

TREND TRACK

URBAN DESIGNERS AND HOME DECOR RETAILERS REVEAL THE LATEST IN COWTOWN DESIGN TRENDS

FROM RECYCLED RESIN doorknobs and furniture that acts as art, to personalized sofas and juicy accent colours, there are some interesting design trends popping up throughout our city. To give you a fresh supply of design ideas for your latest home renovations, *Avenue* talked to a few of the city's best-known designers and home decor retailers to find out what's new and what's influencing the latest in Calgary's design trends.



PERSONALIZED LIGHTING

"When it comes to lighting our homes, Calgarians are opting to follow their personal style rather than any preset trends," says Robyn Bell, lighting consultant with Carrington Lighting. With the lighting trend being "personal style," she says light fixtures are being positioned almost anywhere in the home to accentuate design features and create different moods.

You'll find lights in the toe kicks of bathroom vanities, to eliminate the harsh glare of light that snaps you awake during that 3 a.m.

bathroom trip. Lights are also being placed on top of open beams in rooms with vaulted ceilings to accentuate the vault.

More decorative fixtures are showing up in wine cellars, or even as a trendy touch for bathrooms and closets. "We are seeing a lot of crystal chandeliers over master bathroom tubs or in walk in closets, giving the home a 'boutique hotel' feel," says Bell.

Right: Studio Italia Bellissima Suspensione lights are an example of the decorative fixtures available.



FURNITURE AS ART

In the world of furniture, the trend in our urban haven is to think of your sofa as more than just a place to sit. "People are starting to look at furniture as an expression of themselves," says Justin Ryder, owner of Block. He says Calgarians are

experimenting with their furniture and realizing that, while furniture must be functional,

it can also be art or an expression of pure design esthetic.

"People just want something that's different," he says. "When they're looking for furniture, they want something that no one else has. It's almost like a painting, they want to bring some wow-factor to their space."

Ryder says he sees this trend reflected in the popularity of the

Moooi boutique sofa, which is über-popular, not just because of its sleek design, but also because it can be personalized to suit individual tastes. The boutique sofa comes as a base that can be customized to reflect personal *savoir faire*, with slipcovers in a myriad of colours and designs, and a variety of leg styles.

"You can have a traditional looking piece of furniture with clean lines, neat Provencal-looking French legs [combined] with a fabric that's really wild," says Ryder.

Designed by Marcel Wanders, this line of furniture allows a designer or a customer to create a piece that blends a modern, contemporary piece of furniture with traditional values. >>

Left: The Moooi boutique sofa can be personalized through a choice of leg options and slipcovers.



UP-SIZE MY DESIGN

Another trend hitting the city is the increasing number of larger homes, and this is having an effect on everything from lighting to furniture.

We've gone from seeing a lot of smaller items for condos, to bigger items to fit the homes being built in Calgary right now, says Farrah Nanji, manager at Kiya Home Furnishings. For example, she says she has seen a lot of comfy sectionals with attached chaise loungers lately. But she quickly explains that this bigger scale means comfortable, not pouffy — people still want their furniture to have clean lines.

Bell has also noticed that lighting is beginning to complement the architectural design of homes. "We are noticing that fixtures and glass are becoming larger, both in diameter and in height," she says.

"This is indicative to the size of homes being built these days." This is vital, as Bell notes that the biggest mistake in selecting fixtures is choosing one that is too small for the space. As a

result, designers continue to offer a range of fixtures to accommodate the large scale of today's homes.

Left: The large scale of Studio Italia Suspension Lights complements today's larger homes.

ANOTHER TREND HITTING THE CITY IS THE INCREASING NUMBER OF LARGER HOMES, AND THIS IS HAVING AN EFFECT ON EVERYTHING FROM LIGHTING TO FURNITURE.

ORIGINALITY THROUGH COLOUR

Style maven Monica Stevens, owner of Monica Stevens Interior Design, says one global trend that is playing out right here in Calgary is the desire for originality. "As a trend, design is all about originality right now," she says.

One way people are bringing originality into their space is through colourful accessories and furnishings. Stevens says this trend is manifested in everything from a stylish chair to acrylic tables with a shock of colour like fuschia or lime green. It's also showing up in the popularity of wallpaper, which is popping up in small areas of homes in everything from damask to tribal patterns.

Designer Douglas Cridland has also noticed that Calgarians, especially the young movers and shakers of the city, have started adding a sprinkling of spicy colours to their homes. "The basic neutral palate is still being used," says Cridland, "but people are adding strong vivid colours to this — like saffron orange, chartreuse, hot pink and other off-kilter colours, mostly as an accent in art, chairs, wacky lamp shades, etc." >>

Right: The Julien-Console brings bright colour to the bathroom.





FINISHING TOUCHES

In recent months, many Calgary residents have also started paying more attention to what Melody Scroggins, a design consultant with Banbury Lane Design Centre, calls “the eye of your home,” also known as the entranceway. “People are looking at updating everything from door handles and locks, to hinges, doorbells, house numbers and mailboxes,” she says. “And they are spending a lot of time choosing

PEOPLE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR SIMPLE, CLEAN LINES, BUT THEY ARE SEEKING THEM OUT IN ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCT LINES AND RECYCLED MATERIALS.

the right materials and look.” She chalks this trend up to the surge in real estate prices throughout the city, which is making some homeowners rethink moving.

“Instead of buying, they are fixing up their 10-to-15-year-old homes. And while people have been updating

the inside of their home over the years, from the outside these homes still look like they’re old and need some updating,” Scroggins says.

When it comes to the esthetics of these external design elements, Scroggins says people are moving away from the recent trend of frou-frou and garish designs toward pieces with simple, clean lines.

Inside the home, Scroggins says the biggest trends in finishing touches are focused on cabinetry hardware. People are still looking for simple, clean lines, but they are seeking them out in eco-friendly product lines and recycled materials.

“Colourful, natural eco-friendly knobs are a definite favourite among locals,” she says. “Calgarians are buying everything from rock knobs in natural bright colours to gemstones in wild colours, to recycled resins in greens, blues, yellow and oranges.”

Scroggins says she believes this trend is a result of more Calgarians going green — as we become more environmentally aware, we are buying more eco-friendly products in general and this is extending to our homes.

The result is that not only do we get beautifully decorated homes, but we can feel good knowing we’re doing our part to maintain the earth. ■

Right: Attention to details and fixtures from door handles (such as this one from the Baldwin Estate Atlanta Collection) can help update an entranceway.

Above: The simple lines of the DuVerre Solstice cabinetry hardware is very up to the minute.

