

# GRAND DESIGNS AUSTRALIA

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FURNITURE  
DROP**

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20

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**PREP YOUR  
OUTDOOR  
LIVING AREA**

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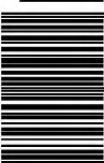
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# MAKE comfort HAPPEN

Furniture should be cosy. It should be stylish. It should be enduring

**WORDS** CARROL BAKER

**a**bove all else, furniture should be something that you love. It defines the look and feel you want to create in your home.

## BIOPHILIC DESIGN

Connecting with nature is good for the soul. It's been shown to instil a sense of calm, to lower blood pressure and boost creativity and happiness. At its heart, biophilic design is all about connecting humans and the natural world. By bringing the outdoors in through the use of natural materials in furniture, you can create beautiful inspired spaces.

Wool, ceramics, stone, timber, jute and silk are all examples of natural materials. By using these in furniture, you are connecting to nature in a very authentic way. Sarah Yarrow, from Sarah Yarrow Interiors, says that post pandemic, we have even more desire to bring the outdoors into our homes. "We do this by bringing in plants and incorporating botanical fabrics, all the way through to designing architectural homes that focus completely on our wellbeing," she notes.

Looking at furniture shapes, Sarah says there has been more emphasis on natural forms. "There is definitely that real nod to nature," she says. "When you look at nature, things aren't designed at perfect right angles; there are also a lot more curves." Coffee and side tables that are circular or oval, mirrors in curved formats, ottomans in organic shapes are all making their mark.

While many are eager to embrace the concept of biophilic design, Sarah says it isn't something new. However, she says it is becoming more widely known as we seek ways to live healthier lives. "It's about taking cues from previous generations and going back to when life was simpler, when they used hardwood timbers, linens, cottons and stone."

The furniture you choose should feel good and it should offer you comfort. As Sarah explains, biophilic really is a very holistic approach to overall wellness. "If you have a beautiful chair you love to sit in at the end of the day, that helps you relax and unwind, your furniture is giving you a big hug," she shares.

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### DESIGNED AND BUILT TO LAST

What does quality furniture mean to you? An heirloom piece you can hand down through the generations? Something ornately crafted from timber? A bespoke piece of furniture that is a one-of-a-kind? It turns out it's actually something you can't see.

Dan Hurditch, CEO of Covesmore Solutions, says the biggest hallmarks of quality furniture are not seen on the surface but hidden below. "They are the joints of a chair, the type of glue used, the springing system used in a lounge, the type of infills used in the cushions and many more," he says. "In today's throw-away society, this is not fully understood by most customers as these qualities are just not present in the average home. This is not an issue of the customer's choice, but an issue of the manufacturer who is happy to release mediocre furniture into our society and mislead their customers for financial gain. Of course, we need these mediocre furniture pieces to make sure furniture is accessible to everyone.

"When it comes to choosing any furniture pieces for my home, they need to adhere to the above qualities and also boast of a simple yet functional design. A hero piece will not only obey my rules of quality and comfort, but also serve as a spectacle and centrepiece of the room. This piece will draw people's attention and demand remarks from visitors," says Dan.

### THE RISE OF RETRO

Whether it's the nostalgic '50s with cinched waists and gloves, or the hip-hugging flairs and platforms of the '70s, retro clothing is very cool. If you love a retro look, why not incorporate that into your interiors with vintage furniture and design?

Many people are captivated by the charm of a bygone era, and going retro is a way to revisit the past and put your own spin on classic furniture pieces. If you source a retro piece of furniture, make sure it works harmoniously with your home interior. Going retro doesn't mean replicating an interior space so it looks like something out of the 1960s. Sometimes it's just a subtle touch here and there, with select pieces of furniture that really resonate with you.

It's possible to mix retro with modern, too. Older pieces of furniture do, for the most part, have more volume than modern slimline pieces — they take up more space. Make sure your vintage furniture doesn't overwhelm the space. Work the new retro pieces in with your existing colour scheme so it doesn't clash. Finally, select a hero piece, something you love, and let it really shine in a prominent place in the room.



**ABOVE** Image courtesy of Satara.  
satara.com.au

**ABOVE & BELOW** Images courtesy of Cosh Living. coshliving.com.au



## MATERIAL MATTERS

In contemporary homes, living spaces continue to spill outdoors. Outside furniture is evolving in response to growing demand for products that will go the distance outdoors.

In the past decade, fabrics and materials incorporated in outdoor furniture have changed. Eloise Sim, content coordinator at Cosh Living, says outdoor spaces used to be somewhat of an afterthought, but not anymore. "With the introduction of innovative all-weather materials and fabrics that mimic the look and feel of indoor furniture, this perception has changed," Eloise notes.

But that's only part of the story. With more and more of us embracing outdoor living, designers have risen to the challenge of crafting furniture that is robust and sustainable.

Eloise says there has also been a focus on producing outdoor furniture that is versatile and comfortable, while also embracing modern design trends and technology to enhance outdoor living spaces. "All of these changes have allowed people to make the most of their outdoor areas not only in terms of functionality; now they also have the ability to be more creative with choice of materials and layouts," Eloise points out.

She adds there are plenty of sizzling new looks in outdoor furniture that are easy on the eye and long-lasting: "Modern and minimalist designs with clean lines are popular in Australian homes, along with subtle natural tones and textures in organic shapes. Versatile modular designs are also gaining traction."

Choosing the right furniture and fabrics sets the scene for comfort and liveability. Accessorising your outdoor furniture is what takes it to the next level of style. Eloise says to enhance the look and comfort of your outdoor furniture, add layers of textured fabrics. "Soft-to-touch materials such as bouclé on cushions or a woven patterned fabric on throws are among our top choices," she reveals. 🏡



Woollahra House by Alexandra Kidd Interior Design. Photography by Prue Ruscoe. Styling by Megan Morton. alexandrakidd.com



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