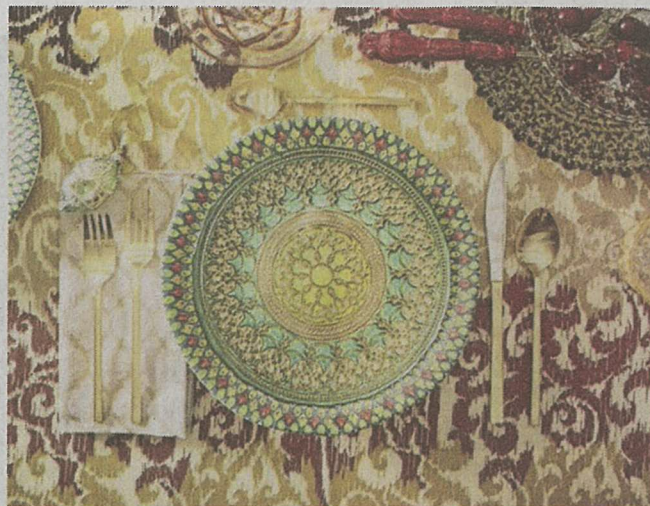
Ancient trade routes — like the famous Silk Road connecting China with the Roman Empire — did more than ferry goods between far-flung spots. They also connected societies, enriching each through a cross-pollination of design, art and technology.

In a wired world, cultural conduits flow even faster. The effect is evident in just about every aspect of North American home life, including how we dress our tables and what we serve on them.

Ikat fabric, created with a centuries-old resist dyeing technique used in South America, Asia and Africa, has emerged as a huge trend in tabletop linen. To get a sense of Ikat design, check out the exquisite pillows on offer at the Turquoise Palace.

These types of colourful, slightly blurred patterns can be found this fall in Ikat-inspired table linens at HomeSense, with prices starting at about \$13. They're shown with exotic Casablanca tableware, in gorgeous golds and greens, which starts at about \$4. But others will prefer Ikat as a canvas for classic white plates.

For them, Trudeau has new dishware with gently curving lines made from materials combining the delicate sheen



Rich Ikat fabric is a hot trend in linens for the table.

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of porcelain with a shock-, scratch- and chip-resistant finish. Prices for the Zenix line start at about \$6.

Both linen and tableware would be complemented with a stand-out piece from Arcadia, a new line from Royal Selangor, the 128-year-old design house founded and based in Malaysia. Made from rich, finely grained Kulim wood, and accented and rimmed with pewter, the collection was created by Todd Hart and Bob Borden, who heads up a multi-disciplinary studio in Santa Fe, N.M.

Borden was keenly aware of the challenge in modernizing a fourth-generation family business rooted in Southeast Asia. In an interview earlier this year, Borden suggested he and Hart wanted to respect the brand's meticulous craftsmanship, and acknowledge the highly decorative aesthetic it was known for.

"But we also knew if we were going to start dancing together with the company, we wanted to create something that would be both unique and subtle," he said.

Two designs, Pure and Wave, have

gently sloping sides on a saddle curve. "We went through four of five renditions of that to get it right," said Borden.

Both are trimmed with a thin band of pewter, but Wave includes a swoop of pewter laid into the base of the platters and inside the bowls.

The result is absolutely magnificent; this collection is the most beautiful tableware I've seen in years. Prices start at about \$110.

Global influences are also being hugely felt in cuisine. Middle Eastern recipes, ingredients and techniques are all the rage with cool-kid foodies.

One of the most widely used staples from that part of the world is nutritious, delicious hummus. It's long been a favourite at my house, which is one of the reasons I jumped at the chance to become involved in the Stir It Up! project launched by Sabra Canada.

I was tasked with creating a topping that could be stirred into classic hummus. (Find my recipe at [facebook.com/SabraCanada](https://www.facebook.com/SabraCanada) and click on the StirItUp! icon.)

Sabra is now inviting Canadians to come up with their own five-ingredient topping recipes, which they can submit online until Sept. 20.

A panel of judges, including me, will select the top five entries and a final winner will be selected through voting on the Facebook page.

While developing the recipes, I played with a lot of hummus in my kitchen.

Hummus is terrific as a low-fat, high-protein alternative to butter for sandwiches and wraps. I made several at a time, wrapping them individually and sticking them in the fridge where my family could grab them.

More from **Vicky Sanderson** at thestar.blogs.com/onthehouse. Also the editor for *Reno and Decor* magazine, Vicky is on Twitter: @vicksanderson or email vswriter@sympatico.ca.