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functional and
 sustainable trends



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There's much talk these days about design trends, green design and simply giving people what they desire, which of course, determines what people will buy. Today people desire mostly functional, practical and eco-friendly pieces. So why not have these necessary items serve a dual purpose? I've labeled these "functional trends."

According to Baker Furniture, a designer and manufacturer of fine furnishings, "With growing global awareness, people are interested in styles influenced by eccentric destinations. Exotic woods from Africa

in organic forms will become popular as primitive accents in the home. Scandinavian-inspired furniture strikes the perfect balance between modern and traditional interiors for a clean, fresh look. Japan is contributing a serene simplicity with its linear, low-profile furniture."

During my research for the 2007 line up in home décor, my focus was three-fold: function, order and style. Function because every home design must begin with a purpose; order because with an ordered environment, chaos cannot exist; and style because you can have the for-



quick tips for a green sustainable home

- Grass wallpaper.
- Recyclable aluminum floors.
- Instead of toxic linoleum, use Marmoleum® by Farbo, made from linseed oil, wood flour, rosin, jute and limestone. It is available in a comprehensive range of design elements and is comfortably soft.
- Decorate with recycled colored glass.
- Sleep on a mattress made from organic cotton and raw silk.
- Use blinds made from hemp.
- 100 percent natural wool rugs are sustainable products.
- Insulate the home with remnants of blue jeans.
- Kohler's Purist Hat Box Toilet gives a 1.6-meter flush for water consumption and a toilet seat that ensures comfort, hygiene and safety.

mer two and still sustain trends. Today, people also want comfort. They want to use color comfortably and intelligibly. I believe color forecasters and furniture designers are cognizant of that, so let's take a quick look at what's stirring in the markets today.

ECHO-CHIC AT FOUR HANDS

Four Hands home furnishings identifies people, product and passion as the backbone of all their

innovations. Upon entering its High Point, NC, showroom, your senses are instantly engaged. It is quite evident that its furniture

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speaks lifestyle. "We desire to provide furniture that changes and effects people's lives in a profound and inspirational way" is their mission to the industry. Committed to the preservation of the world's nat-

ural resources for future generations, Four Hands does a great job of developing and sourcing unique products and making an echo-chic statement all in the same line. I discovered their product line includes lighting encrusted with real sea shells, painted tree trunks as sculpture and cultivated railroad ties from India made into tables.

One of their new environmentally-themed lines is a group of tables made of recycled elm. The

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2007 color spotlight

Pantone Inc., the global authority on color and a provider of professional color standards for the design industries, forecasts delicious and delectable color palettes for 2007. Eight categories follow.

Simply Elegant is a marriage of tradition and modern whose offspring exudes a sophisticated eclectic approach to color. These unique color blends include deep mahogany, silver mink, silver blue, purple passion, antelope, pale gold, frosted almond and copper.

Classic Chic insists on both neo-classic and newly classic. These tones are always in style. Light and deep gray tones in silver, storm and frost, brown in cappuccino is back, mineral yellow and high-risk red heads the runway lineup. Classic black and white adds the needed element of surprise to any color palette.

Lumens invoke sleek simplicity. Color tones sing in emerald, Mediterranean blue, dazzling blue, ultra violet, green, green sul-

phur, ibis rose, silver and star white.

Mélange is a rendition of warm fruit colors and favorable tones to surely stimulate the visual appetite. Colors include melon, strawberry pink, apricot, orange, poppy red, toasty tan (sandstorm), khaki, jacaranda (blue) and yellow.

Aux Naturelle qualifies as organic shades by way of a non-bleach effect. These handsome earth tones incorporate creamy whites, sandy beiges, essential tans, gray, mellow browns accented by subtle shady roses, lily pad green and denim-like blue.

Grass Roots bring a regional flavor to an environment. It begins on a green theme and carries over to mineral blues and various wood tones enhanced by grape, terra

cotta and rose.

Fresh Air is a creative palette that is refreshingly different. Color combinations are vibrant yellow and yellow greens, green pesto, cyclamen pink, purples and violets, sky blues and snow whites.

Light Touch suggests a serene quietness: quiet spaces where both the eye and mind can return. This classic palette of pastels is modernized and includes pinks and lavenders, foamy aquas and greens, powdery blues, sun-tinged yellows and angora whites, silvery gray and rosy taupe.

Trends come and go, but people live on and lives are influenced by occupied spaces. Whatever your needs are, incorporate functional trends that make your spaces work for you.

tabletops have a raw look with an updated classic trend, providing an appealing juxtaposition of dressy and dressed down elements in a single piece. While their optimal blend of cultural influences for their award-winning furniture collections is quite expansive, two of my favorite collections are Java and Versailles, which are comfy, trendy and eco-friendly.

MARRIAGE OF CLASSICS AND ACCENTS

Highland House Furniture unveiled its rendition of designer classics with an eclectic nature at the High Point Furniture Mart. These pieces are specifically designed to give you the freedom to mix and match occasion accents with their upper-end upholstery. I chose to highlight their designs because they have incorporated relaxed and casual pieces, offering a desired comfy feel.

One of my favorite chairs is the stylized Dagmar wing chair with its raindrop dotted textured fabric, nailhead trimmings and its classic slanted back legs contrasting its straight front legs. Another top pick is the Lars dining chair covered in a crisp zebra fabric over straight upright legs, which is exciting and non-presumptuous.

Other intriguing pieces among Highland's 20 piece classic collection include an eye-catching round 19th-century Biedermeier style cocktail table in its rich mahogany finish; a Linnea Wing chair dressed in bold florals casing its upholstered back and matching cushion resting above contrasting distressed wood exposed legs; needed accents such as an hourglass shaped fringed ottoman and a comfy and stylish pillow ottoman; then a focus on the 2008 Beijing Olympics featuring an appealing latticework accent chair, which can be elegantly used for both dining or furniture artwork.

A FUNCTIONAL NEW CONCEPT

The My Pod Chair by Carter is a great place to curl up and read a book, play a video game on Xbox





or watch a movie. It glides on easy-roll recessed casters. Throw out that old sectional and add fun, functional and comfortable seating.

URBAN CHIC

The American Leather showroom

in High Point showcased designer Rick Lee's Menlo Park collection. Influenced by 1980's modernism, Lee's newest designs are intended to elicit feeling and emotion. The sofa and chair groupings feature geometric lines that create a sense of



the dream green kitchen

Green affordable housing and good air quality are the norm for most homes today. More people are cognizant of what they put into their bodies as well as into their living environments. I applaud them.

While researching the topic, I found the home of architect Jim Chuda and his wife Nancy, who co-founded the Children's Health Environmental Coalition (CHEC). Its mission is to educate consumers about environmental toxins that affect children's health. They founded CHEC after losing their only child to a non-hereditary form of cancer that they suspect was caused by maternal exposure to pesticides.

Here are nine captivating ways to build a green kitchen. You can use this concept in other rooms in the home. This is a vital description of order because everything that God created is good and prearranged for all of our needs, which illustrates how form, function, style, design and sustainable living are not mutually exclusive.

- Countertops made from lava stone, found in France, was quarried out of the ground and sliced into slab form and installed either untreated or enameled and fired at 1800 degrees. No gasses or formaldehyde are emitted.

- Germany has much stricter standards for materials production than the United States. It manufactures cabinets made from cherry and wenge woods.

- Veneers made from materials found in sustainable forests.

- Flooring made from

- cork and bamboo, both earth-friendly, natural products, formaldehyde-free, emitting no toxic fumes.

- Cabinets with sliding or shoji doors.

- Energy efficient appliances.

- A custom stainless steel prep counter with sliding cutting board and garbage receptacle creates an efficient use of space.

- Aluminum roll top tambour doors or garages for hiding appliances when unused.

contemporary movement combined with transitional, warm details for a timeless quality.

URBANE SOPHISTICATION

The marriage of vintage, antique and modern pieces creatively express the Laura Kirar collection for Baker. The collection features an expressive mix of wood and upholstered furniture, lighting, accessories, soft goods and textiles. Kirar's inspiration is based primarily in the late 19th- and early 20th-century designs. The ultimate in comfort, function and style is her sleek looking Cradle Wing chair. The wings are decorated with a polished bronze nailhead trim for an added touch of jewelry. This chair has the soft look and feel of butter cream. This same collection includes a Syro Chandelier, a Tea Box Lacquer chest and Kimono Leather Pillows.

KITCHEN ACCOUTREMENTS

Liberty Hardware has a treat for any home chef offering a wonderful and needed appliance lift hardware kit. This kit functions as a small kitchen appliance organizer that pulls out from inside a cabinet and then lifts to counter level. This efficiency proves to be a distinct benefit to bring order in the kitchen while hiding small appliances when not in use.

Function and style meets performance with the Aga's range cooker. The two oven models feature two insulated hotplates. When closed they're just gently warm to the touch; once opened both are instantly ready to cook. The boiling plate is on the left side and the sim-

mering plate is on the right. The top righthand oven is the roasting oven, which is used for roasting, grilling and baking. On the bottom righthand side is the simmering oven. This is where casseroles, meringues and vegetables can be left to cook (even overnight) while you focus on other tasks. Three and four oven models are also available.

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