

LOVED THE 2ND TIME AROUND

Bath interior designer Clair Strong offers advice on sourcing and buying salvage

Recycling and upcycling have become buzzwords of the eco-friendly movement, but it goes far beyond separating the cardboard from the plastic and trying your hand at painting old furniture. For decades a few devoted individuals have been lovingly collecting and restoring all kinds of architectural features... Now everyone is at it!

Architectural salvage is hugely popular in the interiors world at the moment. Anything can be salvaged; tiles, flooring, glass panels, furniture, lighting, decorative features (mirrors etc), bath tubs and sinks. Even the tiny inconsequential things in a house; light switches, kitchen taps and plug sockets can be reclaimed and restored. Items are taken from abandoned warehouses, churches and other historic buildings and given a new lease of life in modern homes, restaurants and shops. It's a wonderful way to preserve beautiful items that may have otherwise been relegated to the tip.

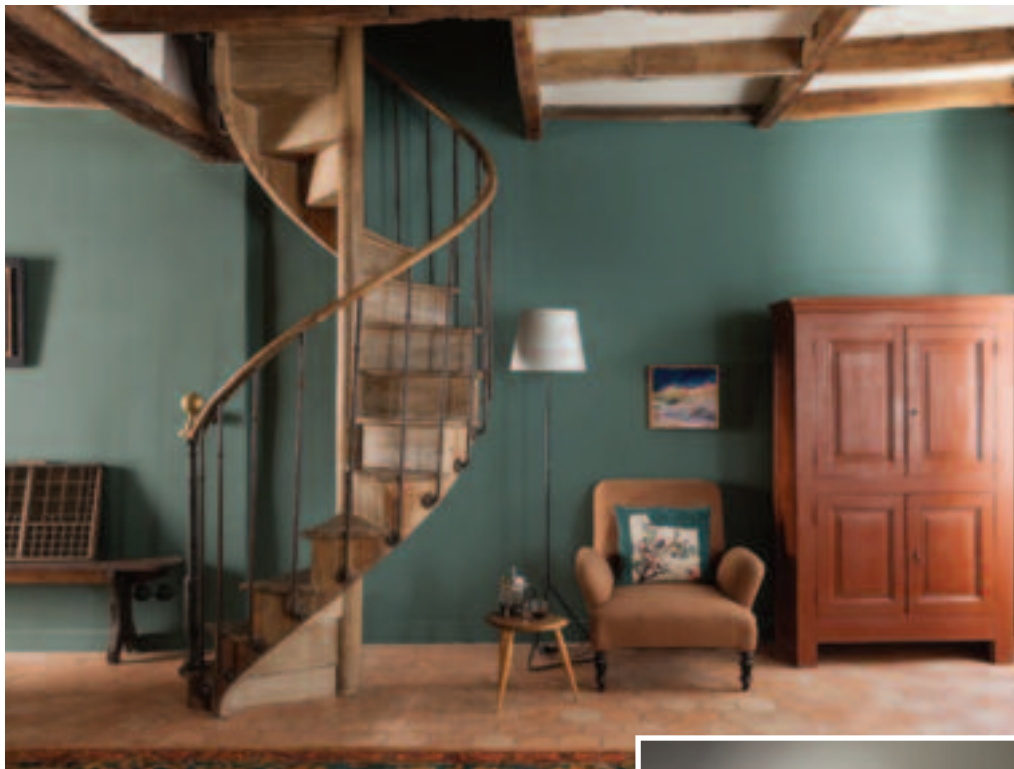
Salvage is popular for a number of reasons – it's not all about environmental concerns. From a design perspective, you can find some real gems. Unique items made using materials not available now.

People are keen to decorate their homes in a way that's personal and owning something no one else has, or is in scarce supply, is a foolproof way to achieve that. The beauty of salvage is that it's often a one-off.

Reclaimed items have the kind of time-worn charm and character you can't find anywhere else. They have history, they tell a story and they bring it to life in your home.

From a purely practical perspective the items have been made to last. The skill and craftsmanship that went into making these things is very apparent, even today.

Older items were generally made in smaller batches to a much higher quality, thus you can depend on them to give you a lifetime of joy. They may even become a family heirloom.



CLAIR'S FINDS
 Retrouvius Reclamation and Design – based in London, this small but excellent salvage warehouse has been operating for more than 20 years. It's run by architects and design enthusiasts with an excellent eye for quality and quirky.
 Retrouvius.com.
 Visit: NW10 5NS



RESOURCE-FULL

English Salvage – one of the largest design and architectural resources in the UK, English Salvage supply architects, designers and the movie industry, as well as homeowners. Their customers include English Heritage, Disney and Jamie Oliver restaurants. This extensive yard is based in Leominster, Herefordshire.
 Englishsalvage.co.uk HR6 0AB



WORKS OF ART

Fallen Furniture – now for something a little different; Wiltshire based Fallen Furniture uses reclaimed aircraft parts to design and build beautiful pieces of art and furniture. The rescued aircraft parts are lovingly and painstakingly polished and paired with glass, wood, metal and textiles to create unique products.
fallenfurniture.com. Lights also in Felix lighting, Bartlett St, Bath

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN

Locally to Bath there are lots of car boot sales, furniture and vintage fairs, house clearances and antique shops worth checking out. There's the regular antiques and vintage market at Green Park Station on Sundays and the auction house Aldridges of Bath holds regular sales. Within easy reach by car, there's Wells Reclamation; the oldest yard of its kind in the UK. Frome Reclamation is another must-visit for eager salvage finders and there's also Bristol's brilliant yard in Southville.



RESTORED & RELOVED

Designoza – A purely online retailer of authentic, original and (if necessary) restored furniture. Their selection of furniture and accessories span the breadth of the 20th century and include things like Art Deco drinks cabinets and post-war bakelite lamps.
Designoza.com



TIPS FOR BUYING AND WORKING WITH SALVAGE

Buying and working with salvage is not like buying any other products, so bear these tips in mind:

- Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions; where it came from, if it can be used for your intended purpose and so on.
- Try to see the item in person before handing over cash. If this isn't possible, check the listings and photographs carefully. Can you get a refund if the item is not what it seems?
- Work only with builders who have used salvage before – specialist techniques may be required to fit your items.
- If you are buying multiple objects, ask for a discount. It is perfectly acceptable to haggle.
- Use retailers who have signed up to the Salvo Code; a code of conduct designed to give confidence to buyers.
- And most importantly; enjoy the process! Salvaging is much like a treasure hunt and you're likely to find some rare gems.



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