BUSINESS OF HOME



A contemporary living room by Lauren Lerner Stephanie Studer

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What's your most unlikely source for furniture and decor?



By Aidan Taylor

Every designer has reliable spots to find furniture and decor for their projects, but some of those may not be what you expect. This week, we asked six designers—Christine Babini, Gaelle Dudley, Dylan Gould, Lauren Lerner, Tracy Morris and Claire Zinnecker—what surprising places they scour for pieces.

PRE-LOVED GEMS

"Facebook Marketplace and eBay! I've found some of my favorite pieces there. I love the hunt and finding something with character that you'd never come across in a traditional furniture store. I'm always looking for pieces that feel collected rather than overly designed, and those sites are some of my favorite places to find them." *—Claire Zinnecker, Claire Zinnecker Design, Austin*



Claire Zinnecker Courtesy of Claire Zinnecker Design



Tracy Morris Courtesy of Tracy Morris Design

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

"Some of my favorite sources for decor aren't design showrooms at all; they're equestrian tack shops and fly-fishing shops. [My firm] is located just outside of Virginia's horse country, and many of our clients have a genuine connection to the equestrian world, so we've incorporated beautiful saddles, leather leads and bridles into their homes. Years ago, we created an installation using individual leather leads, hanging them vertically a few inches apart across a wall; the repetition made it feel incredibly modern, while the worn leather brought so much warmth and character to the space. I also love visiting fly-fishing shops because hand-tied flies are truly tiny works of art. Frame a collection of them in a beautiful grid or grouping, and suddenly something completely utilitarian becomes interesting, graphic artwork. I think the best interiors often include something unexpected, and I especially love when that something has a genuine connection to the people who live there." — *Tracy Morris, Tracy Morris Design, McLean, Virginia*

VINTAGE FINDS



Christine Babini Courtesy of Parini

"Our most unlikely local source for furniture and decor is Facebook Marketplace. [My partner] and I have furnished a surprising amount of our own homes with pieces we've found there, and we're both slightly obsessive about the hunt. We joke that our dream is to eventually open a vintage furniture showroom so we can monetize the hobby we already spend far too much time on. When we travel, that same instinct takes us to street markets, flea markets, antique shops and small independent stores. We're always looking for art, objects, textiles and pieces that we wouldn't necessarily find back home. What we love most is that they bring a story with them; a piece might remind you of a particular trip, place or moment every time you see it." —*Christine Babini, Parini, Detroit*



Gaelle Dudley Courtesy of GLDesign

TURN TO THE CRAFT

"My most unlikely source for furniture and decor is Etsy. I love the possibility of working with global vendors of all kinds, especially when the demands of work get in the way of sourcing trips! From oushak rugs to beautifully crafted wooden furnishings and vintage lamps to antique books, there is a plethora of items at our fingertips. Etsy does a great job at vetting their vendors, and [customer service is] always available if there is an issue. We recently sourced a marble sink from Italy and it came crated, intact, and with the sweetest, most grateful note attached."—*Gaelle Dudley, GLDesign, Fairfield, Connecticut*

TRASH IS TREASURE



Dylan Gould Courtesy of Cargo Workshop

"The Demolition Depot [in New York] is a great place to find one-of-a-kind pieces that can really elevate a space. While working on a loft renovation project, we went to Demolition Depot looking for an interesting barn door. We found a real vintage zinc fire door—the kind that used to be on an angled track with a rope; if there was a fire, the rope burned and the door slammed shut. The door ended up weighing about 400 pounds and took four people to move. We couldn't use it operationally because it kept ripping the track off the wall, but we ended up leaning it against the wall as an objet d'art, and it looked stunning after we stripped and sealed it. I also love to scour the internet for local shops that build custom furniture and see what they've done, though a budget doesn't always allow for custom pieces. The craftsman making these items can offer a unique perspective on what a piece of furniture should be, beyond its pure aesthetics." *—Dylan Gould, Cargo Workshop, New York*



Lauren Lerner Courtesy of Living With Lolo

OLD RELIABLE

"Our most unlikely [finds] come from our most reliable sources. Everyone expects a designer to name a hidden gem or a one-of-a-kind find, but what actually makes or breaks a project is reliability. The partners we lean on hardest are the ones who ship on time, communicate clearly, and move fast when something shows up damaged in transit. Our top two are Four Hands and Moss Home. And honestly, a lot of it comes down to a great rep who gets things done, makes our lives easier, and makes us look good in front of our clients. A dependable rep is worth more than any trendy source. That's the relationship I protect." *—Lauren Lerner, Living With Lolo, Scottsdale, Arizona*