

THE LITTLE BLACK BOOK OF London fabric shops

WITH A GROWING NUMBER OF EMPORIUMS, THE CAPITAL'S FINEST CLOTH SHOPS ALLOW YOU TO EXPLORE AND BE CARRIED AWAY BY PATTERNS, TEXTURES AND COLOURS, WRITES ARABELLA YOUENS



TICKING ALL THE BOXES
Main image: This living room is decked out in Designer's Guild's verdant Karakusa print in Emerald from the new Ikebana collection. Opposite, clockwise from top: Blue Ikat by Susie Atkinson; Phoebe voile by Penny Morrison; new shades added to Rose Uniacke's fabric range; a Mayfair boutique hotel bedroom designed by Juliette Byrne; Bernie De Le Cuona's latest fabric collection; Thick Stripe in Charcoal and Red by Susie Atkinson



The fabric-buying experience in the capital is book-ended by the two great destinations: Pimlico Road and the Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour – and there's plenty to explore in between. As the result of recent investment by Grosvenor Estates, the former has become a leading destination of high-end interior design and antique showrooms. Meanwhile, the latter is the largest of its kind in Europe. The choices are as enormous as they are daunting, which is where the expert eyes of interior designers are so often required to help curate ideas.

PRINTS, STRIPES AND WEAVES

Robert Kime (190-192 Ebury Street, SW1) remains one of the most respected names in decorating and antique dealing. The Pimlico Road shop of the late decorator to King Charles is the best place to view his trove of fabric designs which are favourites with interior designers. Lucy Cunningham recently mixed and matched a number of his stripes for a project across a sofa, armchair and ottoman with great success. "They blend and work so well together," she says. Meanwhile, Henriette von Stockhausen, creative director of VSP Interiors, believes it's almost impossible to go wrong with any of his small-scale designs: in her words, "They're brilliant". robertkime.com

Howe (36 Bourne Street, SW1) is also a firm favourite among decorators, thanks to its nostalgic collection of prints and dependable collection of tickings. howelondon.com

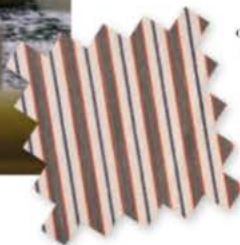
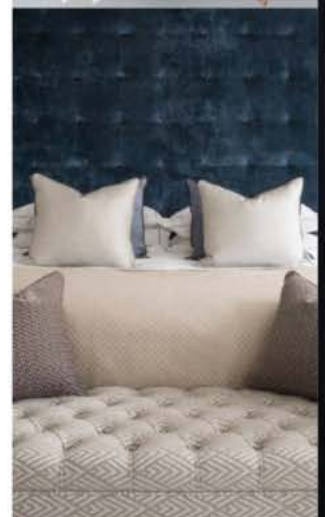
Nearby is Lulu Lytle's **Soane** (50-52 Pimlico Road) where the fabrics are all inspired by the motifs and colours found in Eastern Mediterranean and North African fabrics. Elephantine, a scaled chevron repeat, and the Scrolling Fern print are two designs recommended by Kate Guinness. soane.co.uk

For a more off-beat interior look, the Anglo-Swedish designer **Beata Heuman** (188 Hammersmith Road, W6) continues to expand her own lively range of prints, checks and vertical patterns; she's just added Nettle to her eclectic range. beataheuman.com

CONTEMPORARY AND TRANSITIONAL

Designer's Guild (267-277 Kings Road, SW3) is a London decorating legend. In business for over 50 years, it specialises in the design and wholesale of fabrics and wallcoverings under the helm of the vibrant Tricia Guild. This year's spring/summer collection is called Ikebana, which means flower arrangement in Japanese. "I love the symbolism behind it – heaven, earth and humanity," explains Guild. designersguild.com

Nicola Harding, who's soon to launch her own range of fabrics woven in the UK with linen and cotton, cites **Vanderhurd** (17 Portobello Road, W11) as one of her most regular haunts. "Christine's tailored designs and geometric prints have a feminine twist, and she has an exquisite flair for colour," she explains. "Various prints are overworked with stitching for a particularly special" >>





ONES TO SWATCH

Clockwise from above left: Kate Guinness used Claremont's Sevilla print as a wallcovering in her design of this Islington pied à terre; Juliette Byrne decked this Kensington townhouse out in neutrals; Nettle by Beata Heuman; Magda by Penny Morrison; Roses by Bennison Fabrics

effect, and they work well in any setting whether it's traditional or contemporary." vanderhurd.com

Romo, the family-run fabric house with a showroom in the Design Centre dccb.co.uk pretty much covers all bases, from checks and stripes to country-house florals—and much more in between. It's why it's a go-to destination for the decorator Noor Charchafehi, founder of Celine Interiors. "I've been using them in our projects for years as they offer incredible quality," she explains. romo.com

NEUTRALS AND TEXTURED FABRICS

De Le Cuona's showroom (44 Pimlico Road) is a haven of elegance. The South African designer has an innate instinct for natural fibres and artisanal yarns, especially linen, wool and silk. Juliette Byrne is a fan and often uses Bernie De Le Cuona's designs for curtains in her projects. delecuona.com

Holly Hunt (20 Grafton Street, W1) is a "high-quality staple" for upholstery fabrics along with a large range of leathers, adds Byrne. "They have unique textured plains which provide a sense of London glamour that many clients love." hollyhunt.com

The architectural interior designer and furniture dealer **Rose Uniacke** (76 Pimlico Road, SW1)

has recently added to her fabric collection made up of characteristically restrained contrasting colours, composition blends and elevated weaves. rosuniacke.com

TIMELESS DESIGNS

Set in the heart of Chelsea and established more than 90 years ago, **Claremont** (35 Elystan Street, SW3) is a wholesaler of specialist textiles which—despite never having advertised—is a firm favourite among the top interior designers including Max Rollitt, Kate Guinness and Susie Atkinson, who recommends their quality alongside the timeless designs. "I've used them for many years and never tire of them," explains the decorator, who has recently expanded her own fabric collection with ikats and stripes. claremontfurnishing.com

Bennison Fabrics (16 Holbein Place, SW1), another Pimlico Road district favourite, is famous for hand-drawn and hand-printed designs based on antique textiles. Nicola Harding particularly recommends the blue-and-white florals on an interesting mix of base cloths—they are "second to none". bennisonfabrics.com

For classic designs, **The Fabric Collective** (9 Langton Street, SW10) is worth a venture. The showroom houses designs by the likes of Penny Morrison and her daughter, Sarah Vanrenen. And while you're on Langton Street, check out **Guy Goodfellow** at number 13. His collection has evolved from bespoke fabric designs created for his interior projects over the past ten years and more. thefabriccollective.com; guygoodfellow.com **B**



PHOTOGRAPHER: JAMES HIBBLE; JAMES HIBBLE FOR THE LONDON MAGAZINE



ONES TO SWATCH Clockwise from above

left: Kate Guinness used Claremont's Sevilla print as a wallcovering in her design of this Islington pied à terre; Juliette Byrne decked this Kensington townhouse

effect, and they work well in any setting whether it's traditional or contemporary." vanderhurd.com

Romo, the family-run fabric house with a showroom in the Design Centre (dcch.co.uk) pretty much covers all bases, from checks and stripes to country-house florals—and much more in between. It's why it's a go-to destination for the decorator Noor Charchafchi, founder of Celine Interiors. "I've been using them in our projects

has recently added to her fabric collection made up of characteristically restrained contrasting colours, composition blends and elevated weaves. roseuniacke.com

TIMELESS DESIGNS

Set in the heart of Chelsea and established more than 90 years ago, **Claremont** (35 Elystan Street, SW3) is a wholesaler of specialist textiles which – despite never