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PHOTO: HANS GISSINGER, COURTESY OF JENNI LI

## Jenni Li

*Peru*

Raised in the Atlanta suburbs by her American mother, Jenni Li, 44, didn't feel much of a personal connection with Peru, her father's homeland and country of residence. But when he died in 2007 and she returned to help settle his affairs, "it became a journey for me, a way to understand where I came from," says Li, who was born in Lima. While working as a stylist in Miami and then in Brooklyn, she revisited Peru frequently, inspired by artisans whose textiles were steeped in history and incorporated the country's indigenous resources. The weavers and other craftspeople she met still sheared their wool from flocks of sheep, made natural dyes from plants and insects and used age-old tools like backstrap looms. "There's a mystery about Peru," says Li, whose four-year-old

company, Intiearth, grew out of parties she threw at her home where friends could purchase one-of-a-kind Peruvian textiles that she sourced. "It has a lot of magical qualities for people," she notes. All of Intiearth's wares are handmade in Peru, including vintage frazadas from the Andes Mountains, indigo ikat throws and wool ponchos. "Textiles are imperfect," says Li. "They touch an emotional core in people." [intiearth.com](http://intiearth.com).

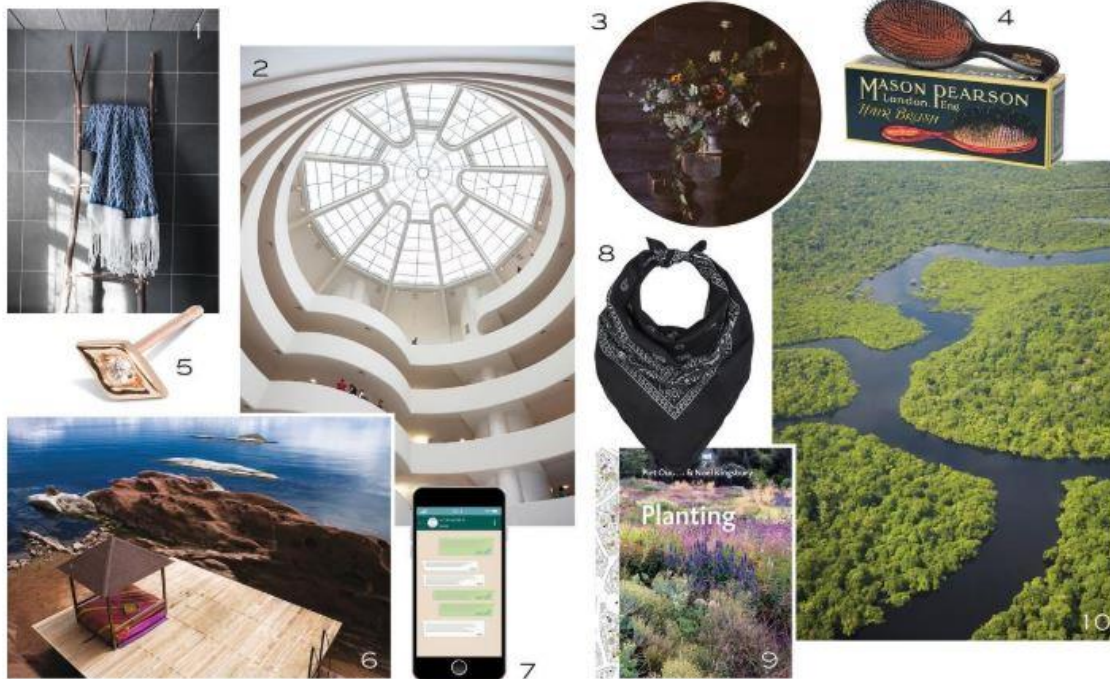


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1. What's a recent piece you discovered?

A *pañon* from northern Peru, an ikat textile with an intricate macramé border, used as a shawl or to carry small children. I traveled six hours by car through the mountains of Peru to reach a small village where a cooperative of women makes them.

2. What museums do you like to visit?

The Guggenheim in New York.

3. What's your favorite recent discovery?

Native cotton, dating back 5,000 years in Peru, is colored naturally. Many farmers are now growing these organic crops again. And the new Saipua store [shown] in Red Hook, Brooklyn.

4. What are your three grooming essentials?

A Mason Pearson hairbrush, Tata Harper face oil and rose-water spray.

5. What's your signature accessory?

Rose-gold stud earrings by Wendy Nichol.

6. What's your favorite hotel?

Titilaka on Laka Titicaca in Peru. It's a small lodge on a private peninsula, and it blends modern design with Andean culture.

7. What tools are essential to your job?

WhatsApp, a large desk or table and a computer.

8. What are your three travel essentials?

An Intiearth shawl, Perfumera Curandera healing perfume and a cotton bandanna.

9. What's your favorite book?

*Planting: A New Perspective*, by Piet Oudolf and Noel Kingsbury.

10. What's your favorite place to visit?

The Amazon jungle. It reminds me how important it is to have a symbiotic relationship with nature.

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