



# Hot seats

*Recent chair design and antique chairs to invest in now*

## Arts and Crafts

Designers such as Ernest Gimson, Edward Barnsley and other members of the Cotswold school are good to invest in now, recommends decorative antiques dealer Holly Johnson. Look out for Gordon Russell's designs in the loan exhibition at the (BADA) British Antiques Dealer's Association fair from 9th–15th March in Duke of York Square, London (020 7589 6108; badafair.com).

## 18th and 19th-century mahogany

'Standard mahogany chairs from the Georgian and Victorian periods are selling very cheaply and they're good chairs,' says antiques expert Judith Miller. 'Fashions are cyclical and I'm sure they will go back up in value.'

## 1980s designers

'They're not easy to come by but chairs by pupils of John Makepeace and other 1980s designers are an emerging market that we are investing in,' says Holly. 'Look out for Alan Peters designs – he's not as well known as Makepeace but he still made beautiful pieces.'



One of the chairs designed by George Walton and Charles Rennie Mackintosh for Miss Cranston's Glasgow tearooms

\* See whose chairs our experts tip as the icons of tomorrow at: [homesandantiques.com/newchairdesigners](http://homesandantiques.com/newchairdesigners)

## WHERE TO SEE

- \* Dr Susan Weber Gallery, Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London, SW7 2RL. 020 7942 2000; [vam.ac.uk](http://vam.ac.uk)
- \* Vitra Design Museum, Charles-Eames-Straße 2, 79576 Weil am Rhein, Germany. +49 7621 702 3200; [design-museum.de](http://design-museum.de)
- \* Design Museum, Shad Thames, London, SE1 2YD. 020 7403 6933; [designmuseum.org](http://designmuseum.org)
- \* Wycombe Museum, Priory Avenue, High Wycombe, HP13 6PX. 01494 957210; [facebook.com/wycombemuseum](http://facebook.com/wycombemuseum)
- \* The Geffrye, 136 Kingsland Road, London, E2 8EA. 020 7739 9893; [geffrye-museum.org.uk](http://geffrye-museum.org.uk)

## WHAT TO READ

- \* *1000 Chairs* by Charlotte and Peter Fiell (Taschen)
- \* *Chairs* by Judith Miller (Conran)
- \* *Chairs: 1000 Masterpieces of Modern Design, 1800 to the Present Day* by Charlotte Fiell (Goodman Books)
- \* *Chair* by Anne Massey (Reaktion Books)
- \* *The Chair: Rethinking Culture, Body and Design* by Galen Craz (WW Norton & Co)

## BUYING YOUR ANTIQUE CHAIR

*Our experts pass on their insider tips to ensure you find a lasting, and affordable, seat*

- Look for originality. 'You don't want things that have been badly restored or altered,' says antiques dealer Peter Woodward. 'An old dealers' trick used to be to extend sets of chairs by making new ones out of parts of the others.'
- Think twice about chairs that may need restoring. 'Restoration is expensive,' says Judith Miller. 'Factor it in as it could turn out more than the value of the chair.'
- Check for sturdiness as chairs need to withstand a lot of wear and tear. 'Before you buy your chair, sit on it, wiggle it, turn it upside down and check the bottom,' says Judith.
- Look out for woodworm. 'Damage from woodworm is a big concern and is the major reason for parts having been replaced,' says Peter.
- Buy the best you can afford. 'Go for the best quality of construction and material for your budget,' says Holly Johnson. 'Even if it seems more expensive than modern design, it will last much longer.'
- Choose a standard style and buy individual pieces. 'Dealers find it hard to shift single chairs,' says Judith. 'By choosing a common design such as a Queen Anne dining chair, you can have a cheaper harlequin set (a set of chairs that are similar in style but vary in details).'