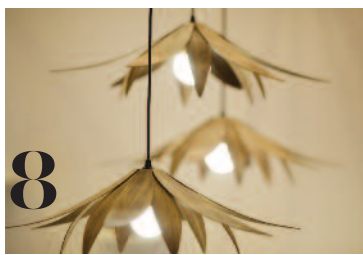




DESIGN TRENDS FOR 2015





Bath-based interior designer **Clair Strong** visited the big London design shows to find out which interior trends and products are heading our way

For two weeks this autumn, the world's biggest and brightest in design talent descended on London to exhibit their latest work. Every year the London Design Festival showcases the most innovative and aesthetically pleasing international product and furniture design. It's the LFW (London Fashion Week) for interiors – where the trends for the next 12 months are revealed.

Some of the major shows include Decorex (a 38-year tradition), 100% Design, Tent and Super Brands London, and Design Junction. But all over London you'll find pop up shops, showrooms and art galleries - including the V&A, celebrating design.

As a Bath-based interior designer I'm a regular at the London Design Festival and find the shows a great source of inspiration. I love coming into a new season with a notebook full of fresh ideas. My clients are a stylish, discerning bunch, but they don't necessarily have the time to keep up with evolving trends. It's my job to do that for them.

So, what's the inside scoop on the latest trends? Which brands should we be looking out for? Here are a few snippets from my notebook.

Trend Spotting

Scandinavian design is still making waves. The trademark of this trend is beautiful craftsmanship, natural materials (especially wood) and sleek form. Denmark based furniture designers, Mater, exhibited at Tent this year, showing pieces such as the Shell lounge and dining chair made from hand-stitched leather seats on a wooden frame, and the beautiful acorn-shaped Terho lamp which is made from hand-blown glass and alder wood.

Ceramic and stone tiles in every shape and size are hugely popular at the moment. I was struck by the large format, oversized tiles as well as tiny, delicate mosaics. The more traditional, muted offerings are of course still on trend, alongside slightly quirkier patterned tiles. There is a focus on reclaimed materials and more sustainable production methods. Renowned architectural salvage company, Bert and May, were exhibiting their reclaimed and handmade tiles at both 100% Design and Decorex.

'Handmade' was another major theme throughout this year's shows. The handmade trend has been blossoming for a few years but it has really come into its own recently.

At Design Junction's Flash Factories exhibit, visitors got to see how companies like Bert and May, Waterford Crystal and Coakley & Cox make their products. There were similar craft demonstrations at Decorex, the highlights of which included rug weaving by Front London and block printed

wallpapers by Watts of Westminster.

As for colours, deep sea hues were the focus at Decorex; teal, rich greens and a variety of blues. These were contrasted against copper and brass accents, creating a really striking but cosy effect. Walls in navy, dark grey and black were also featured proving that dramatic, moody hues are the order of the day. But there was a lighter side too, with a delightfully modern autumnal leaf combination at 100% Design in yolk yellow, apple green and rust orange teamed together with concrete and wood.

Geometric patterns are still big in textiles, as are bold Ikat prints. Classic tartan is back (did it ever really leave?) and circular patterns are also having a moment. It wasn't so much the patterns themselves, but the use of them that really wowed at this year's shows. Patterned tiles, sculpted wooden wall surfaces and fantastically elaborate wallpapers are just a few examples.

But it was the vast array of lovely natural fabrics; linens, cottons and wool, that I found myself especially drawn to; hardly surprising as it's often the simplest items that make the biggest impact.

My Show Stoppers

No design show is complete without a few outlandish exhibitions. There were plenty, of course, in London this year. I noted that particularly interesting furniture has been coming out of Lithuania, Slovenia and Estonia recently. Lina Furniture, for example, exhibited their award-winning modular 'chair'; large, colourful balls that provide a comfortable, adaptable and playful seating arrangement.

Timorous Beasties, a Glasgow based wallpaper design studio, showed off its new collection of dramatic illustrated papers, created in collaboration with Tektura.

Worcester based Macmaster produce timber based lighting and furniture products, the Lotus and Bloom pendant lampshades were particular favourites.

Practical home and office solutions are always well received. I've found that many of my clients want to find ways to make life simpler; whether that's by reducing clutter or creating more productive work spaces.

With that in mind; The Work Desk by Lithuanian designer Ausrine Augustinaite is minimalist perfection, while the Air Charge by Ergo offers sleek and ever so neat wireless charging solutions for phones and tablets. As for bike storage, Woodstick showed they have that covered, as you can see above, with ultra cool indoor bike shelves/racks that are as much a style statement as they are a practicality. ■

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DESIGNS ON YOU: this page, burl wooden hanging bike rack by Woodstick from Design Junction. Opposite page: 1 bedside table by Pinch at 100% Design and Decorex. 2 Lina Furniture's spherical chairs attracted a lot of interest at 100% Design. 3 Coat stands by Horm at 100% Design. 4 Lighting at 100% Design. 5 Tom Raffield's lighting stand at Design Junction 6 Bike wrap. 7 Colour swatches at 100% Design. 8 Macmaster lights at 100% Design.

With thanks to photographer Theo Cohen at 100% Design