

# Vintage

LIBBY MOFFET



## STYLE COMES FULL CIRCLE

*Enjoy the beauty of age with a mix of modern flair and timeless classics*

From the traditional flea markets of Europe to online Facebook Marketplace offerings in Australia, the hunt for retro home furnishings is on the rise as more people embrace the virtues of vintage.

Buying pieces from the past not only supports the circular economy, it brings more depth and beauty to a home, according to leading interior designers, decorators and stylists.

Melbourne-based interior decorator Simone Haag says she believes a 70-30 mix of contemporary and vintage furnishings is perfect.

"Vintage pieces, like artisanal pieces, tend to bring a sensorial complexity and uniqueness with their layers of history," Haag says.

In Sydney, interior designer Thomas Hamel says vintage pieces "come with warm patinas and stories" and are often the conversation starters in a home.

"If a room is only filled with new things, it can lack depth and soul. Likewise, if a room is only decorated in period antiques, it can lack a lightness of spirit. The key is in the mix," Hamel says.

Interior designer Tamsin Johnson, whose showroom in Sydney's Paddington offers vintage and antique furnishings, believes more vintage pieces have a stronger design voice than contemporary items. "Concept overrides beauty in much contemporary furniture, whereas

beauty used to be the priority," Johnson says.

A keen vintage fan, Brisbane-based photographer and stylist Kara Rosenlund says vintage pieces are often more affordable than new furnishings, enabling buyers to be bolder and experiment more with their style.

Rosenlund's vintage loves include rattan and wicker items as well as fish plates, and she's particularly drawn to lamps, nominating a pair of brass and rattan lamps in the style of 1970s Italian designer Gabriella Crespi as one of her favourite buys.

"An impressive vintage lamp sets the mood immediately. Even if you are dipping your toes into the vintage market, start with a lamp," Rosenlund advises, adding that lamps are affordable to ship, unlike large pieces of furniture.

Hamel says one of his favourite recent buys is a vintage sculpture of a standing figure from Palm Springs in California which sits opposite his bed in Sydney, while his much-loved George III period console is coveted by friends.

"It really doesn't matter what the piece is, what matters is what this piece means to the

owner. I always tell my clients that when they are travelling or shopping at an antique fair, if they see something that speaks to them then buy it."

Johnson says she has a passion for lighting, as well as vintage and antique chairs, tables, credenzas, desks and armoires. Her favourite buys recently include a pair of 1970s French flower chairs. "I try not to look for eras, periods or origins too much. I just look for beauty and ask myself, 'Can this piece hold its own in a wider interior conversation?'," Johnson says.

Haag loves scouring auctions and recently nabbed a Picasso from New Zealand auction house Webb's. She says a French ceramic coffee table purchased from the Paris flea markets was one of her top finds.

The decorator also has a word of advice for vintage hunters: "Where possible do some research on the crating, shipping and restoration fees ahead of time, as a bargain can quickly be not so much a bargain once those elements have been quoted."



SIMONE HAAG



TAMSIN JOHNSON

Colourful ceramics, unusual lamp shapes, vibrant chairs or worn-in wicker bring their own unique patinas and characters as they act as vintage accents, adding points of interest to elevate a room



KARA ROSENLUND



## Treasure hunt

### SIMONE HAAG

Locally, Haag (opposite page) recommends Angelucci 20th Century, Castorina and Co, Secondi, CCSS and Grandfather's Axe, while online she likes IstDibs, The Bruno Effect, Pamono and Chairish. She also loves a flea market and auction-house buy.

### THOMAS HAMEL

Hamel's favourite vintage shopping destination is Palm Springs, California, where he finds treasures at Hedge, JC Studio and Scout in neighbouring Cathedral City. In Paris, he visits Galerie Glustin and in London he often covets items in 88 Gallery. In Australia he likes The Vault in Sydney and Graham Geddes Antiques as well as Nicholas & Alastair in Melbourne.

### TAMSIN JOHNSON

Johnson (top) says she likes to focus on European markets and traders because she's confident with Europe's system of antiquity sales. She nominates Béton Brut in London among her favourite sources of vintage furnishings, and also likes to hunt for finds in North America.

### KARA ROSENLUND

Rosenlund (left) hunts for pieces on Facebook Marketplace and loves the Instagram account @midcenturyjo which collates great Facebook finds. She also points to Gumtree and eBay – which she says “everyone's forgotten” – as well as “old school” antique dealers. When the interior designer is travelling overseas, the first thing she does is search for any local vintage markets.