

STYLE

Words by Elizabeth Clarke

The key to creating glamorous living spaces and dreamy bedrooms you'll want to linger in all morning? Wallpaper – a classic wall covering that adds surprise to any space.

“Wallpaper is a powerful tool for creating a layered, curated interior,” says designer Kate Walker. “It forms the backdrop that connects other elements, from timber floors and stone finishes to lighting and upholstery.”

Wallpaper's evolution allows exciting creativity. Floral-covered ceilings to fancifully wrapped spaces, it is a decorator's secret weapon for transporting you to a magical forest or an exotic safari.

“It's about the story, layering and connection, and when chosen this way, wallpaper becomes an artwork in itself,” says Jessica Gombault from Alexandra Kidd Interior Design.

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THE ART OF WALLPAPER

Wallpaper is back in style, bringing bold patterns, rich textures and immersive design.

Design insight:
Thomas Hamel says botanical and organic motifs remain timeless.

ANSON SMART



SEAN FENNESSY

Left: Gable House by Studio Doherty has a bold floral wallpaper on the ceiling.

Right: Yasmine Ghoniem has added textured wallpaper to elevate joinery.



ANSON SMART

Adding tactile wallpaper to cabinetry is also great for elevating joinery.

“We’ve clad wardrobe doors in embossed vinyl and raffia weave wallpaper,” Ghoniem says. “I like the idea of highly textural elements connecting you to moments and slowing you down through the sensation of touch.”

LOOKING UP

If you can peel your eyes away from the walls, don’t forget to look up. Wallpapered ceilings add a layer of drama and surprise.

“Wallpaper also helps cabinetry blend into a room and is great with modern two-pack finishes,” Walker says.

Paper your bathrooms with cool vinyl wallpapers and try wallpapering the backs of bookcases for high impact.

THE NEW PAINT?

With today’s designs ranging from hand-painted murals to grasscloth, is wallpaper the new paint?

“Absolutely!” Walker says. “Wallpaper offers more creative freedom than paint because it introduces pattern, texture, and atmosphere. It has the power to ... set the tone of a room.”

So, does that mean we can bring back the single accent wall trend from the early 2000s? According to Doherty, it’s best left there.

“An accent wall makes a room feel disjointed, so we prefer to commit and wrap the whole room,” she says. ■

“Wallpaper is a powerful tool for creating a layered, curated interior.” *Kate Walker*

SIZE MATTERS

Nature continues to inspire designers, who are gravitating more than ever to texture and craft.

“Botanical and organic motifs remain timeless and there’s a move toward large-scale, expressive designs that feel more like art,” says designer Thomas Hamel. These large-scale wallpaper murals inspired by historic frescoes, landscapes and storytelling create an immersive experience and unlike small prints, become the focal point.

“Mural wallpapers need more customisation to suit each wall, but the result is striking,” says designer Mardi Doherty.

If murals aren’t your style, don’t worry – florals remain a favourite, while bold colours, prints, and layered patterns continue to trend.

“Forget the twee wallpapers of your granny’s house; wallpaper today can be geometric or painterly, abstract or illustrative,” says designer Kate Challis.

SET THE TONE

Designer Yasmine Ghoniem of YSG suggests using wallpaper as the foundation of a space.

“Avoid laying carpet, so you can add the right tempo of colour and pattern with a rug,” she says. “If the wallpaper pattern is a large motif, then scale down the pattern on the curtains and vice versa. Alternate the colours so that the

wallpaper and curtains aren’t matching, otherwise it’ll feel claustrophobic.”

TEXTURE FOR ELEVATED SPACE

Textural wallpaper creates a quiet beauty while capturing light and breaking the monotony of plain walls, Gombault says: “For example, soft moire wallpaper behind heavy linen drapery makes it feel curated rather than formulaic.”

MICHELLE WILLIAMS



ARMELLE HABIB



Right: Kate Challis believes wallpaper today can be geometric, abstract or illustrative.

Far right: Kate Walker recommends using wallpaper to add texture, pattern and atmosphere.