

FURNITURE FOR ALL



The swirling white-on-black patterns on the seat and back cushions of Scrollwork chairs from Century Furniture's Metro Luxe Collection evoke the graceful curves in a wrought-iron gate. Dressed in a clean white enamel paint finish, the chairs have a pieced frame of broken circles that sweep around to embrace the occupant. Also shown from the collection is a bedside chest finished in "Jet." Find Century furniture at Dillard's, Eklektik Interiors, Ladco Washington Park Design Center and Noel Furniture Co.

HIGH POINT MARKET GETS COZY, LOVES THE EARTH AND SCOURS THE WORLD

BY DEBRA MCGAUGHEY

38

The latest trend in furniture has one overriding theme we all can applaud. It is simply: Sit down and relax. This is your home. Do with it what you please.

People who look for direction in home décor might be disappointed by this lack of guidance and vision. (What? You mean I must give up my metallic dining room chairs? I just got them.) It does not mean you must sacrifice what you presently own. In fact, that is the point.

This year, manufacturers displaying goods at the Fall 2007 International Home Furnishings Market in High Point, N.C., are offering collections that have a distinct handmade or one-of-a-kind quality about them. They are offering pieces to enhance what you already own. Why? Manufacturers want you to feel a connection to a piece of furniture you will purchase, a true kinship with it. A friend might ask, "Why did you buy that sofa?" Your

response: Because you absolutely loved it, it was comfortable, the color was great and you wanted it in your home.

Furniture makers are determined to make the pieces you will feel most comfortable with and, in turn, purchase. That means the trend is decidedly on style and comfort. If your new sofa features a leather-and-fabric combination (an increasingly popular option for 2007-2008), great. If that stunning armoire looks distressed and less than perfect (another frequently seen feature now), that's fine, too.

ECLECTIC EMBRACE

The idea is that you — the furniture's owner — saw its quality, beauty and character as something you wanted to possess. Furniture this year is all about telling the world who you are through your own eclectic, carefully culled collection.





ABOVE: The stunning metal bead-fringed settee by Kelly Hopper for Century Furniture perfectly blends old and new styles: tradition with a high-tech twist.



LEFT: The Cascade Display Curio, one of 61 pieces in Bernhardt Furniture Co.'s new Cascade Casegoods Collection, marries modern design and eco-friendly features, including walnut veneers and clear aged-timber finishes that emphasize the wood grain. Local dealers of Bernhardt furniture include Abraham's Furniture, Accents Fine Furniture, Dillard's, Ladco Washington Park Design Center, Louis Shanks, Noel Furniture Co. and Star Furniture.

"No matter what the overall style goal, from the most formally traditional through ultra modern, the surest way to have a room that looks so '20th century' is to rely on overly matched and overly symmetrical interiors," says Davis Remignanti, lead design consultant for Furniture.com.

Remignanti says home decorating trends for 2007 continue to be off the "a la carte" menu, with the best-designed rooms combining styles, materials and textures not normally accustomed to being placed together. Read: Eclectic with a Purpose.

A perfect example of this a la carte combination is the fringe-trimmed armless settee by Kelly Hopper Collection for Century Furniture. The piece, which is modeled after the classic French Bergere, is a blend of old and new styles. Aside from its charming design, the pizzazz comes from the optional metal (yes, metal) bead fringe that encircles its wood frame. It's traditional design with a high-tech twist.

GREEN ATTITUDES

The market for eco-friendly and natural-looking furniture also is growing. Bernhardt's 61-piece Cascade Collection, which was introduced at High Point this fall, is an artistic and modern line featuring walnut veneers and clear aged-timber finishes that allow whorls of wood to show through.

HIGH POINT



ABOVE: *The Shaker-inspired Apothecary Hall Chest is just as useful in a kitchen, bedroom or dining area as it is in a foyer or hallway. From the American Perspective Collection by Stanley Furniture. Find Stanley Furniture pieces at Accents Fine Furniture and Louis Shanks.*

RESOURCES

ABRAHAM'S FURNITURE
5120 Woodway Drive
Suite 6010
713.622.4444

ACCENTS FINE FURNITURE
7075 Southwest Freeway
713.541.3555

BAKER HOUSTON
1111-05 Uptown Park Blvd.
713.627.3235

CHAIRS & TABLES
4019 Richmond
713.960.9000
www.chairsandtables.com

DILLARD'S
Multiple locations
www.dillards.com

EKLEKTIK INTERIORS
16720 Champion Forest Drive
Spring, 281.379.2755
www.eklektikinteriors.com

**LADCO WASHINGTON PARK
DESIGN CENTER**
7900 Washington Ave.
713.868.2828

LOUIS SHANKS
Multiple locations
www.louishshanks.com

**MEREDITH O'DONNELL
FINE FURNITURE**
2992 Kirby Drive, 713.526.7332
www.meredithodonnell.com

NOEL FURNITURE CO.
2727 Southwest Freeway
713.874.5200
www.noelfurniture.com

STAR FURNITURE
Multiple locations
www.starfurniture.com

ZEALIE FINE FURNITURE
2518 Bissonnet, 713.521.3200
www.zealie.com



ABOVE: *Marge Carson Inc. fashions its Madeira marble-topped Borghese Oval Bedside Chest in a Sumatra finish with Medici silver and vintage gold metal leaf trim, as well as antique brass and nickel ring pulls. Noel Furniture Co. and Ladco Washington Park Design Center are Marge Carson Inc. dealers.*



ABOVE: *Sculptural beauty takes form in this Vicomtesse Lounge Chair by Jacques Garcia for Baker using a French upholstery technique known as "gainage," characterized by wrapping leather or fabric to the frame to create a defined silhouette. Shop for Baker furniture at Baker Houston and Meredith O'Donnell Fine Furniture.*

The walnut veneers come from sustainable U.S. suppliers. The finishes boast a 47 percent reduction in volatile organic compounds. Even the packaging, catalogs and showrooms are made from recycled materials that are kinder to the earth.

"As purchases become more considered, we think these unadorned and powerful earthy designs, sustainably built, will be welcomed and respected," says Heather Eidenmiller, director of brand development for Bernhardt.

Colors are reflecting this eco-friendly attitude. Neutrals now include rich browns, greens and tans. Realistic, rustic reds are popular. Even the '70s orange-and-lime color ways have not lost their audience. And, of course, classic black-and-white themes continue to prevail, as seen in Century Furniture's ebony and ivory upholstered creations. But again, a wide range of earthy colors, including the popular deep brownish-black finish for casegoods, is being offered to suit consumer tastes.

GLOBAL INSPIRATION

Those who seek traditional furniture with timeless beauty should consider the Smithsonian Collection by Bernhardt. Other options include the clean, crisp designs found in the Jacques Garcia Collection for Baker and the relaxed yet traditional English-based approach in the American Perspective Collection from Stanley Furniture Co.

American consumers will see a steady influx of pieces reflective of other world cultures this year. Some call the look "globally inspired." Japan, China, India, South America, Europe and Africa cultures are all coming forward in furnishings.

"The reason this has happened is because most people are more socially aware today than in the past," says Dana Poor, Cotton Inc.'s manager of home trend forecasting. "We, especially American consumers, are more aware of what's going on outside of our country."

European and African forms meet in Stickle's St. Croix group, a seven-piece mahogany bedroom offering with distinctive twist-carved top rails and carved moldings, all in a new "Montego" finish. Animal-print ottomans and chairs, some in rich purples and dark hues, are being presented in accent pieces.

The blending of world cultures is actually a blessing to U.S. furniture makers. While purchases in the United States have dipped during the past year, experts report the overseas market is picking up steam. One measure: Wealthy Asian families are buying upscale American furniture as status symbols, according to a recent *New York Times* article. The purchases are a sign that their homes are truly grand enough to accommodate these generously proportioned pieces.

That's something we large-living Texans can certainly understand.