

# World of INTERIORS

For those missing travel this summer, take a trip to Europe's finest interiors shops right here in town. We ask design experts for their favourite destinations

From luxury French fabrics to Danish contemporary furniture, Europe's finest interiors feel very much at home in London. The cosmopolitan townhouse effortlessly teams an Italian sofa with a Scandinavian mid-century statement chair, a Spanish tile in the bathroom and French linen in the bedroom. There are no geographic or cultural boundaries when it comes to high quality materials and craftsmanship. The capital's top interior designers are spoilt for choice when it comes to showrooms. "Whilst the UK has many great furniture brands and



designers, I have long held a passion for Italian and Scandinavian design," says Tara Bernerd, whose international practice is based in Belgravia ([tarabernerd.com](http://tarabernerd.com)). "They are so well-known for their leadership in furniture design and have an innate sense of style, with an enviable rich heritage. With our HQ being based in London, it is especially helpful when brands have a London outlet or showroom, as it is so important to be able to see a sample, to fully comprehend the dimensions of the piece, its aesthetic and most importantly of all in the case of a chair or sofa – is it comfortable to sit on?"



Rosie Ward, creative director at interior design studio Ward & Co based on Fulham Road ([wardandco.com](http://wardandco.com)), believes the classic architecture of London marries well with modern, vibrant European design. "The fireplace in one of our projects stands out as a feature because we have used a more contemporary wallpaper behind it. The same goes for the Roche Bobois sofa we incorporated in the reception room – it contrasts but also highlights the more traditional herringbone floor."

## VIVA ITALIA

Italian furniture is much loved in the London home. "I think it is the sheer simplicity and timelessness of the design, fitting easily into any environment," says Anke Summerhill, managing director and creative director at Minotti London ([minottilondon.com](http://minottilondon.com)). With its

huge showroom on Margaret Street, Minotti offers some of the most sleek and sophisticated furniture to come out of Italy and is a hit with homeowners. "It does not date and has that effortless elegance," says Summerhill. "Our favourite kitchen brand to work with is Boffi ([boffi.com](http://boffi.com)) with a showroom on Wigmore Street," says Summerhill. "For bathrooms we love Agape, Antonio Lupi and Cielo," which can be found at West One Bathrooms, [westonebathrooms.com](http://westonebathrooms.com).

Tara Bernerd's Italian favourites include B&B Italia, "whose entire collection is the byword for elegance. Their Tufty Time sofa looks great anywhere". She also names Molteni&C, which "produces one of Gio Ponti's armchairs that manages to be both striking and comfortable at the same time".

Rosie Ward favours Minotti for its "striking clean lines" and Giorgetti ([giorgettimoda.com](http://giorgettimoda.com)), on Fulham Road which has "exquisite craftsmanship and sensually



curved furniture". Ward goes to Flexform ([flexform.it](http://flexform.it)) "for beautiful patterns and fabrics", Dedar ([dedar.com](http://dedar.com)) and Rubelli for furnishing products and lighting, all at Chelsea Harbour Design Centre ([chdc.co.uk](http://chdc.co.uk)), a base for many European brands. "It is always a joy to visit our showroom at the Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour," says Nicolò Favaretto Rubelli, the CEO of Rubelli ([rubelli.com](http://rubelli.com)). "There is a wonderful design scene in London."

Another Italian brand very much at home is the Florentine kitchen maker Officine Gullo ([officinegullo.it](http://officinegullo.it)). "Having a presence in one of the interior design capitals of the world means not only dealing with British clients but also grants us access to a huge pool of international clients," says Manfredi Conforzi, head of marketing at Officine Gullo. "London has a cosmopolitan style that you can't find elsewhere, and it is exciting to see our Italian kitchens being included in very British homes."

## SWEDISH STYLE

"The Scandinavian design approach to life is focussed on balance, concepts like the red thread centre us to make decisions based on our values," says Staffan Tollgard. The Swedish-born interior designer. Tollgard moved to London 20 years ago and with his wife Monique founded Tollgard Designs ([tollgard.com](http://tollgard.com)). "Our showrooms in Belgravia & Chelsea feature Scandinavian heroes such as Eikund, Finn Juhl, Overgaard & Dyrman and Gubi."

Swedish design embraces the principles of comfort, neutral tones and a modern and minimalist approach to space. A more recent arrival is the luxury Swedish bed brand Carpe Diem ([carpediembeds.co.uk](http://carpediembeds.co.uk)). "People seem to get really excited with our flying bed, Vindlo," says Rui Franca, manager of the flagship store. "Not only is it a great adjustable bed, it's also an innovative design piece, and our



**INFLUENCES** From far left to right: Bathroom by Agape; furnishings by Rubelli; Television Centre flat by the Italian [cosina.com](http://cosina.com); Scandi style by [tollgard.com](http://tollgard.com); Carpe Diem's adorable dog bed. Previous: [theivishcollection.com](http://theivishcollection.com) sells works by French designers at its Belgravia showroom

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"It has a great mix of pieces, reworking design classics as well as working with contemporary designers."

## FRENCH FINERY

When it comes to fabric, for many interior designers, it just has to be French. "For a diverse range of fabrics, from textured wool bouclés to bold and vibrant patterns, French fabric house Pierre Frey ([pierrefrey.com](http://pierrefrey.com)) is a firm favourite," says Clara Ewart. "The full collection is on display at its trade showroom in Chelsea Harbour." Meanwhile, for sculptural, contemporary furniture and high end upholstery design, "Christian Liaigre ([liaigre.com](http://liaigre.com)) is second to none," she says. "Originating in Paris, their UK showroom on the Fulham Road has a modern gallery feel with an extensive, curated display of their collector's item worthy pieces."

For Rosie Ward, "Roche Bobois [at Harrods, Fulham Road, [roche-bobois.com](http://roche-bobois.com)] is one of my go-tos for stand-out, colourful contemporary pieces. I love Elitis [at Abbot – Boyd at Design Centre Chelsea, [abbotsandboyd.co.uk](http://abbotsandboyd.co.uk)] for fabulous textures and vibrant colours – they have some gorgeous cushions too. I also love to work with Lelièvres [at [doh.co.uk](http://doh.co.uk)]"



**ON THE TABLES** Clockwise from top left: The new Porcelanosa showroom in Hanover Square; designers love to work with French fabric and wallpaper company Lelièvres, [lelievresparis.com](http://lelievresparis.com), which offers both modern and classic styles; the clean lines of German-made Poggenpohl kitchens

appliances such as Miele and Gaggenau." Usefully, Gaggenau also has a fine showroom on Wigmore Street ([gaggenaulondon@gaggenau.com](mailto:gaggenaulondon@gaggenau.com)).

## SPANISH FLAIR

Finally, in terms of Spanish style in London, the big splash is the arrival of the new Porcelanosa showroom in Hanover Square. Porcelanosa is a high end ceramics company Porcelanosa in Hanover Square. This is a huge investment in London for its luxury flooring, kitchen and bathroom products, according to Nicola Tresalern, Porcelanosa UK marketing manager. "This is a great move for us – we wanted to showcase the best of Porcelanosa and this space will allow us to create visually striking spaces. Hanover Square is a fantastic location that is steeped in history. The world of interiors, it would seem, is very much at home in London. ■"

established itself in the hearts and homes of Londoners. Richard Anderson, studio manager from the flagship studio on Wigmore Street ([rignmarc@poggenpohl.com](mailto:rignmarc@poggenpohl.com)) says, "Our studios invite clients to immerse themselves into the world of design. We work with our clients, their architects, and interior designers every step of the way creating their dreams into reality."

## GERMAN CRAFTED

Germany may have lost (this time) to England in the football, but when it comes to interiors, especially kitchens, it reigns supreme. Trend-setting design, technical know-how, quality materials and craftsmanship are the hallmarks of German goods. Rosie Ward is not the only Poggenpohl fan, citing its "wonderful clean lines and interesting mixes of materials". With showrooms in Chelsea, Hampstead and Wigmore Street, Poggenpohl has



## A TASTE OF EUROPE IN THE CAPITAL

### WHERE TO EAT

Spanish Barrafina in Covent Garden, for authentic tapas. Scandi Totally Swedish, Marylebone; Aquatic, in St James Italian "We personally love Matteo's at Annabel's but there's a great Italian in every neighbourhood!" says Minotti's Anke Summerhill

### WHERE TO DRINK

Scandi Pantheconic Roof Garden. "A beautiful Nordic Garden and Scandi inspired cocktails," says Staffan Tollgard. French The newly opened Ever After Bar channels Paris chic in Hoxton, left. German The Munich Cricket Club, SWL draught beers and a 'Merke's Martini'

### WHERE TO SHOP

Scandi Books and gifts at Edit at Pantheconic on Mutton Street. French Books at La Librairie Le Page in South Kensington and The European Bookshop on Gloucester Road. Danish Gang & Olufsen in Islington for the ultimate in audio and visual kit