



LIVING RETRO

andrew weaving

with photography by andrew wood

LIVING RETRO



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藏书章



LIVING RETRO



andrew weaving *with photography by andrew wood*

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THIS PAGE Mixing mid-century pieces with contemporary and classical detailing gives a home its own identity and is very living retro. Here, a Herman Miller-production Eames lounge and ottoman are upholstered in white leather, bringing the iconic pieces bang up to date. The plastic wall panels echo the original door mouldings.

OPPOSITE A Serge Mouille 'Conque' wall sconce dating from 1954 lights up the entrance hall of a Parisian home.

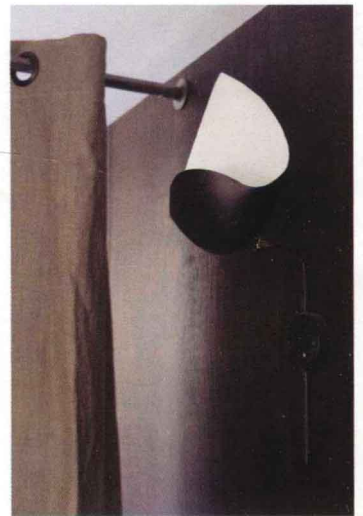
introduction

It's a conundrum: now we are well and truly into the twenty-first century, why do we still look back to find inspiration for a truly modern way of living? It's ironic that we look to the past to create interiors that are in the vanguard of fashion. But, without a doubt, retro style still has enormous appeal.

Today our homes are an extension of who we are; a way of signalling to others our tastes, opinions and outlook on the world. Of course, there are those who slavishly follow trends, with a new wardrobe every season, and an updated colour scheme and home accessories to match, but equally there are also many who want to develop their own style and refuse to be dictated to by glossy magazines or retail superstores.

Living retro does not demand close adherence to any particular set of style rules. There are no limits other than the chronological parameters the look spans, roughly from the 1950s to the late 1970s. Instead, living retro is a multi-faceted look that ranges from sophisticated glamour to pared-down chic, allowing its followers to cherry-pick their favourite pieces from the cream of twentieth-century design. It's not a trend that can be summed up in a sentence or two, but an idiosyncratic style that's all about having the confidence to live with the things we love, and to put them together in a way that suits our own particular circumstances. And at its heart is an abiding passion for vintage furniture and an understanding of the very best of twentieth-century design.

Those who choose to live retro generally fall into one of three main categories. First there are the purists – perfectionists who seek to recreate a specific moment in time in their home, and to put together an interior that is entirely faithful to the building that houses it, so the whole interior conjures up one look, one era, one moment in architectural and design history. Alternatively, you may have a certain signature style of your own, and this trademark look will be stamped upon your home, no matter how often you move, or





ABOVE This furniture grouping in David Jimenez's house in Palm Springs is a perfect illustration of Jimenez's signature style, which draws on the popular Hollywood Regency look: an eclectic mix of elements from different continents and periods inspired by designer luminaries such as David Hicks and Billy Baldwin.

OPPOSITE A bold, dramatic black and gold wallpaper – Imperial Trellis by Stark Wallcoverings – brings glamour to the guest bedroom in David Jimenez's house. The unusual metal lamp, with its sculptural forms, ties in with the colour scheme while adding another layer of pattern and texture.

where you may go. Finally, there are the maximalists among us, magpies who have a passion for collecting vintage pieces and playfully and proudly displaying our favourite finds. Do you recognize yourself? Whichever category you fall into, you are living retro.

The purists' take on retro living may seem extreme to some, but the natural approach to others. If you're working with a mid-century home that has many original features intact, one way to go is to choose only those furnishings and finishes that would have been used at the time of construction. This rigorous approach to living retro can be time-consuming, as you turn into a design detective and find yourself hunting high and low for the perfect vintage fabric or reconditioned refrigerator, but ultimately these efforts are worthwhile, as it's the amazing attention to detail that make these homes work.

Purists dream of stumbling across a one-off mid-century house designed for an enlightened client, like my house in Lakeland, Florida (pages 120–127). Their ideal home is an untouched gem with its original features largely intact, having been loved and cherished by its owners, passed down in the family and well maintained – just like Courtney and Joy Newman's house in Palm Springs (pages 12–19), which had its original bathrooms still in place. Living in a purist retro home can be compared to living in a museum – some of us dream about it, while others shudder at the very thought!

If you love all things retro, but don't enjoy playing by the rules, the likelihood is that you have developed your own signature style and that your home reflects your personal taste. Homes like those of Jonathan Adler (pages 48–55) or David Jimenez (pages 80–87) put a very personal spin on living retro. Although the building blocks of these interiors are retro pieces and a retro sensibility, their owners have married together a combination of different elements and styles from different decades, creating eclectic and quirky effects. The provenance or production history of a piece does not matter if its aesthetics appeal.





The great benefit of taking a less historically rigorous approach is that you can see your home as a blank canvas, and it can be taken to pieces then extensively remodelled to meet your own individual wants and needs, even if this means the finished interior is not authentic by the purists' standards. For example, Mark Davis's home in Palm Springs (pages 38–47) was extensively remodelled to make the space more suitable for modern living and to fulfil Davis's vision of the perfect retro home, one where original pieces sit happily alongside contemporary items that share the same feel.

The collector's home is another way of living retro, and of creating a home that reveals its owner's predilection for one particular aspect of retro design. This passion may be for a particular kind of artwork, like the Brian Willsher sculptures I display in my London home (pages 30–37) or Dubi Silverstein's collection of vintage travel posters (pages 138–145). Other collectors may have built up a collection of vintage furniture that they are obsessive about, a case in point being Nicolas Hug and his treasured original Scandinavian pieces (pages 21–29). Collectors' homes afford a fascinating glimpse into their inhabitants' interests and enthusiasms.

One of the greatest advantages about retro living nowadays is the wealth of pieces that are available. There are of course original pieces, many of which are now hugely sought after, from auctions, vintage furniture stores or which may even be a lucky junk-shop find (increasingly rare, nowadays). There are licensed modern re-editions, as well as newer versions of twentieth-century designs or modern pieces inspired by retro or mid-century modern style. I hope the suppliers list at the end of this book (pages 154–155) will provide you with a starting point for your own adventures in living retro. Nowadays we are lucky – the easy availability of so many fabulous retro and retro-inspired items allows us to create our very own take on retro style, using the very best of what's on offer.



OPPOSITE An entrance hall or lobby is an ideal space to display a cherished collection of vintage paintings. Hanging them as a group creates more impact. This area was originally closed off from the rest of the interior. The dividing wall was partly removed and LS sculptural ceramic elements from Architectural Pottery designed by Malcolm Leland in the 1950s were installed, creating a screen but retaining an open-plan feel.

ABOVE An otherwise all-white space is the perfect backdrop for a collection of objects united by their vibrant tomato-red hue: Zsolnay ceramics, Holmegaard glass and a sculptural 1950s Italian chair. The chunky custom-built shelves are ideal for showcasing collections of smaller pieces.

THIS PAGE **The Newmans' favourite pieces in the house – an Eero Saarinen Tulip table and chairs by Knoll – enjoy pride of place on the raised dining area.**





sophisticated glamour

When a reassessment of twentieth-century design first began, some years ago, collectors were generally drawn towards the mid-century and, in some cases, earlier. The latter decades of the century seemed too close for comfort – less glamorous, less exotic, too familiar. Now the time frame has widened, and many of us are finding late twentieth-century design more in tune with our tastes.

In Rancho Mirage, just east of Palm Springs, Courtney and Joy Newman live in a 1969 house that is filled with an ever-changing collection of retro furnishings of the same vintage. Full of colour and texture, this house bears all the hallmarks of the late 1960s and early 1970s – shag-pile carpets, sophisticated leather, steel and glass furniture, and exuberant use of bold colour and pattern.

Courtney Newman's passion for twentieth-century design infuses both his private and professional lives. Newman's Palm Springs store, Modernway, specializes in high-end vintage furniture and accessories; in particular, works by Vladimir Kagan, Milo Baughman, Thayer Coggin, Sergio Rodrigues and Pierre Cardin, as well as items by Arthur Elrod, the interior decorator who worked on many of the large houses built in Palm Springs and the surrounding area in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly homes designed by architect William Cody.

The Newmans' home in Rancho Mirage was designed by William Cody in 1969, and is located on the grounds of the Tamarisk Country Club, which was established in 1952 (the club, on Frank Sinatra Drive, is the second oldest in the desert). One of a small group of houses, it nestles on the very edge of the club's golf course. Occupying an almost square plan, the accommodation is on two levels and surrounds an open central courtyard, with the master bedroom and main living areas having access to both this courtyard and the garden, which is adjacent to the fairway.

BELOW Colour is a big element in this house. In the courtyard the walls are painted by Ryan Alonso and the 1969 Bouloum loungers are by Olivier Mourgue.

BOTTOM RIGHT More colour in the den, where the psychedelic padded walls enclose it and make it soundproof.

BOTTOM LEFT A retro mirrored wall sculpture reflects vintage coloured glass decanters displayed in the bar area.





The house overlooks the manicured green of the Tamarisk Country Club. The glass walls are shaded by the ample roof overhang. On the tiled floor that runs throughout the living areas stands a suite of furniture from Pace Collection dating from 1970. The menagerie of animal figures, including a proud lion by Italian ceramicist Guido Gambone, sit on a custom-designed table by interior decorator Arthur Elrod.



