



Beirut

A Guide to the City

then fine-tune. To execute these one off pieces, Nalbadian works with Tibetan weavers who use everything from bamboo to nettle silk.

---> BROUMANA AREA

Maison Tarazi

— Rizk Plaza Center +961 4 862 194 - maisontarazi.com.

Monday-Friday 9.30am-6pm. Saturday 9.30am-1.30pm.

This family of architects and artisans has been designing fantastic oriental furniture for 150 years. In the late 1800s, they even produced a throne for the last Ottoman Sultan. Today, jovial father and son team Michel and Camille sustain the tradition from the hills overlooking Beirut in their large workshop and showroom. Whether you are seeking an Ottoman-style copper lamp, a wooden panel decorated à la Mamluk or a Damascene mother of pearl mirror –it's all here. Aside from made-to-measure oriental pieces, Maison Tarazi also has an antique shop in the Rizk Plaza that gathers 1,001 magical objects, from 18th-century Chinese tiles made for the Arab market to painted glass icons of traditional Middle Eastern heroes like Antar and Abla.

---> CLEMENCEAU AREA

Orient 499

— Omar Daouk Street opposite the former Holiday Inn Hotel +961 1 369 499

- orient499.com. *Monday-Saturday 10.30am-7pm.*

One of our favorite stores in town, Orient 499 has turned local and regional crafts into luxury items. Retail couple Aida Kawass and Frank Luca have made their homeware and fashion store look like a spread out of "World of Interiors". It's a treat just driving by and admiring their creative windows. Inside their recently expanded store, you will find an exquisite selection of furniture, caftans and shirts (for women and men), jewelry, hammam products and stationary. Most are sourced in Lebanon and Syria, but Orient 499 has ventured beyond the immediate neighborhood, bringing back copper lamps from Morocco and tableware from Central Asia. There is also a wonderful kids section. It will be hard to leave empty handed.

---> DEKWANEH AREA

Blatt Chaya

— Mar Charbel Street off Camille Chamoun Avenue (close to Barista and Bassoul-Heneine showrooms – see map on website). *By appointment +961 1 695 222 - blattchaya.com.*

Edgard Chaya, a retired businessman stumbled one day on a suitcase containing some curious molds, which he soon figured out were owned by his great uncle and served to make floor tiles. It was not long before he decided to revive the all but forgotten craft. In their heyday, such tiles adorned the floors of houses from Beirut to Barcelona. It took four years for Chaya, with the help