

little black book: occasional chairs

DESIGNER CHRISTIAN BENSE USES ACCENT CHAIRS IN MANY OF HIS SPACES - HERE'S WHERE HE GOES TO BUY THEM



A sculptural vintage accent chair feels at home in this Mayfair living room by interior designer Christian Bense

FEATURE ELLEN FINCH PHOTOGRAPHS (MAIN IMAGE) ALEXANDER JAMES

FOSTER & GANE

The easiest way to start introducing antiques into your home is via an accent chair and Foster & Gane is the first place I look. It tends to have a selection that feels less 'obvious' – any piece bought feels less like something borrowed from your nan and more like an engaging find that has loads of interest and detail.

TWENTYTWENTYONE

I get that antique isn't for everyone, but I do think there is a rite of passage in buying a design classic, be that new or old. Every house should have one – for me, it's a mark of a well-rounded home, regardless of the style – and Twentytwentyone is my first point of call. One of my favourites has always been Arflex's Botolo chair – the definition of an accent chair, especially in the fur finish. A close second would be anything from Carl Hansen – there's nothing more classic, especially when introduced in a more traditional interior.

AND OBJECTS

As a studio, we like to make sure we're introducing as many different materials as we can into a scheme and the Easton chair (shown) is a prime example of an accent piece that achieves this. The fact that you can also customise its products means And Objects' pieces can be reinterpreted time and time again, which is great when you don't want to be cookie cutter with projects.



SIGMAR

I fell in love with Sigmar after I walked into one of its pavement product shoots on the King's Road years ago. It has the most epic taste – and it's great to buy some of that for yourself. The design practice and gallery has such timeless pieces and its price point varies, so it's a great shout for any project.

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THE *LIVINGETC* TEAM RECOMMENDS

JULIAN CHICHESTER

For pieces that feel like one-offs even though they're new, look no further than Julian Chichester – the ultimate in standout pieces.

LOVE YOUR HOME

Obviously we want to recommend the chairs from our collection for this brand – but honestly, its entire range is worth exploring.

ERCOL

You simply can't go wrong investing in one of these design classics – we love the Eterna chair (pictured) for a shapely nod to current trends.



FIONA McDONALD

A forever favourite in the studio is Fiona McDonald. Where clients may not want vintage pieces in their home and would prefer newly made, I always suggest they opt for designs that will be classed as classics or worthwhile antiques in the future – 'the antiques of tomorrow', so to speak. The quality of her stuff is amazing, too. I can't fault it.



RETROUVIUS

Sundays are for Retrouvius, as that's when it releases its latest stock. It is a great way to introduce salvaged, reclaimed and vintage pieces into a home. You'd be amazed at what you can find. I've bought everything from boucle sofas to a chair that's definitely more for looking at than sitting in. Keep notifications on for these guys for sure!