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# How to Spend it

HOT AND GOLD







Royal Stranger velvet and brass  
Marshmallow sofa, €5,905







# PUTTING ON THE GLITZ

A new art deco for the 21st century is a splendiferous hit of eclectic glamour for homes. Katrina Burroughs reports



A new aesthetic is setting the tone in high-end interiors and it's as welcome as a pink gin served from a clinking art deco drinks trolley. It calls for decorative drama and a cocktail of ornament and colour inspired by the dynamic decor of the grand hotels and cruise ships of the 1920s and 1930s. Devotees are calling the style new art deco – but it's not a pastiche of period design, more a redefinition of its sumptuous audacity for the 21st-century home.

"Everyone is looking for glamour and excitement in their interiors, in the same way as when deco first emerged as a new form of expression in the 1920s. It was a complete breakaway from what had gone on before and articulated a revaluation in design and architecture. It was progressive, optimistic and luxurious," says Ken Bolan, from the comfort of a Talisman Bespoke Deco Club chair (£9,360 per pair) at his London headquarters – a 1939 repurposed garage with a splendid stepped façade.

Opulence and daring were the hallmarks of design in the art deco era, which acquired its snappy title from the... deep breath: 1925 Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, the world fair that introduced the exciting new style. Though forms were often geometric or streamlined (think Empire State Building), materials were lavish and art deco designers fabulously unafraid of ornament (consider Wallace Simpson's Cartier flamingo brooch). Popular patterns included fan shapes, cubist motifs, big cats, palm trees and stylised references to tribal art, the east and, of course, the discovery of the tomb of King Tut. Realisation of these creations demanded the skills of the best artisans of the era and designs were prized as *objets d'art* as well as functional furniture. Now, according to tastemakers such as Bolan, the dashing deco spirit is being revived for an adventurous contemporary clientele.

When it comes to pattern, new deco devotees are less keen on panthers and pyramids and more enamoured of the overscale geometrics of the era. Amy Somerville describes her aesthetic as "a masculine 1930s style of art deco". Inspired by the cocktail bars of the grand hotels of the era, she has created the Manhattan drinks cabinet (£21,000), decorated with squares and rectangles of American black walnut, ziricote and oak. She takes delight in the disruptive nature of new art deco. "In residential design, the expression of individuality, character and comfort has roared back into style – chaos, movement and colour are celebrated once again," she says. Cheers to that.

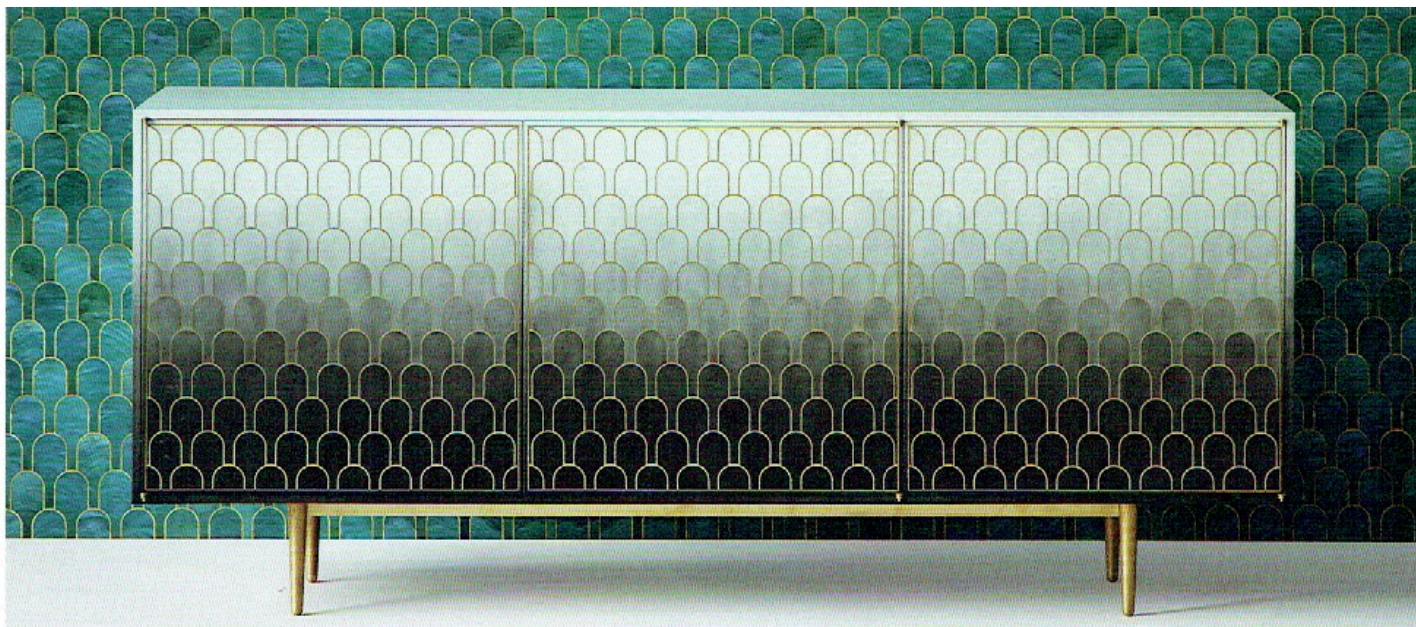
The cocktail cabinet is the hero design of new art deco – a form that allows designers to peacock their creativity, for makers to strut their virtuoso craft skills and for collectors to acquire a spectacular



Clockwise from top: ornamental surfaces add élan to a room designed by Stéphanie Coutas. Zelouf+Bell eucalyptus, sycamore, wenge, shagreen and brass Stella'd cocktail cabinet, £28,375. Lalique crystal panel, £2,700. Munna velvet and brass Olympia armchair, £3,410







statement piece. Linley launched a choice example last year, the Cocktail Cabinet (£70,000, pictured overleaf), in charcoal veneers of ripple and straight sycamore, its églomisé surface highlighted with mother-of-pearl dots. Michael Bell and Susan Zelouf, meanwhile, create new art deco furniture to commission from their studio in rural Ireland – and the star of their repertoire is the Stella'd cocktail cabinet (£28,375, pictured on previous page) in fumed figured eucalyptus, ripple sycamore, wenge, brass and shagreen. “We sense a return to glamour,” Zelouf says, “but it’s a sensual, considered glamour reflecting more time spent in the embrace of home. Our private clients are relaxing and entertaining more at home and are therefore interested in layering colour, texture, patina and story.”

New art deco wall coverings are often as pleasing to the hand as to the eye. Lumen tiles (from £395 per sq m, pictured far right) from Studioart’s 2018 collection are made from Velluto nubuck leather that is stitched, padded and moulded with a pattern inspired by light waves. Italian architect and interior designer Cristina Celestino’s handpainted Plumage porcelain wall tiles (£490 per sq m) for BottegaNove are ridged to mimic the barbs of feathers. “Interiors are always storytellers,” says Celestino who has created dreamlike, stylised interiors for fashion brands such as Fendi and Sergio Rossi. “I think the increasing number of requests for surface patterns and coverings is due to a greater desire for customisation and giving personality to interiors. Our houses are becoming more and more representative of ourselves.”

Though decorative surfaces are a key element of this aesthetic, designers usually steer away from a palette of several patterns. If a wall covering is fancy, the furniture tends to be less so – after all, these are contemporary homes, not the SS Normandie. However, there are bold exceptions. Stéphanie Coutas, who worked in fashion before switching to interior design, was given a brief for a home on the French Riviera in Cap d’Antibes that was “to emulate the feeling of being on a superyacht”, so she let rip with rich ornamental surfaces in new art deco style (pictured on previous page). A table is decorated with a metallic and wool thread inserted into the glass, the metallic/wool-blend rug mimics the pattern of the tabletop, which harmonises with a black and green marble sideboard and leather wall panels, which in turn echo each other’s polygonal pattern.

If new art deco has a signature shape, it’s the curve. Furniture often adopts a sinuous, streamlined form, like the silk velvet-upholstered sofa created by David Collins Studio for the MahaNakhon tower, a 310m-high building in Bangkok designed by Ole Scheeren. Francis Sultana, interior designer to the art world, is also a fan of sweeping style. “I love to use the curve, especially in my upholstered pieces,” says Sultana, who launched the mohair velvet-clad Victoire

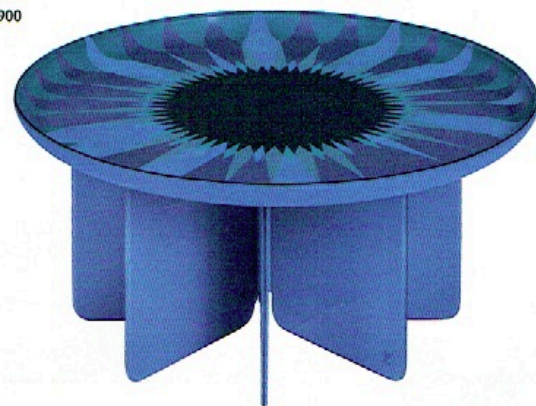


daybed (£23,700) last year as part of his Narmina collection, and admits that the flamboyant design of the 1920s and 1930s is a constant inspiration. “My clients want quality; they also desire materials that have longevity in addition to a sense of craftsmanship and skill. The art deco period really encapsulated all of these elements,” he adds. “It was also a period that first saw the two skills merge in the work of designers such as Armand-Albert Rateau, Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann and Jean Dunand, which is significant for me as an interior designer who designs furniture.”

Ruhlmann is the inspiration behind another glorious set of curves, the Albany console (£9,345) at Davidson. The piece – set on bowed legs and finished in satin black sycamore with distressed bronze gilding – is based on a 1930s Ruhlmann dining table, adapted and refined to suit 21st-century taste.

What new art deco designs all have in common is drama. They are the pouting, preening lead vocalists of any scheme – never the backing band. Paula Sousa, CEO, founder and creative director of Munna explains why such pieces are in demand: “The interior designers we work with are looking for designs that would act as the scene-stealer in an interior.” Munna’s

Clockwise from top: Bethan Gray maple and brass Shamsian Nizwa cabinet, £7,850. Studioart Lumen Velluto ginepro tiles, from £395 per sq m. India Mahdavi for Louis Vuitton leather Talisman side table, £11,000. Arik Levy for Baccarat tuile de cristal Futuredeco chandelier, £66,900





deco-style showstoppers include the shell-shaped Olympia armchair (£3,410, pictured on third page) in duck-egg velvet and the Fringes armchair (£2,570) – extravagantly trimmed, with tiered tassels reminiscent of the flapper dresses of the Jazz Age. These are attention-grabbing, by any measure, but it's a fellow Portuguese brand Royal Stranger that has taken the curvy aesthetic of new art deco and created something uniquely theatrical. The Marshmallow collection (including a stool, €1,968, and sofa, €5,905, pictured on opening pages) combines Michelin Man pneumatic curves in velvet and polished brass with a contemporary palette of sugary pastels. Architects Sofia Pinho Santos and Rui Moreira Santos launched the label last year with the aim of making pieces that are luxurious and uplifting. "Our mission is to transform grey times and create a better world that is colourful and happy," says Santos. New art deco designers are not without ambition.

Another warrior in the battle against bland is the Milanese designer Gio Pagani, known for evocative, expressive design intended to bring glamour to what he calls "the theatre of private life". Pagani was formerly an architect who designed store interiors for Versace and MaxMara, and in 2015 – when he started his furniture label – he wanted to create "timeless objects" with "fashion's dynamic and contemporary spirit". Pagani's most covetable new art deco pieces include the Eclat d'Eau floor lights (from €1,320), hand-blown Murano-glass globes set on gleaming metal legs, which partner beautifully with his Senza Fine range – the capsule range that is informed by 1950s Italian style. "What I am seeing nowadays is that my clients are increasingly looking for an eclectic aesthetic approach," he says.

This mix-and-match approach is the key to making new art deco work in the contemporary home. A highly stylised, homogeneous scheme may look stupendous in a fashion boutique, but could turn out to be overwhelming to live with, once unboxed. So what if you want to buy just one piece? Dip a toe in the trend with modern marquetry, such as the monochrome Shamsian Nizwa cabinet (£7,850, pictured on previous page) designed by Bethan Gray in collaboration with Iranian artist Mohamad Reza Shamsian. Or try the dramatic geometric stylings of the Bonhomme standard lamp (£864) by Atelier Areti. If you have a club chair to reupholster, consider Diamonds (£223.20 per m, pictured top) from India Mahdavi's True Velvet range for Pierre Frey. The Paris-based architect does not consider her work in the tradition of art deco style. "I am much more joyful and polychromatic," she says. But Mahdavi's makeover of The Gallery at Sketch in 2014, featuring velvet chairs with seatbacks like plump pink Viennese fingers, is a paradigm of new art deco style (and should you fancy a Sketch-style dining room, Mahdavi's Rue Las Cases store sells similar Charlotte rotating chairs, €3,200, with a brass base).

A handful of brands have a particular knack for this trend as art deco is in their DNA. Baccarat and Lalique each own a glittering archive of art deco-era crystal and glass and have recruited the best contemporary designers to reinterpret their heritage. Baccarat has collaborated with Arik Levy since 2013 on a collection featuring crystal tiles, and in April launched the 10-tiered Futuredeco chandelier (£66,900, pictured on previous page), inspired by the Jets d'eau light created by Georges Chevalier, the firm's first creative director, in 1925. Lalique recently returned to its roots to produce architectural panels (example pictured on third page, €2,700) drawn from René Lalique's original designs for the Orient Express.

But the luxury label that is taking new art deco to another level is Louis Vuitton. Last year, the highlight of its *Objets Nomades* exhibition during Milan Design Week was the Talisman side table by India Mahdavi (€11,000, edition of 50, pictured on previous page), whose indigo leather top conjured deco-style marquetry. This April, it was the highly ornamental, exquisitely crafted leather flowers (€200 each) designed by Atelier Oi, that were

From top: India Mahdavi for Pierre Frey velvet Diamonds fabric, £223.20 per m. Linley sycamore, nickel and mother-of-pearl Cocktail Cabinet, £70,000

stars of the brand's show. The trio of designers behind the studio, Aurel Aebi, Armand Louis and Patrick Reymond, say they have always identified with the ethos of art deco, and consider it an ancestor of their beautiful blooms. "Inspired by japonisme, ornamental flowers and a specific respect for artisans, it's an art movement respecting and putting handicraft at the forefront. The work and know-how of the artisan is an integral part of today's trend," says Aebi. Hundreds of these flowers were suspended from the ceiling of the Palazzo Bocconi, the crimson blooms hung like a warning to decorators of the white-wall school of design: "Your time is up. Make way for new art deco." ♦

#### RETURN TO SPLENDOR

Amy Somerville, 21 Boston Pl, London NW1 (020-7586 2211; amysomerville.com). **Atelier Areti**, 020-3286 6148; atelieraret.com. **Atelier Oi**, atelier-oi.ch. **Baccarat**, 14 Basil St, London SW3 (020-3402 4731; baccarat.com). **Bethan Gray**, by appt, 65 Alfred Rd, London W2 (020-3214 3150; bethangray.com).

**BottegaNove**, Via Molini 88, 36055 Nove (+39042-459 0110; botteganove.it). **David Collins Studio**, The Studio, 74 Farm Ln, London SW6 (020-7835 5000; davidcollins.com). **Davidson**, 101 Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (020-7751 5537; davidsonlondon.com). **Francis Sultana**, 2-4 King St, London SW1 (020-7589 5946; francissultana.com). **Giopagani**, Via Montebello 30, Milan (+39023-676 9970; giopagani.com). **India Mahdavi**, 3 Rue Las Cases, 75007 Paris (+331-4555 6767; india-mahdavi.com). **Lalique**, 47 Conduit St, London W1 (020-7292 0444; lalique.com). **Linley**, 60 Piccadilly Rd, London SW1 (020-7824 7240; davidlinley.com). **Louis Vuitton**, 17-20 New Bond St, London W1 (020-3214 9200; louisvuitton.com). **Munna**, munnadesign.com. **Pierre Frey**, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (020-7376 5599; pierrefrey.com). **Royal Stranger**, royalstranger.com. **Rubelli**, Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (020-7349 1590; rubelli.com). **Stéphanie Coutas**, 9 Rue Lincoln, 75008 Paris (+331-8129 3190; stephaniecoutas.com). **Studioart**, studioart.it and see Rubelli. **Talisman**, 79-91 New King's Rd, London SW6 (020-7731 4686; talismanlondon.com). **Zelouf+Bell**, by appt, The Old Chocolate Factory, 515 Kilmainham Sq, Dublin (+35387-230 5386; zeloufandbell.com).