

THE Report

LUXE HITS THE ROAD TO GATHER DESIGN INSPIRATION FROM AROUND THE GLOBE WITH THE HELP OF THE SAVVIEST OF TOUR GUIDES.

WRITTEN BY BRIELLE M. FERREIRA

WINDOWS ON THE WORLD

It's true that inspiration can strike anywhere—but it doesn't hurt to take your creative muse on a trip every once in a while. From Mexico and England to Scandinavia and beyond, the colors and flavors of far-flung locales can be as intoxicating at home as they are in their respective parts of the world (think bold Yucatán tiles on a patio in Southern California or a beautifully patinaed Swedish grandfather clock holding court in a farmhouse in Texas). Here, we tapped some of our favorite interiors experts for an insider's look at the best international destinations for design lovers.



PHOTO: ANDRÉ VICENTE GONÇALVES.

Photographer André Vicente Gonçalves captures the vila of Óbidos, Portugal, in this charming collage.

mexico



1

mission: WANDERLUST

Designer Laura Kirar performs her own southern migration multiple times each year: The New York-based interiors maven and product designer owns a home in Mérida, Mexico, and finds herself endlessly enthralled with the historical city's exciting arts scene and thriving community of craftsmen. Read below, as she fashions what her pitch-perfect itinerary looks like for a fun-filled day in the Yucatán. laurakirar.com

9 a.m. I always try to start the day with yoga and a swim at home. I'm still in the process of restoring my 18th-century hacienda, so I love to spend as much time there as possible.

10 a.m. Next up is breakfast: There are always tortillas made by hand, fresh-squeezed mango juice, huevos revueltos and avocados picked from the tree in my own yard.



Counterclockwise from top: Designer Laura Kirar wandering through her favorite outdoor market, taking a dip in the Cenote Kankirixche, and starting the night with friends and La Negrita's famous mescal.

11 a.m. There really isn't a "shopping district" in Mérida, but the Mercado Principal in the center of town has a little bit of everything—from food to shoes to vintage jewelry. There's also great shopping around the Parque de Santiago in Centro, where you can find contemporary, artisan-made sandals, hats and accessories at places like Kukul.

1 p.m. The lunch at Hacienda Temozon is fantastic; I always order the guacamole con chapulines, sopa de limon, carnitas and a tequila with sangrita. If it's Sunday, we go to brunch at Hacienda Ochil. The hacienda is picturesque and also has its own James Turrell installation.

3 p.m. Next, I make my rounds: I visit FonArt shop for the best in embroidery, pottery, and table and bed linens, Coqui Coqui for natural mosquito repellent and room scents, and the Alfaro Galeria de Arte y Antigüedades in the Centro; though, the term "antiques" should be taken lightly—it has a really eclectic collection.

5 p.m. Then, it's another late afternoon dip in one of the many surrounding cenotes, pools that form naturally when a limestone bedrock collapses. I love the Cenote Kankirixche; it's breathtakingly beautiful.

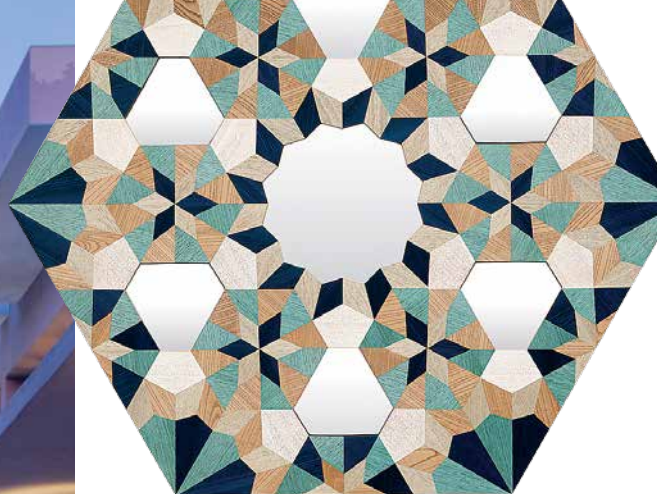
6 p.m. Time for a siesta at home followed by early drinks at La Negrita, where you'll find the best taquitos and mescal around.

THIS PAGE: MISION; WANDERLUST PHOTOS: COURTESY LAURA KIRAR. OPPOSITE LOCAL FLAVOR PHOTOS: TIM STREET-PORTER. SHOW OFF PHOTO: COURTESY CARAVANA AMERICANA. TALENT SCOUT PHOTO: COURTESY INDIRA LONDONO.

2 LOCAL flavor

David Serrano, one half of the creative duo behind celebrated Los Angeles shop Downtown, spills on what he loves most about his home away from home in Mexico:

"The quality of light in Mérida inspired me to start painting again. They sometimes call it the 'White City,' but its skies are very blue. And, while it doesn't have mountains, the clouds are so white and full that they almost feel like unscalable peaks in their own right. It's a big, big world, but I'm treating this little corner of it as my very own cabinet of curiosities." downtown20.net



3 show OFF

This year's first-annual Caravana Americana, which took place in March, made a big splash in Mexico City thanks to its stunning array of art, fashion and housewares from all across Latin America. From the creative minds of Regina Barrios and Alessandro Cerutti, the pair behind the cult-favorite boutique Lago DF, Caravana Americana seeks to pair Mexican makers—like 1050 Grados, Ricardo Casas and CyTF, whose handsome marquetry work is shown here—with international buyers for a weekend of contemporary design bliss that we can't wait to mark and set on our calendars for next year. caravanaamericana.com

4 TALENT SCOUT

The former executive director of one of the newest additions to the Yucatán arts scene, Fundación de Artistas, Indira Londono (right) reflects on the region's growing creative community and gives collectors the inside scoop on where to go and who to watch when building their portfolios. fundaciondeartistas.org

What makes Mexican art different? It's difficult to categorize and compare artwork from Mexico versus the U.S. because there are many factors that influence artists even within regions of the same country—for example, the art in the Yucatán will be very different than in areas like Oaxaca and Mexico City. Here, art specifically draws influences from many factors such as its region's Mayan ancestry, Spanish occupation and the Caribbean climate.

Top Mexican artists to watch: Mérida has many talented local artists, but I'm mostly interested in artists who redefine the idea of art and utilize it as a vector to create a dialogue about relevant social issues. Some of my favorites are Alexa Torre, Marcela Diaz, Stefania Rivadeneyra, Karla Madera and Uggo Gonzalez.

Must-visit art fairs or festivals for American collectors: My favorites are Noche Blanca—an event sponsored by the city of Mérida in conjunction with artists, galleries, museums and public spaces for a finely curated tour of what the community here has to offer—and the National Biennial of Visual Arts of Yucatán—which features a wide range of Mexican art, including paintings, sculptures, photography, video-art and installations.



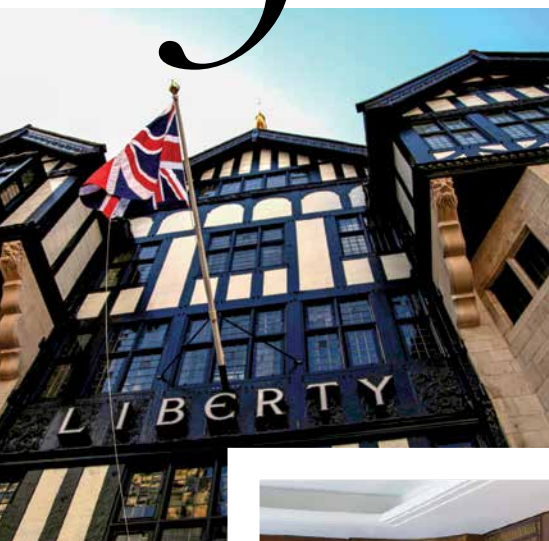
england



A few of designer Martyn Lawrence Bullard's favorite British haunts, clockwise from top right: Guinevere, The Beaumont hotel and Liberty of London.



5 FIRST PERSON
MARTYN LAWRENCE BULLARD



London to me is not only my original home and teenage stomping ground, it is a main artery for my decorative inspirations and design shopping. These days, I like to start my trip by booking into one of the splendid new design hotels that have sprung up across the country. My current hot spot is the super luxurious Beaumont hotel in London's W1; it makes you feel like you're in *The Great Gatsby*, but you're not, you're on a shopping trip with me; so, here's what comes next:

8:30 a.m. There's no better place to start your day than in The Colony Grill Room at Selfridges with a full English breakfast and lashings of Earl Grey tea all silver-served with the finest attention to detail.

10 a.m. Head over to Alfies Antique Market with dealers that sell everything from vintage-leather and vellum travel trunks (ask for Leslie Warander at The Tintin Shop to show you his secret stash hidden upstairs) to 1970s and '80s Italian furniture and lighting.

11:30 a.m. From there, go to King's Road in Chelsea. With luck, you'll get to catch a viewing of the latest sale at Lots Road Auctions, a veritable bargain-hunters local auction held weekly. My favorite antiques store in London, Guinevere, is just around the corner and is a real treat for the eyes.



12:30 p.m. After antiques, a spot of lunch is required. I head to the Wolseley—by Piccadilly Circus—a European restaurant designed by my friend, the late and great David Collins. It's highly stylized with black-and-white marble floors, bronze chandeliers and chinoiserie-lacquered panels.

2 p.m. A little après stroll down Piccadilly will bring you to Fortnum & Mason, the luxury food and lifestyle store that happens to make my very favorite tea, Imperial Earl Grey. After stocking up on that, I head to Jermyn Street to visit my tailor: Ozwald Boateng makes the most fun suiting.

3 p.m. No day in London is complete without art. The S2 Gallery, run by Fru Tholstrup, belongs to Sotheby's and houses exhibits by rising art stars like Charming Baker, along with group shows, like the recent exhibit curated by Tommy Hilfiger and Jeffrey Deitch. As a photo enthusiast, I also head over to the Hamilton Gallery in Mayfair.

5 p.m. London is known for its quality upholstery and fabric houses, but for me, visiting the tiny trim shop VV Rouleaux is a necessity. This jewel-box store offers amazing trims, tassels, beads, feathers and other theatrical decorating tools.

7 p.m. The perfect day in London ends with my favorite eatery, The Ivy. Favored by London's theater crowd, its recently remodeled interiors are cozy and glamorous. martynlawrencebullard.com

THIS PAGE: FIRST PERSON PHOTOS: COURTESY MARTYN LAWRENCE BULLARD. OPPOSITE: LONDON CALLING PHOTO: HESTON WELLS. TALLY HO PHOTO: COURTESY JONATHAN ADLER.



6 LONDON calling

While Michael S. Smith has become a bit of a symbol of Americana—having been tapped by the Obama administration to reimagine the White House's residential spaces during the First Family's time in Washington, D.C.—the LA-based interior designer actually built much of his influential aesthetic from his time overseas in London, where he studied at the beloved Victoria and Albert Museum and fostered a lifelong love of antiques. Find out why his London calling is as loud as ever. michaelsmithinc.com

What do you love most about British design? English homes, especially the wonderful country houses, have a very identifiable voice; they're about putting various things together in a way that's both comfortable and aesthetically pleasing. Since the country has a longer history than the U.S., people have been acquiring furniture and passing it down in the family for much longer, and the result is both a lack of fussiness and a

practicality when it comes to design. It sees very formal and important pieces feeling at home with more approachable and humanistic things: a mastery of the mix.

Favorite British designers past and present: The classic example, of course, is the design firm of Colefax and Fowler; their work has been a not-so-secret source of inspiration in a lot of really good English houses. Beyond them, I love the modernity and color of the legendary David Hicks and the historical elegance of Robert Kime.

Is there a historic English house you'd particularly love to design? I'd be truly thrilled to outfit places like Haddon Hall or Chiswick House—estates that have really beautiful architecture and are just extraordinary with a kind of eccentric appeal. There's something challenging and exciting about creating personality in a home that already has so much of its own.

7 TALLYHO!

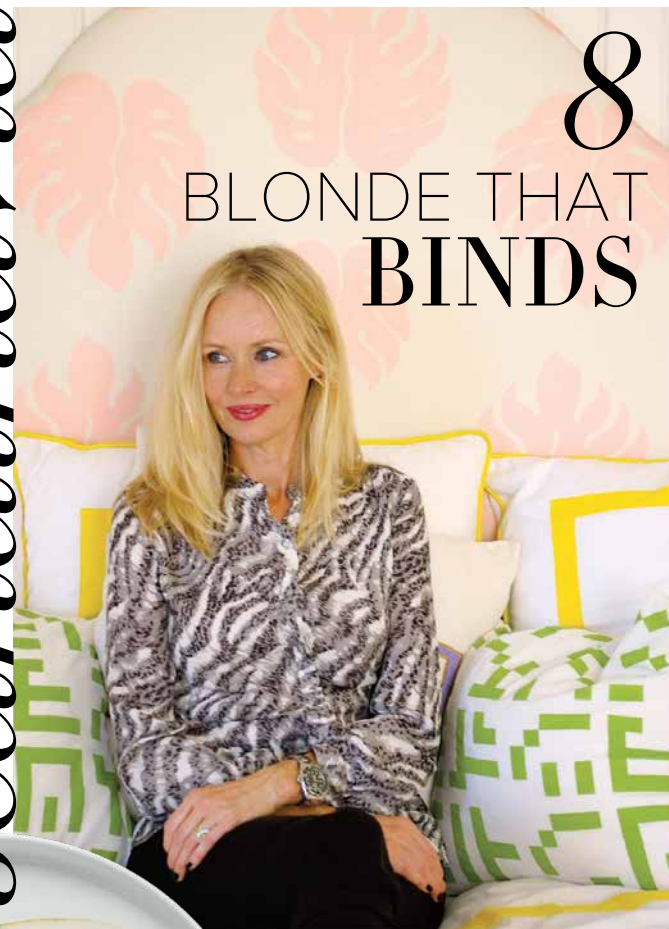
Known for his wild color palettes and playful style, Jonathan Adler doesn't mind buttoning it up every once in a while with a dose of classic British design. Here are his top-five spots to visit in London. jonathanadler.com

1. My shops! I have one on Sloane Avenue and one on Westbourne Grove. They're great fun (as evidenced by Adler's Zebra British flag rug shown at right), and I'd love them even if they weren't mine. **2. Liberty of London** is a must. The building is sublime, with the most gorgeous Gothic architecture and patina. **3. It's not a trip without a visit to Harrods.** You can get literally anything there. **4. I love Alfie's Antique Market**—a building full of little shops and surrounding streets with shops. It's packed with heavenly finds. I spend almost an entire day there whenever I'm in London. **5. The Conran Shop** is another favorite. I love going to the flagship location in Chelsea. They always have something new and outside the box.



scandinavia

8
BLONDE THAT
BINDS



Los Angeles-based interiors and product designer Jill Sorensen may have left her Swedish upbringing behind in terms of miles traveled, but she continues to embrace the country's sophistication and simplicity in her fun and quirky home projects all over the U.S. Here, she sits down with *Luxe* to give us a Swedish design history lesson. jillsorensen.com

Favorite Swedish designers past and present: I'm a fan of King Gustav III. He was a Swedish king in the late 1700s who was obsessed with design, and during his reign, he created the style of furniture that's the most famous in the country today: Gustavian. I also love Josef Frank, who designed the amazing Swedish Tenn fabrics that are like pieces of art.

What do you love most about Swedish design? I love all things Gustavian, which is

basically a simplified country version of Louis XVI style: the distressed furniture, white-painted floors, etc. Because of the lack of sunlight (only four hours or so a day in the winter time), Swedes are experts at adding brightness to their interiors with pastel walls and white interiors.

Best shops to visit in Stockholm: You'll find the most incredible fabrics imaginable at the beautiful Svenskt Tenn in Stockholm; it was originally founded in 1924, and it never fails to impress. I'm also always surprised at the things I find at Bukowskis auction house. It has incredible antiques up for grabs and is surprisingly affordable. Otherwise, blocket.se is also one of my favorite little secrets: It's a resale site that is very popular in Sweden. You can find amazing things for next to nothing in your local area!

9
MAIN COURSE

The Finnish brand Marimekko has made a name for itself in the U.S. with a bold and colorful range of introductions across the fashion, textile and home arenas, and it's easy to see why. Proof positive: the dreamy watercolor palette of the compulsively mix-and-matchable Sääpäiväkirja salad and dinner plates available now. us.marimekko.com



10
ring TRUE

Swedish native-turned-New York and Palm Beach mainstay, Lars Bolander shares what keeps him going back to his homeland year after year: "What I love most about Sweden and Swedish design is its simplicity. The country's sense of beauty is so uncomplicated: It's all very pale with lots of neutral colors, grays and whites, and dove blue. I have a vacation home in a small village there with great history: As little as 50 years ago, the town telephonist lived downstairs. There was still just one phone in the whole village, and she would have to ring bells attached to people's homes with string to alert them to a call!" larsbolander.com

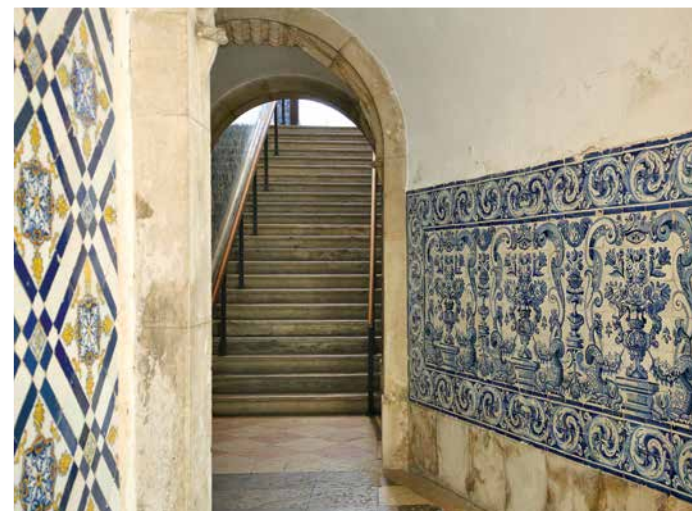
THIS PAGE: BLONDE THAT BINDS PHOTO: COURTESY JILL SORESEN. RING TRUE PHOTO: COURTESY LARS BOLANDER. MAIN COURSE PHOTOS: COURTESY MARIMEKKO. OPPOSITE: TRAVELOGUE PHOTOS: CATHERINE BAILEY.

postscript



11
TRAVELOGUE

ON THE ROAD WITH CATHERINE BAILEY, CREATIVE DIRECTOR, HEATH CERAMICS.



▲ LISBON, PORTUGAL

Part of researching tile for the promotion of our latest book, *Tile Makes the Room: Good Design from Heath Ceramics*, this trip grew out of our fascination with places like Portugal, with cities and regions with layers of history that's been preserved and respected.

National Tile Museum There's such a rich heritage of handcrafted tile in this country that they opened a museum dedicated to it (above) and set it in a former convent that dates back to 1509. The reverence for tile, a material that we so often overlook, filled us with awe.

Palácio Ramalhete This hotel (shown at right) was an oasis of calm. There was gorgeous tile wainscoting everywhere, which was our favorite touch. We love hotels like this: intimate places (this one only has 12 rooms) with deep history.



▲ VIENNA, AUSTRIA

We were invited to speak at the Monocle Quality of Life conference and took the chance to go to a place we'd been dreaming and planning on going to anyway. And we weren't disappointed thanks to the classic buildings, wonderful design heritage, and great things going on culturally and entrepreneurially.

Augarten Porcelain Factory Wow! This factory (above) is such a far cry from ours in California. We love that the owners of the company appreciated their staff so much that they created this beautiful place for them to work. We think the same way: that great work comes from great work environments. We just have a different style!



▲ GUNILLABERG, SWEDEN

Tage Andersen's home (above), far from any major town, is an amazing work of art—and a working farm. The villa and gardens were created by Andersen, himself, a maverick florist and artist. It was designed almost as an art installation, but, again, with a farm, so it's pleasing aesthetically but not at all precious. These trees were something that Andersen must have envisioned as many as 20 years ago; it's taken that long to become what they are. heathceramics.com