

Create your ideal living space



Jersey dining set from The Furniture Mall

Get the inside take on current interior design and furniture trends.

By Belinda Wan

IT is the place you spend most of your time, when you are not at work or out and about. Home can be more than a shelter. Home can be an expression of your personality and lifestyle. How do you decorate and furnish your living space to become a sanctuary where you can find respite from your hectic work schedule?

Determine what you like

To start off, get a good idea of what type of furniture you like, and the vibe you wish to achieve.

Ms Naazli Somjee, the business development manager of Window To The Past said: "Do not force yourself to like something just because it is trendy or because you think that it is the correct decision to make. You should really like something before you buy it."

Mr Fung Soh Hiang, the general manager of The Furniture Mall advised: "Homeowners should first determine the theme for the interior decor concept, which could be based on Asian-inspired or European-inspired designs, for instance, and be aware of the suitable furniture styles."

"Furniture and furnishings should complement the interior decor concept. All fittings should enhance the theme of the interior decor, so you can get an integrated design for your home."

Difference between furniture and interior design trends

Trends come and go, but for a more seamless design, it would be wise to make a distinction between furniture trends and interior decor trends, said Mr Fung.

"Furniture trends are more classic and evergreen. Interior decor trends vary depending on one's culture, inspirations and personal taste," he said.

One thing is for certain though – homeowners are becoming quite an adventurous lot.

Ms Somjee said: "Homeowners' choices are getting more eclectic these days, with many homes featuring a cool mix of the modern, vintage and antique. Many of our customers are going for industrial furniture which has become very popular in the last three years or so. It takes elements that were considered ugly in traditional wood-working and turns them into design elements in high-quality finishings."

Customers have a wide variety to choose from.

"We stock everything from antique to Chinese to modern styles. We display the appropriate furniture and looks in our showroom in line with the hottest trends. Industrial, recycled and repurposed furniture are featured more prominently in our showroom this year, alongside our other styles of furniture," said Ms Somjee.

Hottest home trends

The use of pop colours, repurposed items, raw woods, and the mixing of materials, such as a wood-and-iron coffee table, is a trend that shows no sign of abating just yet, said Ms Somjee.

Statement walls, less built-in and more moveable furniture, as well as the use of brighter lighting and mirrors to give an illusion of a bigger space, are also popular, especially as limited space is an issue that many homeowners grapple with.

Mr Fung noted that with smaller apartment sizes and the emergence of condensed living spaces, the demand for custom-made furniture is increasing.

While classic designs for furniture and vintage-style pieces remain popular among customers, more are turning towards technology-driven furniture and furnishings, and multi-functional furniture, such as a cabinet which doubles up as a decor stand. There are also more customers looking for eco-friendly outdoor furniture.

Woody, nature-inspired and the minimalist looks are classic favourites. Some landed property homeowners go for more exotic and elaborate designs in furniture which exude opulence. Some homeowners opt for that quirky psychedelic touch in their homes.



Custom-made Wilson Vania Allegra Linette armchair from Window To The Past

So should one decide on the interior decor first before shopping for furniture, or vice versa?

Ms Somjee said: "I usually advise homeowners to shop for the main furniture piece first. This allows them to decide what they like style-wise, after which the interior decor can be designed to fit their idea. For example, if you picked a coffee table with an intricate design, you are not likely to go for a very busy wallpaper as it might clash."

Have a strong focus

Ms Somjee advised homeowners to have a focal point in their grand design.

"Homeowners usually want good-quality furniture which reflects their personalities instead of that of the architect. It is possible to find beautiful pieces which fit your home, even if you have a limited space to work with," she said.

"Pick a statement piece, such as a coffee table, and make that the focus of the room. This makes the room so much more exciting to walk into, be it a big or small space," said Ms Somejee.

Mr Fung advised homeowners to consider value, quality and designs that are complementary so that they can be easily integrated into their interior decor as form and function matter just as much.

Or, if you can't find the time needed to give your home a makeover, you can always engage the experts to take your home from ordinary to the extraordinary.

Said Ms Somjee: "We have an interior design service for our clients, and we are always ready to help them design the perfect look for their homes."

Selected retail outlets of The Furniture Mall also have interior design consultation services available.