



GOOD THINGS ARE MEANT TO LAST

INTERIOR DESIGNER, PROPERTY GURU AND CITY DWELLER MAGAZINE COLUMNIST
CHRISTINE YORATH TELLS US HOW TO SEE THE BEAUTY IN OLDER FURNITURE



I write this piece after attending the opening of a dementia friendly café in South Leeds and it had me thinking about the old adage, 'out with the old and in with the new'.

As we become more aware of the occurrence of memory loss in old age and associated conditions we also become more knowledgeable about how to best look after people with such conditions and especially in specialist residential homes for people with Alzheimer's and Dementia it is now usual to see furnishings in a style of many years ago.

Don't worry! I am not suggesting that we all furnish our homes in a time warp but

maybe we should consider longevity of furnishings and not be so quick to discard some items, especially ones carrying happy memories.

Perhaps your nanna has a favourite old chair and passes it to you and you just can't see it in a modern city centre apartment or you have a very contemporary suburban home and an old family friend offers you a Bergere chair you loved as a child... don't say no! An old chair upholstered in moss green dralon velvet will look 100 times better once its recovered in a Designers Guild fabric by Christian Lacroix such as Talisman Arlequin and it will fit nicely in to any sort of scheme whether Traditional or Contemporary.

Many younger people are finding beauty in the furniture of the 1960's, a look which is fast becoming known as 'mid century' typically a brand called Ercol and also teak furniture. I am finding it hard to believe that the furniture which was what my contemporaries loved is now fetching more than its cost when I was first setting up home in the early '70's. I have to admit I never took

to Ercol or to teak preferring then a very modern and highly polished rosewood dining table. But to coin another well worn phrase; 'what goes around comes around'.

If you are a hoarder you will find it easy to hang on to older items, even if you're buying a replacement, so you end up with twice as much as you want. Sometimes there are pieces of sentimental value that evoke special memories and these are definitely items to treasure, and sometimes to bring up to date.

One of my clients had a selection of old fashioned looking paintings she wanted to keep for sentimental value. So we discarded the old wood and gilded frames and added a large mount in dark coffee and had them all framed in white and hung them in a cluster on a pale coffee coloured wall instead of dotted around a room. The pictures were saved for posterity and are now being able to be enjoyed in a new incarnation.

Another way to hang on to the past but to bring a new lease of life to furniture and

one of the easiest ways is to have a sprayed factory finish! I did a full apartment make over and my client had almost all new bespoke living room furniture but she really liked the function of an illuminated corner display cabinet she had had for some time. But all the new furniture is oak combined with a lacquered finish in a taupe colour and the old corner cabinet was modern knotty gold pine (one of my least liked timbers for living room furniture) so we had it sprayed to match the other items and it looked perfect.

The knack is to be brave, see the beauty in older furniture and see past the current upholstery and finish of the wood, don't be afraid to hang on to older items you like just because they aren't 'on trend' and accept graciously gifts of family heirlooms even if you have to rethink some aspect of them and look forward to enjoying your trips down memory lane!

For more advice go to www.christineyorath.com or get in touch by emailing christine@yorathgroup.com or ringing 07836 737300.