

# A PERFECT BALANCE

With her finger firmly on the pulse of all things trending, Cara shared her top tips for updating your home this spring – head to [www.joburgnorth.getitonline.co.za](http://www.joburgnorth.getitonline.co.za) and give them a read!



Driven, business savvy, and immensely talented, it seems there's nothing Cara Saven can't do! This passionate mother and brain behind Cara Saven Wall Design talks about what keeps her going and the importance of finding balance.

'If there's one thing I'm not, it's an extremist! I always need things to be balanced in my life.' In between raising her kids, running her business, doing charity work and still finding time for herself, it's amazing to watch Cara go about her day, yet it's something she seems to do with ease. Cara maintains that her success comes from this ever-elusive balance, which she also says has been a key internal factor in her business journey so far. 'I think my aversion to extremism is also part of why I've been able to serve both my art and business sides so well. When I first started studying at UCT I was doing Fine Art, but I soon realised I wasn't built to be a fine artist, so I switched to a BA in art history. But even then, my comfort zone was always far more in business, so I did a postgraduate degree in marketing management after that. I was lucky because both degrees played a big role in leading me to the place where I am today.'

That place is behind the helm of Cara's incredible brand, Cara Saven Wall Design – a company specialising in custom designed wallpaper, canvases, framed prints and vinyls. If you've recently spotted some breathtaking wallpaper in a hotel, restaurant, or office space, chances are you've seen some of Cara's work though amazingly, this isn't the path she'd always planned for herself. 'I've always been creative, but my background is actually in retail buying. I'd planned to go back to work full time and was definitely going to be a working mother, but after I had my first child I realised there was no way I could do that – retail buying isn't something you

can do part-time.' Armed with her desire to start working again, but also knowing she needed more flexibility, Cara decided to embrace another of her passions – photography – as a way of keeping her creative as well as her business sides satisfied. 'I started approaching businesses and offering to take photos for them that they could then use as the décor in their offices. That naturally morphed into taking those photos and printing them on a larger scale for some of the projects. Then about two years ago, I officially relaunched as Cara Saven Wall Design and began building ranges of wallpaper and vinyls that were accessible to everyone.'

The ranges speak for themselves – no matter what style you're looking for, you'll find it on her website. 'We're constantly adding new things to the ranges, too, so it never gets boring.' From bold prints to bright botanicals, and so much more, it's incredible to see the sheer span of designs she's come up with. 'Sometimes I just get an idea of what I want to see on a wall, then I start playing with it and transferring the idea onto paper – a lot of my botanical prints are like that. It's so random, and it's really just based on what's inspired me that day, week, or month. A lot of the time, our designs are influenced by client requests, too – somebody will approach me with an idea, and if I don't already have it in my range, then that motivates me to go out and source it or build it or design it.'

While wallpaper has long been a trend worldwide, South Africa has been a little slower in embracing this versatile décor

option. Finally, however, local design enthusiasts and serial home decorators are starting to use it more freely. 'Accessories like wallpaper are no longer just used by interior designers – we're seeing now that even individuals doing a little home touch-up themselves use wallpaper somewhere. It's really fantastic.' Aside from helping people to take their homes to the next level, Cara says she also loves getting to work with imaginative corporate clients in South Africa. 'It's been amazing to work with some incredible brands over the past couple of years, revamping their offices and spaces. My aim is to show people just how much difference working in a beautifully well-crafted space can make to their employees' moods and productivity.'

When Cara isn't behind her desk or taking on the world of motherhood, you'll probably find her on a yoga mat or climbing a mountain – something she also credits as being key in keeping sane. 'My work is very dominant in my life and always has been. This year has been a much better year for me in terms of finding that all important balance, despite being busier than ever. If you want something done, give it to a busy person! So I make sure I'm either in a yoga class or hiking a mountain at least four or five times a week – above all, I need to make sure I'm making time to look after myself.'

*Details: To check out Cara's incredible designs (and order something special to really brighten up your home!) head online to [www.carasaven.com](http://www.carasaven.com). Be the first to catch a glimpse of new designs by following her on Facebook and Instagram at @carasavenwalldesign*