THE HALL OF FAME

DECORATING

What Is Transitional Design, and How Can You Get the

Look?

Set your self free with this instinctive style that allows you to experiment with mixing different aesthetics and create timeless

rooms

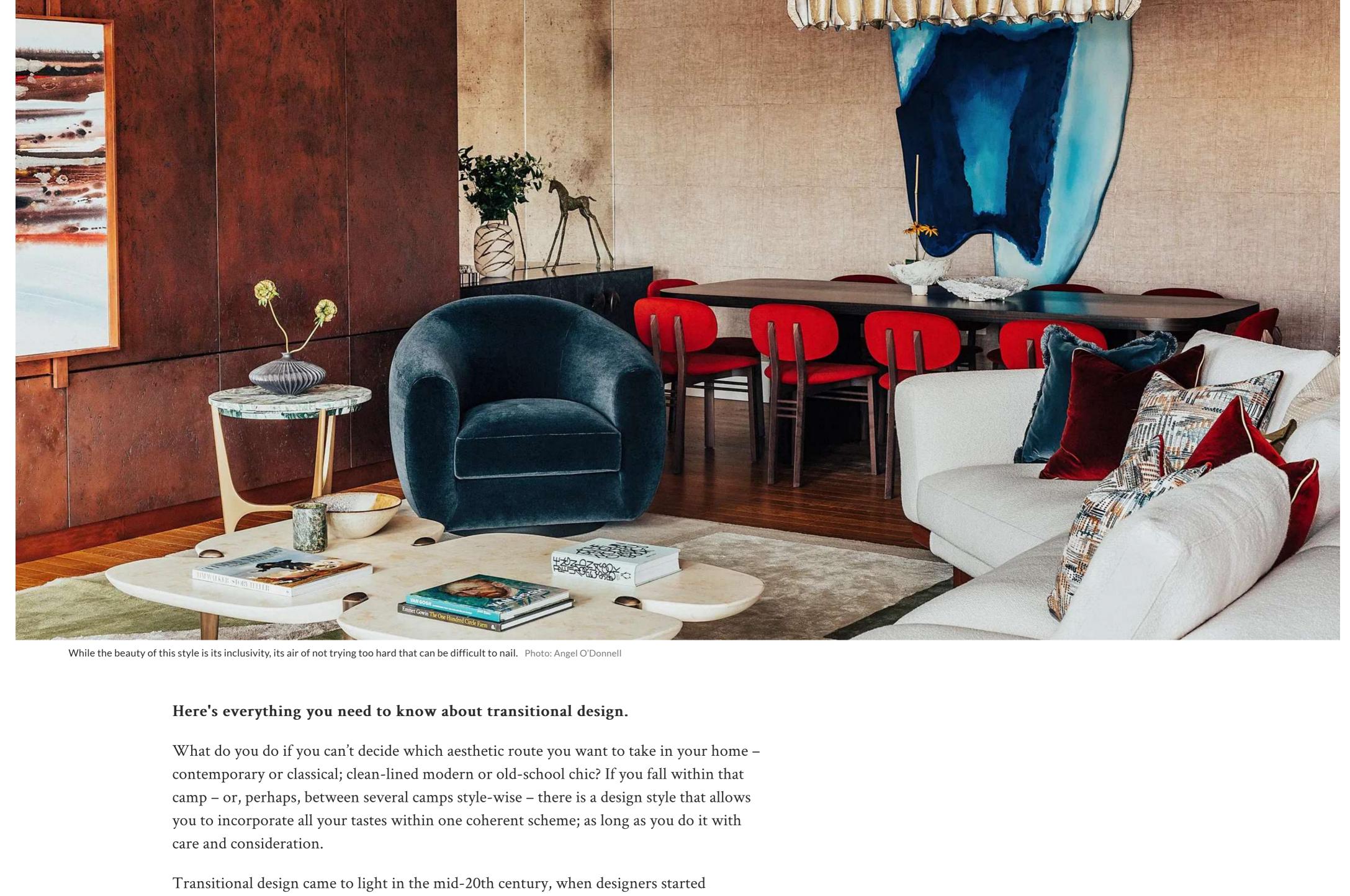
By Jessica Doyle

April 24, 2025

THE DEBUTS

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What is transitional design, and why does it appeal? While it might be trending right now as a design style, this approach is, instinctively, anti-

moment yet again.

Studio Vero

Studio Vero

Banda / Michael Sinclair

approach?

Christian Bense / Alexander James

something vintage.

Christian Bense

Angel O'Donnell / Taran Wilkhu

Christian Bense / Alexander James

interiors."

Christian Bense / Alexander James

if over time."

stone finish combined with a soft velvet or bouclé.

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THE 2025 LIST

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Studio Vero

trend - it's all about blending different periods and design schools, shapes and colours, and

embracing contrast, rather than trying too hard to make everything match.

deliberately to mix antiques with contemporary pieces, and it's an approach that is having a



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"Transitional design appeals precisely because it's more fluid, looser—it allows spaces to

Rudebeck, co-founder of London-based design firm Studio Vero. "What makes it so

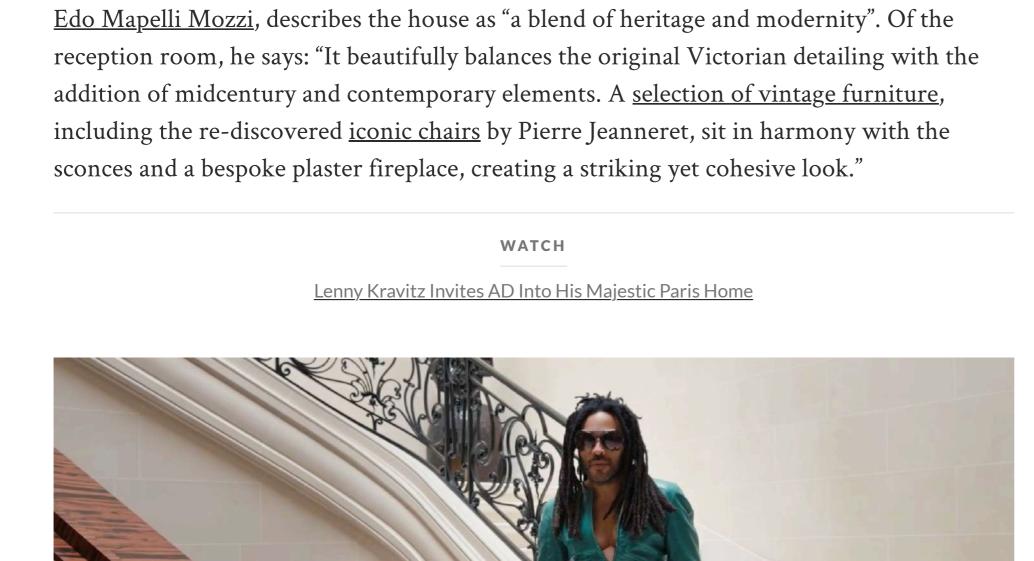
evolve naturally rather than feeling dictated by a particular era or fashion," opines Venetia



Designer Christian Bense agrees that its appeal lies in its lack of design dogma. "One of the

difficult things about implementing some of the more 'regimented' design styles is that they

require an all-or-nothing approach, and they result in a home feeling disjointed if



So they sent me to Paris.

It's a look that works particularly well in older properties such as this, where modern

modern buildings, where antiques can be set against a contemporary backdrop.

What are the benefits of designing with this kind of

pieces can be juxtaposed with well-aged architecture, but it can also be applied to more

A sophisticated example of transitional design can be <u>seen in a townhouse</u> by international

property firm Banda, which works across Europe, the US and the Middle East. Its CEO,

new pieces can be added without killing an existing look, which ultimately results in timeless, characterful rooms. "It allows for contrast, for personality," says Rudebeck. "You're not trying to make it look a certain way; you're responding to what feels right."

One key benefit of the transitional design style is that it allows a home to evolve naturally;

That sense of the instinctive nature of design is at the heart of it. "The main benefit is that

resonate with them," says Bense. Nothing is off the table, and there are no 'rules' to adhere

recommend that you shop with the following trio in

mind: something masculine, something feminine and

As such, both he and designer Ed O'Donnell of designers Angel O'Donnell describe

transitional design as a "have your cake and eat it" approach. However, it is not a case of

without ever veering into maximalism," says O'Donnell, who suggests following Coco

Chanel's famous advice to look at a mirror before you leave the house and remove one

accessory. Editing is key: this is a look that embraces the quiet luxury aesthetic, but just

throwing whatever you like into a room and hoping for the best. "It's an eclectic approach

people can establish what is appropriate first, and then weave in additional styles that

When it comes to transitional design, I always

gives it a bit of extra character.

How can you nail the transitional design look? While the beauty of this style is its inclusivity and its air of not trying too hard, there's a difference between a room in which disparate pieces have been combined with intention, and one where things have been put together without a thought. "When blending old and new, the key is not to overthink it," advises Rudebeck. "Some contrasts add interest, while subtle connections create harmony. A sleek modern sofa can sit effortlessly alongside a beautifully worn antique table if the balance feels right. Don't try too hard to make everything 'match'."

Christian Bense / Alexander James

If that all seems a bit nebulous and hard to grasp for anyone who is not a practised

something feminine and something vintage," he says. "Applying this mindset when

item is, but what energy or vibe it will bring to a space. You could substitute the

designer, Bense has a formula that might help: "When it comes to transitional design, I

always recommend that you shop with the following trio in mind: something masculine,

shopping or furnishing a home means you need to think about more than just what the

masculine/feminine for modern and art deco, for example, or any combination of styles,

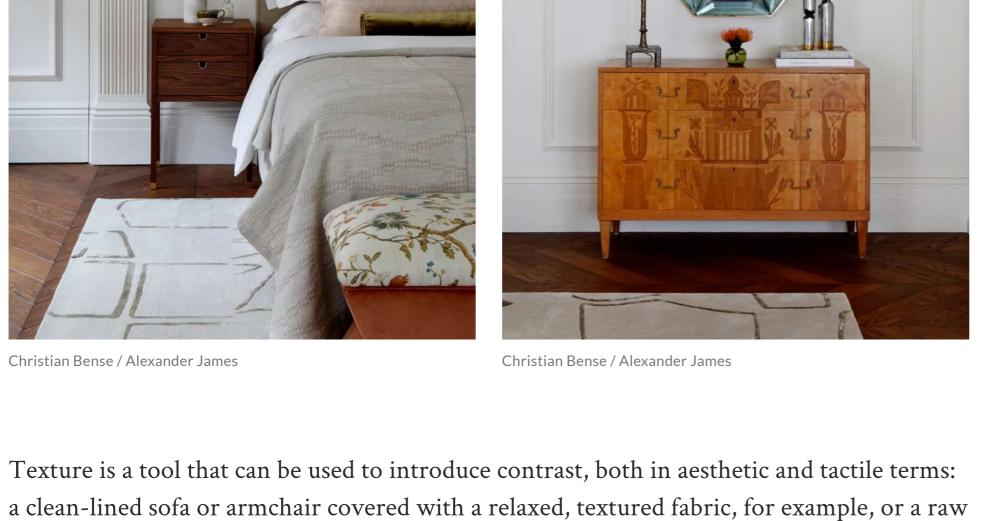
but mixing these with antiques will ensure an organic mix of styles and character to your

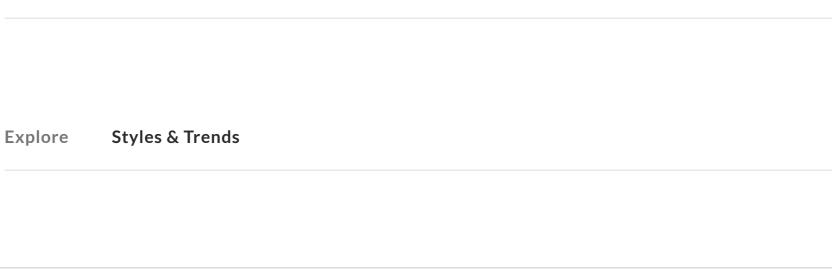
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"A slight mismatch of neutral is also a great way to make a space feel lived-in and layered,

retain some of the more modern elements, while making a space feel organically curated, as

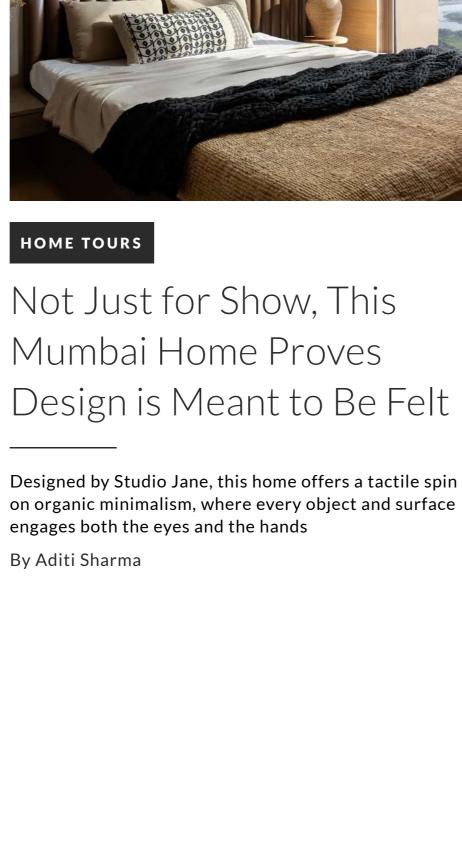
rather than designed in one go," says Bense. "The odd subtle mismatch means you can

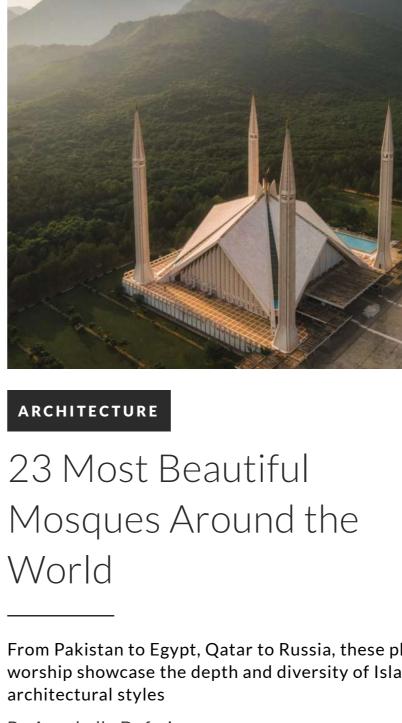




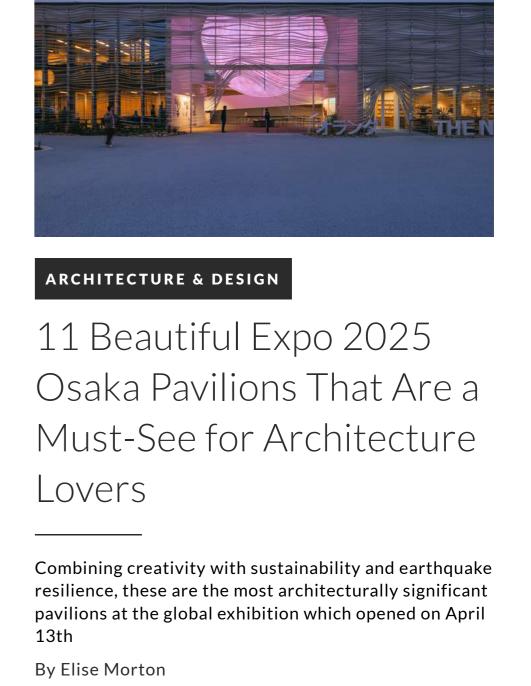








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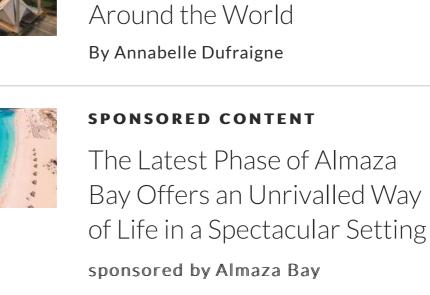
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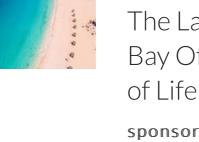
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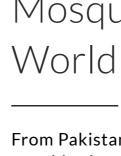
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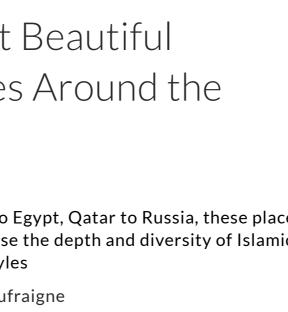




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