

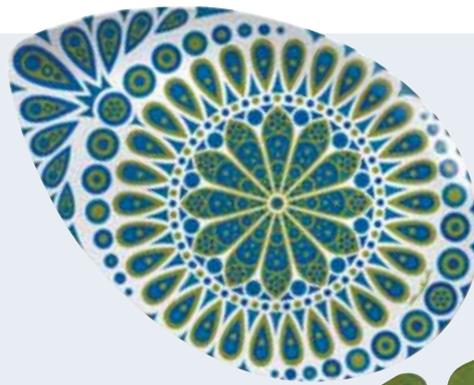
powerful patterns

Layering textures and patterns to create dimension will be huge this year, according to designer Sarah Richardson. Nature-inspired patterns, such as birch-tree bark, birds and flowers, and repetitive geometric shapes, will take centre stage.



A set of framed bamboo prints from **Linea Marketing** is a great way for consumers to incorporate natural elements into their interiors.

Geometric prints are a staple for designer **Jonathan Adler**, whose Happy Home Mod Peacock platter from **Precidio** is shown here.



This accent chair from **Reemka Imports** is a great example of how powerful geometric patterns can be on furniture.



Leaf-cutout tablemats from **Torre & Tagus Designs** illustrate the trend toward nature-inspired patterns and shapes.



inside the trends

Acclaimed design expert Sarah Richardson shares her trend predictions for 2008. By Amy Tokic

touchy-feely textures



A sparkly chandelier-print pillow from **Merben**.

If something looks good, but feels bad, it'll never sell, says Sarah. It needs to look good and feel great. Touch is a powerful sense and products with texture make a strong statement in the home. Mother-of-pearl, chunky knits and sparkly sequins will be a hit with consumers in 2008. If you add this trend to your inventory, stock up on accent pillows and throws – they're a relatively low-cost way for your customers to seasonally change their décor.

The luxuriously soft and tactile Knotting Hill throw from **Merben**.



ethnic influences

It's no mystery why ethnic influences are trending up – Canadians are exposed to a multitude of intermingling cultures. According to Sarah, fabric is where we'll see this trend making a strong appearance with bright colours and graphic patterns. Hand-woven carpets, high-polished and lacquered furniture, and antique Asian pieces will also be in high-demand.

Culturally rich fabrics, such as these Indian block-print linens from **Envi Designer Concepts**, will make a strong appearance in 2008.



grey is the new beige

Neutrals will always be important, says Sarah, but beige is out; grey is the new neutral. "People got really sick of beige and were looking for a new neutral," says her design partner Thomas Smythe. Grey is a wonderful neutral because it pairs up beautifully with popular colours like robin's egg blue, lemon yellow and other citrus hues. Combining grey with these bright colours results in a space, or store, that's pretty and fresh.

Muti & Co. is offering an array of home accent pieces in the new neutral hue: grey.



it's easy being green

Reusing materials is a popular way to go green. Pictured here are stools from **Shiraleah** (distributed by David Youngson & Assoc.) made from reclaimed railroad tracks.

There's never been a greater consumer demand for green and ethically-made products, says Sarah. In fact, it's more than a trend – consumers are making "green" a lifestyle. And, they don't mind paying a bit more for products that are eco-friendly, fairtrade and well-made. Green products are this century's ultimate feel-good purchase.



Consumers are gravitating toward eco-friendly products, such as recycled paper goods like the ones shown here from **Mirage**.



At the recently held CGTA Gift Show in Toronto, **Sarah Richardson**, host of *Design Inc.* and *Sarah's House* on HGTV, and her partner-in-design Thomas Smythe, offered retailers valuable advice on how to incorporate the hottest styles into their stores. Following trends can be time-consuming and confusing, but the key is to sell what you love, says Sarah. Sift through the trendy products and stock your shelves with items that reflect your store's style. With that in mind, here are the trends this design power house predicts will be hot in 2008.

For details on the companies mentioned here, turn to supplier listings on page 32.

wood-n't you know it

This year the pendulum will swing from dark to light wood tones, predicts Sarah. In line with the movement toward nature-inspired patterns, exposing the light, natural tone of wood will be a focus for designers. Pieces that highlight the unique spiral of a wood's grain and its rough edges will be popular. Also look for white-washed and bleached woods, and items made from driftwood, elm and teak. Specifically, the log side table will be a hot item this year.



The Maka bench from **Sodi Designs**.

2008 TREND SNAPSHOT

- GEOMETRIC AND NATURE-INSPIRED PATTERNS
- TEXTURE
- ETHNIC INFLUENCES
- LIGHT WOOD TONES
- RETRO '80S COLOURS
- NEUTRAL GREYS
- GREEN AND ETHICALLY-PRODUCED PRODUCTS ■

miami vice

Thanks to Crocket and Tubbs, lemon yellow, robin's egg blue and pastel pink were the must-wear colours of the '80s. We're not heading back to that decade (thankfully), but its hues are back in a brighter interpretation, a trend that will display beautifully in the spring and summer months. "You don't have to use the colours all together," suggests Sarah. "Pick the ones that work best for your store."

Brightly-hued cups and saucers from **HRS Enterprises** play up the trend toward retro '80's colours.

