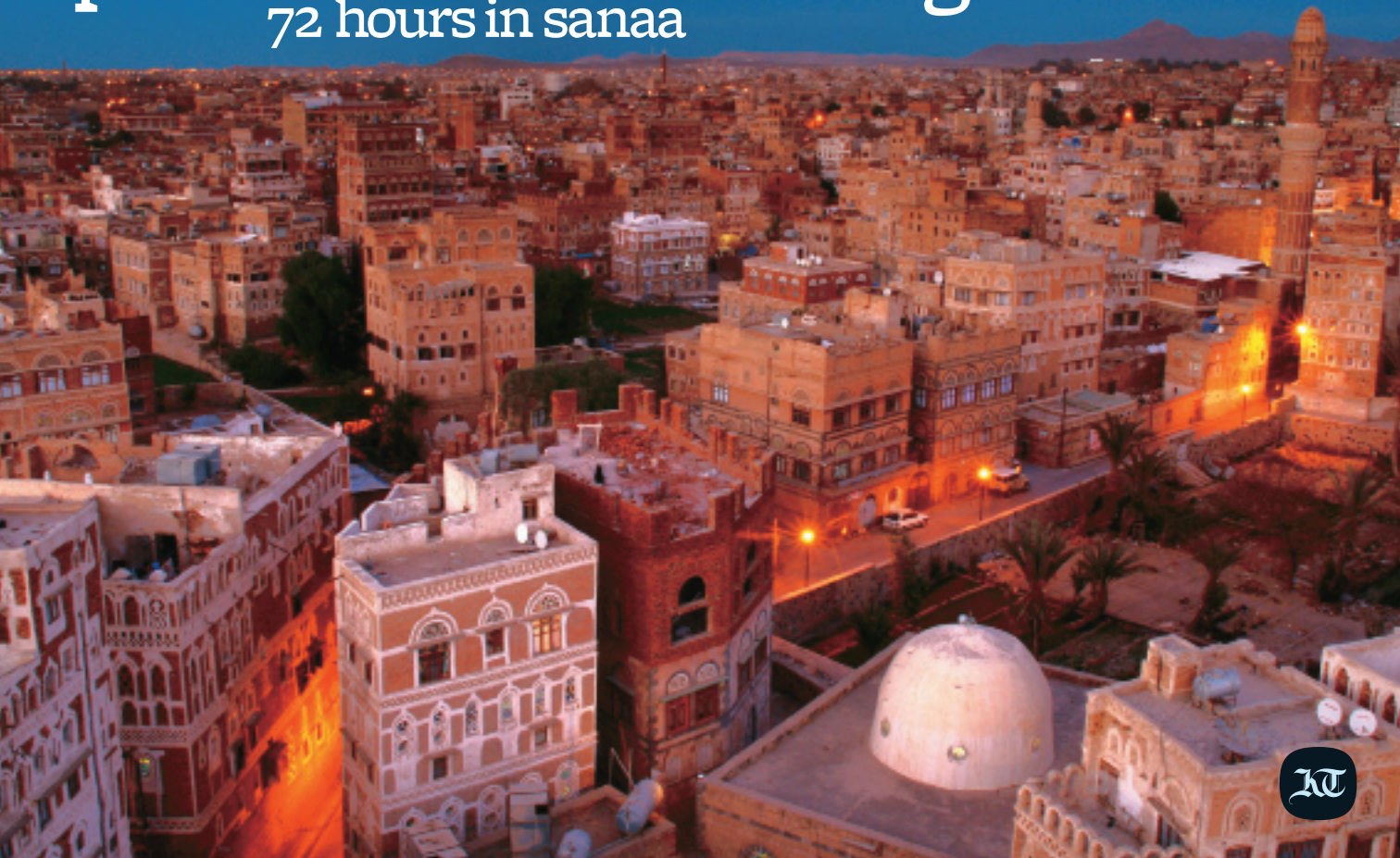


# wknd.

postcards from the edge  
72 hours in sanaa





**W** {the cut}

**Jumeirah gem**  
O Concept brings the cool

lagerfeld • the queen • designtastic

# {designtastic} creative landscapes



Economic gloom and doom does have an upside. It lays the foundations for a fertile new landscape of creativity. When the market gets tough, companies have to work harder to keep consumers, which means they have to find more creative ways to engage them. Innovation becomes a must in the design process. The message is clear: less but better. Dieter Rams, one of the greatest product designers of the 20th century, has been pushing this philosophy for some time. But it is only now that the rest of us are beginning to sit up and take notice.

According to the consumer trends commentator, Faith Popcorn, people now want things that are simple, useful and beautiful. They will buy less but better; products that will last in terms of design and quality, please the senses and create harmony.

Italian homeware company Seletti transforms everyday objects to bring enjoyment and beauty into our homes. The witty Daily Aesthetics collection includes cartons and containers, plates, jugs and trays, crafted in porcelain and glazed in gold or silver. The idea being that you'll want to use the items again and again. Turkish designer Demet Bilici's 'Desert Core' desk pad for Corian evokes the soft curves and shadows of the desert, making work tasks in-

initely more pleasurable. While Karim Rashid's Morphescape tableware line, designed for interiors accessories firm, Gaia&Gino, resembles the silhouette of Istanbul's cityscape, and has a pleasingly visual and tactile quality.

**when the market gets tough, companies have to find a new way to keep consumers which results in greater innovation. These days, innovation is a necessity**

Check it out at Boutique 1 at The Walk at JBR in Dubai.

The less is more maxim — originally coined by architect Mies van der Rohe — is probably what Italian design maestro, Giorgio Armani is banking on. His newly opened ArmaniCasa store at the Dubai Mall is the epitome of timeless chic. The continuing collapse in property prices might accomplish one worthwhile thing: obliterate the tendency to treat a home as merely an asset.

So much of existence is spent in soulless offices, airports, restaurant and retail chains, cars and in the ether of cyberspace — the home is one of the last repositories of meaning; our lives can be read through their decoration, design and contents. So, property developers in the US are finding ever more outlandish amenities to revive sluggish sales.

In Manhattan, this ranges from a guest apartment rentable at \$100 per night; rooftop beaches, complete with sand, hammocks, grills and hot tubs; and even medical assistance, included in homeowners' maintenance fees. Doctors on call or at-home botox anyone? Emaar's recently unveiled 'rent to own' scheme in their 'ready to move in' properties in Downtown Dubai, pales in comparison.

Pantone, who style themselves as "the authority on colour and provider of colour standards for the design industries" has announced the colour of the year for 2009: mimosa. Yup, you heard it right: yellow, or rather, a "warm, engaging yellow". Yellow represents the nurturing quality of the sun, and apparently "no other colour expresses hope and reassurance more", and on this, the implication is, profits will be made.

*designtastic is an online magazine and communications consultancy. [www.designtastic.net](http://www.designtastic.net)*