



Courtesy of Atlantic Wallpaper & Décor

Wallpaper can produce the effect of a mural.

Wallpaper roars back onto décor scene

BY JANA SOELDNER DANGER
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Wallpaper has made a roaring comeback in the world of decor. After falling out of favor a decade or two ago, it is now a go-to decorating tool for many homeowners and interior designers. It can create stunning looks just about everywhere in a home, including main living spaces, bathrooms and even closets. Some wallpapers are still pre-pasted, with adhesive on the back. With others, paste is applied to either the back of the paper or to the wall.

A BAD RAP

“Wallpaper had a bad rap for a long time,” said Tim Quinn of Atlantic Wallpaper & Décor in Pompano Beach. “It was difficult to shop for — you had to go through a library of books to find what you wanted — it was difficult to install and impossible to remove. Then factories started to create products that have better substrates like strong fibers instead of paper. They’re very stable, and they started taking hold throughout the world. They’re easy to hang — they go on the wall like butter — and they’re easy to remove.”

“A lot of manufacturers were trying to replicate paint effects and stucco,” said Alan Kemp, head of marketing from Graham & Brown, a UK-based company that manufactures wallpaper and sells all over the world. “Now there’s variety and quality of design. In the past, people felt like wallpaper was a life sentence, but it’s very easy to



Courtesy of Atlantic Wallpaper & Décor

Many different designs are available.

change now.”

“When you use wallpaper, the whole room changes,” said Fanny Aouizerate, owner of The Wallpaper Store in Miami. “There are so many designs and patterns and textures. You can also do large-scale applications.” Wallpaper fell out of favor when plain white walls became popular, said Michael Garvey, merchant of organization and wall décor at The Home Depot. But that’s changed. “Over the past few years, wallpaper has been making a huge comeback into being a popular design trend,” he said. “More homeowners are wanting to bring wallpaper back into their homes for a new and unique touch.”

Why not just use paint? “Painting is messy,” Aouizerate said. “With wallpaper, in one hour you can

have a wall done without the mess.”

SHOPPING

Shopping is easier, too. At Atlantic Wallpaper, products are displayed in creative ways throughout the showroom — some are even draped into dresses. “We’re making wallpaper fun again,” Quinn said. “But books still exist.” Samples similar to paint chips — but larger — are available to take home. “You have to see what something looks like with your own lighting, fabrics and furniture,” Quinn said. Graham & Brown offers an app that uses an individual’s smart phone camera and an augmented reality program to superimpose different papers on a homeowner’s walls. “A lot of people have trouble visualizing what a wallpaper would look like,” Kemp said. “Technology helps with that. You can also look on social media or visit websites or online magazines for inspiration. There have never been more opportunities for visual inspiration.”

When you think you’ve found the right paper: “Pin a sample to the wall and live with it for a few days,” Kemp said. “Look at it at different times of the day to see the light.” Think about which wall you’re going to do, Kemp added. “It will be a major focal point, so think about which wall you want to draw attention to.”

“Be sure to use colors and patterns that complement the shape, size and décor of a room,” Garey said. “Darker colors make large rooms seem smaller and offer a cool, relaxed

feel; light colors make the room look bigger and create a sense of warmth. Floral or repeated patterns hide bumps, nicks and other imperfections, and can be used to highlight smaller areas. Large patterns create a cozy, intimate environment; small patterns create a sense of spaciousness and call attention to overall color schemes. Vertical stripes make walls and ceilings look higher, while horizontal stripes elongate narrow rooms.”

TEXTURE’S THE THING

Texture is a major attraction, Quinn said. Manufacturers are incorporating materials such as glass beads, cork, mica, slate, embroidery, rope, metallics and faux skins like snake, ostrich and stingray into wallpapers. “You might have a background and two layers of texture on top,” Quinn said. “Part of the reason the industry is coming back is that manufacturers are making so many unique products.” Some applications include painting or whitewashing over the wallpaper. “The wallpaper behind the paint provides texture,” Quinn said.

It’s also possible to reproduce a photo, painting or drawing digitally to create your own design Aouizerate said. “Wallpaper can be art,” she added. “But instead of just having it on canvas, you can have it on the whole wall.”

Interior designer Eloise Kubli, owner of Collective Construction and Design in Plantation, has continued to design with wallpaper throughout her career,

even when others were avoiding it. “I’ve always used wallpaper,” she said. “It’s a very quick way to update a room. It’s durable and beautiful and has a tactile surface I can’t achieve with paint. It has depth and dimension, and creates a unique look. And so many now are hand painted by talented artisans.”

Wallpaper can create unexpected drama on a ceiling, Kubli said. “It gives so much depth and character.” “We’re doing a lot of ceilings — coffers and trays with gold and silver leaf and shiny metallics,” Quinn said. He also does a ceiling application that involves putting a frame around the perimeter of a room, tucking a vinyl membrane into it and applying heat. “It pulls it tight and it looks like glass,” Quinn said. “It makes the ceiling look higher, and it reflects whatever your view is. You can also build in lighting and ceiling fans.”

Other ideas: “Cover the island in your kitchen in a fun, peel-and-stick wallpaper print,” Garvey said. “Smarten up a bookcase. Put a bold, peel-and-stick wallpaper design behind the shelves. Take your staircase to a new level. Cover the risers with peel-and-stick wallpaper in an unexpected pattern.”

TRENDS

What’s trending? Gone (for the most part) are the timid designs and smooth papers of yesteryear. “We’re not selling flowers and ivy trails anymore,” Quinn said. “Now people want interesting textures. They love shim-

mer and sparkle and go or the wow factor. They also like geometrics and botanicals like banana leaves.”

At Graham & Brown, flowers are still popular — but often in stunning, dramatic patterns. “Bold florals, big leaf prints and succulents that bring the outside in,” Kemp said. “Also geometrics. And although there are still local nuances, we’re starting to see similar tastes and trends across the globe.”

“A lot of Latin Americans love linen,” Aouizerate said. “Color and texture, but no pattern.”

“Mica and capiz shells are gorgeous in Florida homes,” Kubli said.

DO IT RIGHT

If you are hiring a professional installer, check references and read online reviews. A homeowner who wants to do the job him- or herself should be careful to prepare correctly.

“Turn off the power before removing faceplates and socket covers,” Garvey said. “Use a sponge or cloth and a gentle cleanser to remove dirt and dust from the walls, and allow them to completely dry.”

Get rid of bumps and imperfections. “Many walls are knock-down or orange peel,” Quinn said. “They’ll need to be smoothed with a skim coat or covered with liner paper.”

A BEAUTIFUL DESIGN ADDITION

Wallpaper can be a creative and attractive addition to a home’s décor. “It has an inherent beauty,” Kubli said.

“The right paper doesn’t go out of style.”



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World-Class Art Fueling Wynwood’s Commercial Growth

Arts and culture can reinvigorate neighborhoods and increase property values, and there’s no better local example than the Wynwood neighborhood of Miami. Wynwood has transformed from a quiet warehouse district to one of America’s most coveted tracts of real estate.

Wynwood, which attracts more than 2 million visitors annually, has experienced a boom in office space since 2018, part of Miami’s overall office construction boom that is the largest since 2009. Tourists and new residents are driving the development in Wynwood.

Wynwood is now an example for neighboring neighborhoods going through similar transformations. From Little Haiti, to Allapattah, Wynwood has set the pace for progress.

An internationally renowned destination, the Wynwood Arts District contains over 70 galleries, museums and collections. Each winter, thousands flock to Wynwood during the annual Art Basel Miami Beach Show.

Wynwood’s metamorphosis into a top destination for food, art, and retail can be traced back to 2004-2005 when late Miami property developer Tony Goldman purchased more than 25 properties. At the time, Wynwood warehouses were selling for just \$40 to \$100 a square foot. Goldman had led a rebirth of New York’s SoHo district and South Beach, and wanted to do the same in Wynwood.

In 2008, Goldman allowed a Soho artist to paint a mural on one of his Wynwood warehouses.

Miami’s infamous Wynwood Walls cultural center is currently celebrating its 10-year anniversary with a massive retrospective group exhibition featuring past and present works.

Wynwood Walls began 10 years ago as an initiative to revitalize Miami’s warehouse district through street art and graffiti. Since its inception, the art hub has featured work from top street artists.

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Courtesy of Graham & Brown

A feature wall covered with dark paper can add drama to a room.