

## Lucky if you can find Pinky's

I have found that people who intend to stay in Dubai for a while like to find something unusual to furnish their home, something out of the ordinary, something from the region and as far from the Swedish ideal as possible but also not off the planet in price.

The usual scenario is to wander through Marina with a wistful look in the eye and work out a balance between rent and school fees to see which month you can afford that ornate chair or screen.

There is a solution but it requires some effort. As you know all wonderful things don't come easily.

There are two furniture shops in the UAE that have wonderfully carved and ornate pieces, just like Marina, but at a fraction of the price. Some pieces even look suspiciously similar.

The catch is they are in Sharjah. Yes, that is where the hard work comes in. Trust me, it is worth every stressful minute.

These two establishments are called Lucky's and Pinky's and they are fairly close together in the Industrial area of Sharjah.

They are both in large tin sheds and have furniture stacked to the rafters, literally. You quickly understand how the weekly Al Quoz fire can happen. To find that perfect piece for the hallway, you have to pick your way carefully between rows of stacked tables and sideboards, careful not to knock something or get caught on a door knob or latch. Don't wear your nice white pants as everything is covered in a fine layer of dust.

Similarly they both have carved ornate Indian furniture but there are also quite different styles in each shop so you must visit both. There are gaily painted cupboards and fine wrought ironwork in

Lucky's and heavy Rajastani doors in Pinky's and everything in between. There are also lanterns and pots and all sorts of other stuff to decorate your palace. Some are even genuine antiques (ie. over 40 years old).

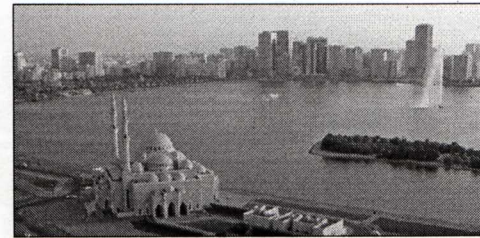
Imagine battling through an hour of Saturday traffic, finding the right shed in the maze of dirt tracks and wrecked busses, struggling through the towers of furniture in the stultifying, oppressive heat, finding the perfect piece and then negotiating a brilliant price. Sir Edmond knows the feeling.

They will wax, polish and fumigate it for you and deliver it anywhere in Dubai or Sharjah within the week. You will be so pleased to finally see it in place in your home that you will tip the delivery guys, even though it is 11.30pm and you had already been in bed for an hour.

Now, how to find them? Hmm. Well here goes...

Take the Airport Tunnel toward Sharjah and keep going straight for several km. Once you realise you have entered the twilight zone that is the Shajah Industrial Area, start looking for a Bridgestone Tyre outlet in a row of businesses on the right side of the road. Turn right at Bridgestone. The bitumen immediately disappears and you suddenly wish you had brought the Prado. Drive straight ahead while negotiating equal numbers of wrecked trucks, potholes, and Pakistani workers. Turn left at the T junction and then immediately right. About 100m ahead on the right is Pinky's in a large white(ish) shed. You look at it in relief and then realise it is closed as it is just 1.15pm and it will only reopen at 4.00! Yes, the old ways are still operating in Sharjah.

Now, once you have finished here you have still to visit Lucky's. Drive back to the bitumen the way you came. Warning! Do not try to take a short cut through the dirt roads of the industrial area as you will suddenly find yourself in Narnia, or more



likely, Mordor from Lord of the Rings. Dozens of Prados and Jeeps drive in here every week, never to be seen again.

Turn right at Bridgestone again, back on the bitumen road. At the first big roundabout, turn right. You are now driving toward National Paints. At the next big roundabout turn right, back in the direction of Dubai. Follow this road until you reach a flyover that goes over your head and do a U turn. Turn immediately right up a side street that goes off at an angle. Lucky's is the row of large yellowy sheds on your left. The relief will be palpable.

Now for the frilly bits of décor, drapes, cushions, curtains etc., try the Pride of Kashmir warehouse between the Gold and Diamond Park and the Police Licencing office near Interchange 4 in Al Quoz.

Some tips for a successful Off Road Trip such as this.

- 1/ Travel in pairs in case one gets stuck. Never leave them behind, even if they just want to have one more look at that table in the last shed.
- 2/ Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.
- 3/ Take a GPS and a mobile phone.
- 4/ Aim to arrive at your destination before 1.00pm or after 4.00pm.
- 5/ Measure the space you want to put the sideboard in.
- 6/ Take a tape measure.
- 7/ Haggle.

Good luck, have fun and don't call me if you can't find your way home. You know what my memory is like.

ANZA Offroad



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