

# The little black book of interiors style

Where do industry insiders head to find unique homeware and gifts? Some of our favourite designers, bloggers and tastemakers let us in on their go-to places. By Olivia Lidbury



**Kate Watson-Smyth**

*Interiors blogger and author (madaboutthehouse.com)*

I've come across some brilliant black-owned businesses since co-founding the Design for Diversity pledge [which helps to promote under-represented communities in the design industry]. One of them is Grain & Knot. Owner Sophie makes the most beautiful hand-carved wooden vases, pots and brushes (tip: many items say 'sold out' but she updates the stock every couple of weeks). And through

Instagram, I've just discovered @in\_casa\_by\_paboy, who makes the most exquisite cushion covers in Italian cotton to order. He's a tailor from The Gambia seeking asylum in Naples and I love the idea of supporting his creativity. For textiles, I really like Poodle & Blonde, particularly the Mazzo collection, as it features the sorts of colours I like. I'd pair the drum lampshade with a resin base from Pooky (pooky.com).

Rekha Dambar

**Right** Similar wooden vases from £45, **Grain & Knot** (grainandknot.com). **Below** Mazzo drum lampshade, £102, **Poodle & Blonde** (poodleandblonde.com). Cushion cover, from around £62, **In Casa by Paboy** (instagram.com/in\_casa\_by\_paboy/)



**Above** Christmas 'eggs', £18 each, **Choosing Keeping** (choosingkeeping.com). **Below** Swirl candles, from £6 each, **The Edition 94** (theedition94.com)



**Beata Heuman**  
*Interior designer (beataheuman.com)*

Tucked away in Covent Garden, Choosing Keeping is the most magical stationery shop. It has the best selection of Christmas baubles in London (also available online). I feel transported back to my childhood when I'm browsing. It also sells smaller brands along with beautiful pots by Mochaware and pieces by John Derian. I bought myself a wonderful paperweight with a flowering dandelion set in it (from £40). Another place I rate is The Edition 94; founder India Whalley has such an interesting and fun selection of pieces. I adore the Swirl candles, which come in an array of colours and sizes, and the ceramic-vegetable knife rests (£13.50 each) – perfect for the tabletop. I'll also often pick up furniture for my clients from here: India will find old wooden furniture and have it lacquered in really bold colours.

Interiors

**Below** Fountain lamp by Viola Lanari, £648, **Porta Romana** (portaromana.com). Hand-woven jute bag, £42, **Maison Bengal** (maisonbengal.co.uk)



**Lucinda Chambers**

*Co-founder of lifestyle brand Collagerie (collagerie.com)*

I first came across Maison Bengal when The Conran Shop had a wall of its striped tote bags and I instantly fell in love. The brand also has a wonderful story: it supports women in Bangladesh through training them in handicraft and creating employment so that they can support their families. The colours and textures are fantastic – I have quite a few of these bags, and I also have their rugs liberally scattered around the house. I'm a huge fan of ceramics and lamps and I've recently discovered an irresistible combination of both at Porta Romana. It has an incredible array of choice and the styles are so unusual. Safe to say I've been saving up...



**Lonika Chande**

*Interior designer (lonikachande.com)*

My look is highly decorative and I lean towards block prints and glazed pottery, so I always check out Tinsmiths. It has lots of well-priced fabrics – and beautiful sheepskin hot-water-bottle covers. I've bought several of the Kilim cushions and the striking slipware pottery by Sean Miller is currently top of my wish list. I always pick up linen napkins from The Cloth Shop – they wash really well and make great gifts. At the opposite end of the aesthetic spectrum, Labour and Wait (labourandwait.co.uk) excels in enamel dishes and hardwares – I love pairing utilitarian items with something more intricate.



**Left** Linen napkins, £7 each, **The Cloth Shop** (theclothshop.net). **Below** Homeware, from £5.50 for a wooden spoon, **Tinsmiths** (tinsmiths.co.uk)



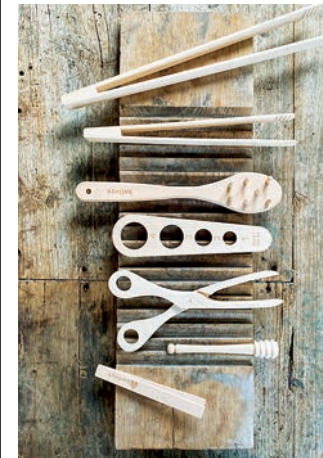
**Paula Sutton**

*Interiors blogger (hillhousevintage.com)*

When I started my own blog 10 years ago, I came across the beautifully written blog posts by interior designer Ben Pentreath, and then I discovered his shop, Pentreath & Hall. I've since collected his gold letter pots (I have three, spelling out HHV!), which are classic yet modern and fit in with any decor scheme. Another site I love for a treat is Fiona Finds. Laying a beautiful tabletop is something I've enjoyed doing for a long time and this site is a tablescaping dream! I'd describe the products as heirloom pieces – they feel timeless, things that you could pass on. I've currently got my eye on this hand-blown glass water jug.



**Right, from top** Wooden utensils, from £1 each, steel dustpans and brushes, £8.50 and £5.50, and Kitty sofa, from £2,575, all **Baileys** (baileyshome.com)



**Matilda Goad**

*Designer and creative consultant (matildagoad.com)*

If there's one shop where I get to the till and find I've picked up more than I need, it's Baileys. Combining beauty with functionality, it has such an irresistible selection of wooden utensils and brushes. A more extravagant purchase I'm eyeing up is one of the Chesterfield-style sofas, which are all handmade in the UK and come in a wide choice of linen colourways. Whenever I'm in east London, I like to check out Straw (strawlondon.co.uk), a tiny boutique on Columbia Road. It has a gorgeous edit of small pieces of vintage furniture, baskets and pressed-flower cards. It's one of those places where the curation and display is so inspiring; I'll be trawling the website while the shop is shut.



**Left** Bobble jug, £45, **Fiona Finds** (fionafinds.co.uk). Brush pot, £40, **Pentreath & Hall** (pentreath-hall.com)