

# TOP FIVE DESIGN TRENDS OF 2023



Martha Titcombe



Catherine Francis

As 2023 kicks off, Martha and Catherine take a look at some of the design trends we can expect to see this year. We are moving back to life post-pandemic, and design will begin to flourish whilst taking account of surrounding external factors: rising costs, wellbeing and mental health, and of course – sustainability!

## 1. THE MAXIMALIST'S ERA

We are finally coming out the other side of COVID 19, a time that was dictated by minimal, clinical spaces. As design focused on easily cleanable materials and furniture, we became desensitised to vibrant, joyful interiors that celebrated collaboration. Now we are able to come together again, this will be reflected in how we approach designing spaces, with each interior intended to create an inspiring experience for the user, whether this be in a restaurant, theatre café or a work cafeteria. Neutral colours will be replaced with exuberant purples, oranges and reds, and clashed with a variety of patterns. Interiors will be drenched in textures, and we will see a move toward opulent furniture, fixtures and fittings. All of these will be layered to create spaces that revive our senses and stimulate our minds.

## 2. ADAPTING, RE-USING AND VINTAGE DESIGN

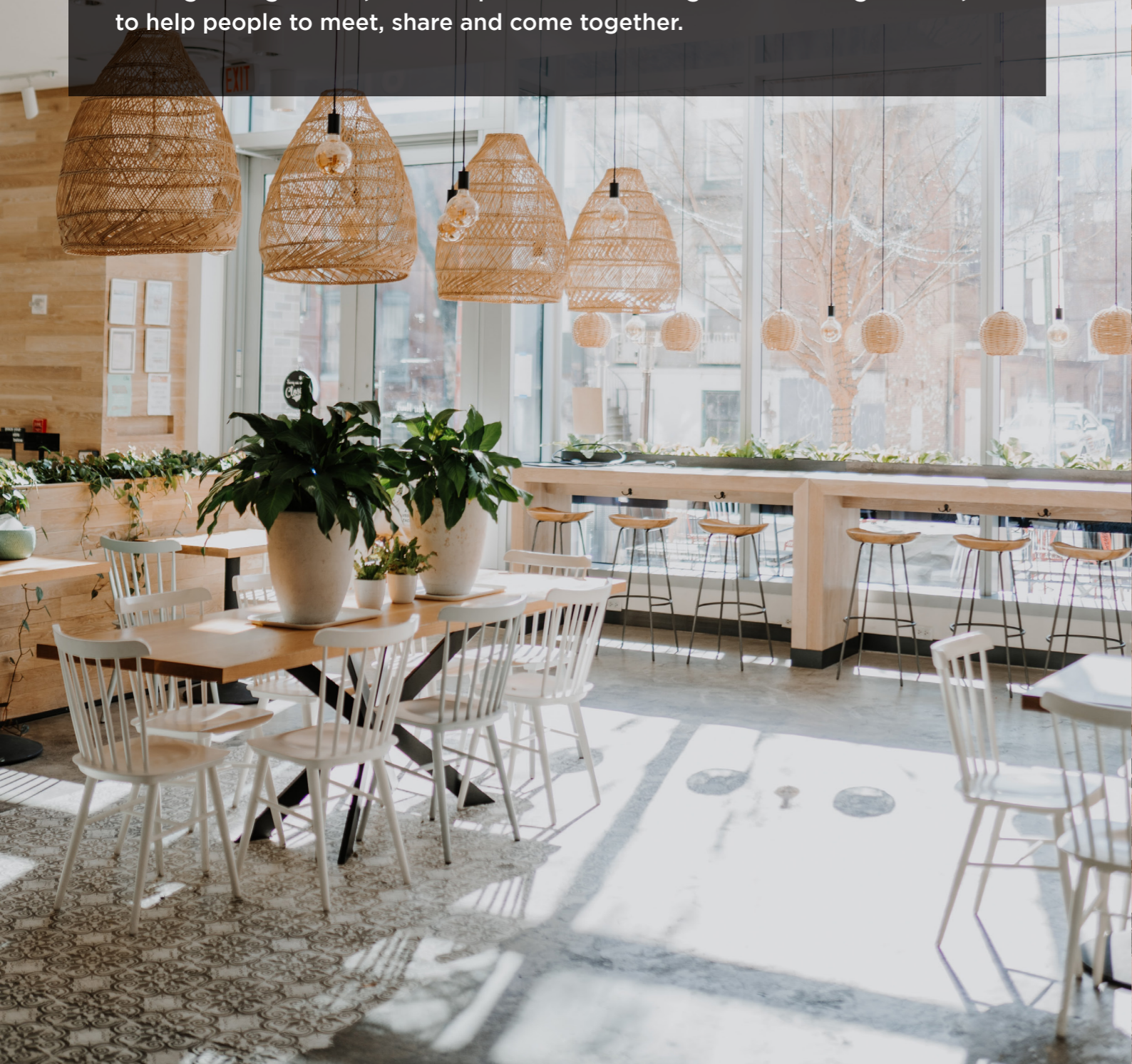
We can't escape the fact that costs are rising, even in the design world! Reusing and recycling is not a new idea, it is massively popular in the sustainability movement. But designers will use this approach more to keep projects within budget. This can range from adapting buildings that are already in existence to reusing second hand furniture and materials. When starting a project, more thought will be given to how we can incorporate and adapt existing design elements rather than replacing. Re-upholstering chairs, wrapping old counters, painting aging furniture. As this progresses, interiors will begin to develop their own unique styles, whilst remaining wallet friendly.





### 3. WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Our health, wellbeing and mental state are things that everybody is making priorities in both their work and home lives. Over the past couple of years, design has taken an important role in creating environments that help people feel comfortable and safe. Even a few key ideas can be applied to design to prioritise wellbeing. Well-lit spaces help the space feel bigger, whilst giving the user control of how they react to the space. Ideally, designers should maximise natural light and surrounding views to ground the design in natural elements. Having clear entrances, exits and routes through the space can help reduce the feeling of entrapment and spatial anxiety, whilst evident signage and waymarking will also help the user navigate the spaces with ease. We will see interiors continue to encourage group interaction with social seating arrangements, for example booths and larger table configurations, to help people to meet, share and come together.



### 4. ESCAPIST DESIGN

We live in a time of uncertainty, from the economic crisis close to home, to the devastation further afield - we are living in a time where the everyday stresses of life can be overwhelming. Designers have the ability to create sanctuaries which allow us to escape negative feelings.

We should never underestimate the power of plants. Biophilic design (the human connection to nature) can aid escapist design. Plants can help to improve memory and concentration, whilst enabling us to combat anxiety and depression and reduce stress levels. Designers are also using visual storytelling within spaces as a means to create visual distractions, this can be demonstrated through murals, immersive projections, sculpture and furniture.

The trajectories of our emotions caused by these everyday stresses can be modified for the better, using these escapist design techniques.



## 5. SUSTAINABILITY

With every year that passes, sustainability continues to be at the forefront of everything we do and focus on - and design is no different. Designers are implementing innovative and radical new solutions in an attempt to minimise the negative impact of design.

Designers are utilising what we already have access to in the natural world: Matyas Gutai from Loughborough University has developed Water-Filled Glass (WFG). These windows contain water between the glass panes which help to absorb heat from sunlight and in turn help to heat the building.

A similar idea was seen in Brazil: Sururu Da Mundaú experimented with unconventional materials (mussel shells) to create vernacular and sustainable building materials. Designers should be striving for longevity, quality and clever design.

## MEET THE AUTHORS

### Martha Titcombe

Martha is one of the fabulous designers at MYA Consulting. After gaining a degree in Interior Design from The University of the West of England, Martha worked as Design Assistant for the BBC TV Series 'DIY SOS: The Big Build'.

She balances her architectural skills with an interest in history, plus has strengths in writing and graphic design.



### Catherine Francis

Catherine is responsible for the process of design and innovation, and works closely with her clients to capture the 'wow' factor. With exacting standards and an exceptional eye for detail, Catherine brings design leadership and innovation to any project team.

Catherine earned a degree in Interior Design from Kingston University, and then gained experience working in an architecture practice before joining MYA Consulting.



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[info@mya-consulting.co.uk](mailto:info@mya-consulting.co.uk)

