

# Sustainability WITH STYLE

Create an eco-friendly living space by choosing furniture pieces with care and consideration, writes **Guinevere Davies**



**G**orgeous interiors needn't cost the earth. From choosing furniture suppliers who make their manufacturing processes known to supporting local designers or giving beloved heirlooms an upgrade, there are myriad ways to ensure our living spaces not only look good but do good too.

## TAKE CARE

Our homes are more than just a reflection of our personal taste and style; the items we choose to surround ourselves with also represent our values. Eco-friendly or sustainably made pieces of furniture are emblematic not only of your love for your home environment, but the future of the planet as well. >



Bofred



Audi Snijman Interior Design



Lemon

As minima design's Jacques Cronje explains, "There are so many aspects of our lives where it's hard to avoid having an environmental impact; for instance travel and energy consumption – particularly in South Africa where most of our electricity is still produced by burning coal. Compared to that, simply making conscious choices as to what we consume and purchase is relatively easy in terms of reducing our environmental impact."

Says Audi Snijman of Audi Snijman Interior Design, "I think it is incredibly important to contribute to the preservation of our environment, in every aspect of our lives. We need to be responsible, not only in our purchasing choices, but be mindful and considerate in our shopping habits too. Therefore, if a desired item is not immediately available, I will always suggest to my clients that we wait, and don't, in the interim, make do with a cheaper item that will eventually need to be discarded."

Lemon's Kevin Franketal adds, "In terms of design, what is important to us is designing and manufacturing products that are made to last, thereby encouraging lower consumption, less waste and an attitude of buying fewer but better-quality pieces for your home."

According to Bofred's Christa Botha and Carla Erasmus, "Everyone should play their part in being conscious and being as sustainable as possible."



Bofred

We do as much as we can in reducing waste with packaging, and all our boxes for local and international orders are 100% recyclable.

"The materials we use for each product are also sourced and researched extensively to use the most environmentally friendly materials available and possible for production."

### MAKE GOOD CHOICES

When it comes to shopping for sustainable furniture, it's important to place functionality ahead of aesthetics, advises Manna Design's Ane Pieterse.

"When you choose furniture based on functionality, it will remain useful and contribute to your quality of life."

"The problem with cheap, mass-produced furniture is that it tends to be informed by trends and appearance rather than function. Low-cost materials also tend to be low-quality and this >



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**“Having a balance between old and new is what makes a house a home.”**

– Christa Botha and Carla Erasmus



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creates more waste over time. A considered and functional piece of furniture, made with high-quality natural materials, ensures longevity and is therefore a more sustainable choice.”

Audi Snijman Interior Design’s Snijman says, “Opting for quality that lasts is certainly one of the ways we can minimise our impact. As is buying furniture that is made from natural materials (like rattan or bamboo); or investing in antiques (that are really built to last); or even having a local carpenter handcraft a piece of furniture for you from reclaimed wood.

“Handmade pieces often have less impact on the environment, not only because of the way they are made, but also because of the way they are prepared or treated – the production footprint is usually smaller.”

What your furniture is made from is also a key consideration, says minima design’s Cronje. “Wood is the clear winner in terms of sustainability. Wood is the only material that is an entirely renewable resource. Trees are continuously being grown and sequestering carbon dioxide and producing oxygen while doing so.

“When a tree is harvested, to be replaced by another, the product made of the wood actually locks that carbon away for the lifespan of the product.”

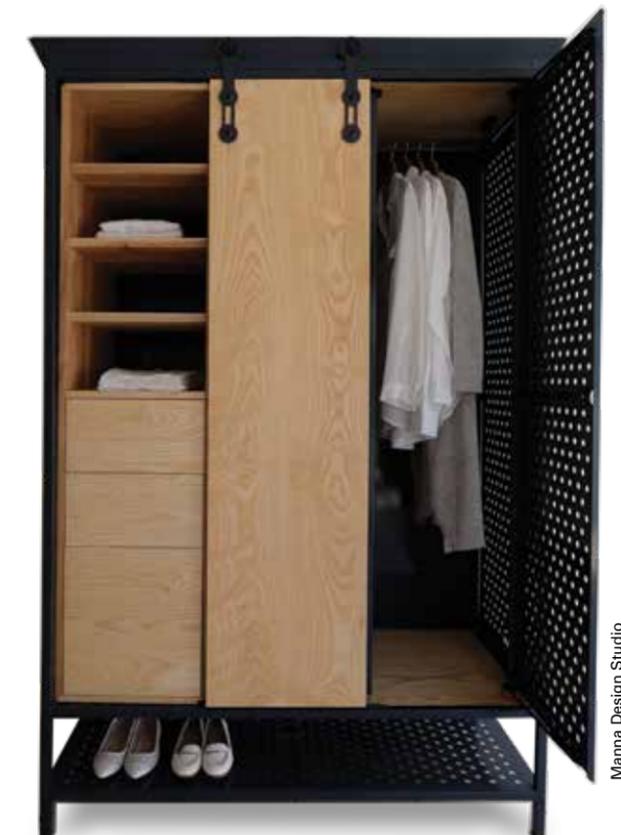
Manna Design’s Pieterse agrees. “Solid woods add wonderful warmth to any space, and serve as a subtle reminder of nature in our indoor spaces. It is soft to the touch, and a good insulator, which makes it a comfortable

material to interact with in summer and winter.”

Lemon’s Frankental adds, “Many brands will use an FSC-certified timber for their products. This means that the timber is from forests that are well managed and not over-logged. Apart from guaranteed high quality, this means that the wood used in your furniture has not affected any aspect of the local community, or adversely impacted the surrounding environment.” >



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## OLD IS NEW AGAIN

There's also no need to buy new if you have perfectly good pieces sitting in your home that really only need a little bit of TLC.

As Bofred's Botha and Erasmus reveal, "Having a balance between old and new is what make a house a home. By changing the finish slightly, reupholstering or refitting furniture, reusing pieces can be simple and affordable. Our interior preference is mixing different styles of furniture and designing your space with both old and new."

Says minima design's Cronje, "If for example you have tired of your sofa, instead of replacing it, why not have it reupholstered? And while you're at it, select a fabric made by one of several of our very talented local fabric designers. While considering reuse, there are also local manufacturers who specialise in making furniture pieces from reclaimed wood – and it's hard to beat that in terms of sustainability."

Audi Snýman Interior Design's Snýman adds, "Reusing and repurposing old furniture that is structurally sound is a definite 'green' habit, made even more special when the items have a wonderful backstory. In my many years as an interior designer I've heard some truly amazing family stories and special memories associated with collectors' items and antiques. And often they need just a little bit of restorative work, or new upholstery, to shine again." 🏠

***With thanks to Audi Snýman Interior Design, Bofred, Lemon, Manna Design Studio and minima design***