



GOOD ON PAPER

Boldness and whimsy are making their long overdue comeback in the home. Are your walls ready for the revolution?

BY TIM McKEOUGH

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Condesa by Serena Dugan Studio, Tag 9184 by Phillip Jeffries, Mayenne by Brunschwig & Fils, Can-Can by Flavor Paper, Excentric by Diptyque, Ginger by Thibaut, Fan Palm by Stroheim, Venus from Collection 360° by Élitis, Turning Leaves by Voutsas (on floor).

DON PENNY



A blue floral print by Florence Broadhurst adds to the zaniness in Jonathan Adler's home office in Greenwich Village, New York City.



Ghislaine Viñas used Flavor Paper to give a mega-dose of vitamin C to a bunk room in Montauk, New York.

Forget paint. When a room screams out for a truly audacious change, it's almost impossible to beat statement-making wallpaper. Whether the design depicts lush oversize florals, a hallucinatory geometric pattern, or a lively scene from some foreign dreamworld, a unique wallpaper can propel a space from a ho-hum afterthought to a home's crown jewel.

"It's probably my favorite tool to make someone's house feel really distinctive," says the New York City-based designer Celerie Kemble. "It's a real mood changer and instantly adds a big dose of personality. Even though there's no actual depth to it, patterned wallpaper gives a foreground-background effect that eliminates the feeling of that big, sad, flat wall."

As wallpaper has been surging in popularity for well over a decade, the range of options has proliferated, with new and old companies introducing patterns that might have been deemed too outrageous just a few years ago. At the same time, designers and homeowners alike are growing more daring.

NOW TRENDING

Murals

Thanks to digital printing, full-scale wall murals are now almost as accessible as the repeating patterns of yore. Calico Wallpaper, for instance, creates artful, abstract motifs rich with atmosphere that never repeat. The company's latest introductions include designs resembling super-size wood grain, paintbrush strokes, and free-form paper cutouts, as well as washes of color evoking gauzy clouds and electric sunsets.

Peel-and-Stick

Don't have an installer, or worried about papering a rental apartment? No problem. Companies like Chasing Paper and Wallshoppe make peel-and-stick wallpaper that looks as good as traditional products but is simple to hang and just as easy to remove when you grow tired of the design.

Added Function

Wallcoverings can do more than merely add decoration. Liners from companies like MagScapes can make any wallpaper magnetic. Smarter Surfaces offers dry-erase wallpaper that can turn entire walls into giant whiteboards.

NuWallpaper has wallpaper that serves as a chalkboard. And if a room is too echoey, companies like Maya Romanoff and York Wallcoverings have woolly and felted wallpapers that can improve acoustics.

"I've become a lot more adventurous with bold, oversize patterns and colors, compared with when I first started using wallpaper," says the West Coast designer Nathan Turner, a partner in the direct-to-consumer wallpaper brand Wallshoppe. As more people become more comfortable with patterned walls, he says, they're also moving beyond feature walls and small-scale rooms to wrap larger spaces like dining rooms, lounges, and bedrooms in paper. "Wallpaper has finally made its way out of the powder room," he says.

Not only are there more patterns from more manufacturers on offer, from loose painterly designs to strict architectural motifs, but manufacturing technology has also advanced significantly, opening an avenue to customizable murals; peel-and-stick wallpaper; textural products that resemble wood, shagreen, leather, and fabric; and functional wallcoverings that double as chalkboards, magnetic walls, and acoustical damping.

All of that is good news for homeowners. Resources that were once reserved for the trade are more accessible, and DIY installation has become a real possibility. It's also easier to find wallcoverings that mimic revered finishes, such as decorative painting, Venetian plaster, and wall upholstery.

"I use a lot of fabric as wallpaper because it adds depth," says the Baltimore-based designer Mona Hajj. In one bedroom, for instance, she finished walls with intricate >

A collision of vivid patterns is united by a Brunschwig & Fils print in the powder room of a home in Baltimore designed by Mona Hajj.



lace over a layer of silk, and in a bathroom she added paper backing to a nubby charcoal fabric so it could be pasted into place. Pulling off such details usually requires big budgets and expert installers. However, deeply textural wallpapers from companies like Phillip Jeffries, which makes products with grass cloth, wood veneer, and more, can offer a similar look for less expense and with more room for error.

And just because the product is called wallpaper doesn't mean it should be used only on walls. "Frequently, I use it on ceilings," Kemble says. "I've also designed a series of natural textures in wallpaper, like tortoiseshell, which I've seen installed in the backs of bookcases and insides of drawers."

The Spanish designer Lorenzo Castillo, a power wallpaper user, has rules for which types of papers to use where. "I prefer plain textural papers with a natural textile look in big spaces like drawing rooms," he says. "I like to use papers with smaller patterns—geometrics or motifs from nature—in bedrooms, walk-in closets, and bathrooms," where a sense of calm is desired.

He frequently reserves the largest-scale patterns for entrance halls, libraries, and dining rooms. "In those spaces, you can be more dramatic," Castillo says, "and why not get wild and crazy?" ■



PRINT'S NOT DEAD

Bring any room in your home instantly to life with these eye-popping new wallcoverings.

BY PARKER BOWIE LARSON

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1. BEAT 9195

On the hunt for the perfect wave-patterned paper? You're in luck. To the trade. phillipjeffries.com

2. FRUIT BY WILLIAM MORRIS

A 19th-century classic is ripe for the picking in this vibrant new colorway. To the trade. morriscandco.sandersondesigngroup.com

3. URBAN

Add a painterly touch with this abstract mood setter. To the trade. arte-international.com

4. BAGATELLE BY MANUEL CANOVAS

Available for the first time as a wallpaper, this iconic print is as exciting as floral motifs get. To the trade. cowtan.com

5. SQUARE DANCE T12846

Graphic patterns in tight repetition are never the wrong choice. \$146 per roll. thibautdesign.com

HAIJ: PIETER ESTERSOHN; WALLPAPERS: DON PENNY