

In Good Taste

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SLIP INTO THE SEASON



COOL COUTURE
SLIPCOVERS RECLAIM
THEIR REIGN OVER
SUMMER'S LIGHTWEIGHT
DRESS CODE, THIS
TIME WITH ALL THE
TAILORED TRIMMINGS.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRIA GIOVANNI/VENDOME PRESS.

Ruffled cotton canopies drape the dining chairs on designer Amanda Lindroth's seaside veranda in the Bahamas.

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 “When I want to *cut the fanciness* of a drawing room...I will work a slipcover into the space. There’s something *inherently summery* and more casual about them.”

—DESIGNER ISABEL LOPEZ-QUESADA



Striped and climbing-vine covers help relax and scale down Lopez-Quesada’s pavilion-like living room in Biarritz, France.

IN MADRID, summers are very hot. Growing up, I remember my grandmother removing all the carpets and covering the furniture—the Louis XVI chairs, the sofas, even the canapés—in cotton cloths, many with floral patterns, before leaving for the season,” says Spanish interior designer Isabel Lopez-Quesada. Today, that “more relaxed, gypsy look” finds a place in the homes of even her most formal clients, she notes, often with couture detailing like buttons, ties, and contrasting trimmings. “When I want to cut the fanciness of a drawing room, make it look a little

more real, I will work a slipcover into the space. There’s something inherently summery and more casual about them.”

They were, of course, born of the sun’s intense warmth. To protect delicate brocades and velvets from fading in the summer heat, homeowners and house managers as far back as the Middle Ages draped furniture in simple white covers. By the 19th and early 20th centuries, the light, quick-change canopies had become as much a signal of summer’s relaxed shift as seersucker suits had for clothing; in tony summer colonies, demand was so great that their suppliers became known



Nicky Haslam, whose English hunting lodge is shown here, recommends using antique fabrics for a “lived-in look.”

MAIN IMAGE: MIGUEL FLORES-VIANN/INTERIOR ARCHIVE; CHAIR DETAIL: SIMON UPTON/INTERIOR ARCHIVE X TRUNK ARCHIVE.

ENSEMBLE CAST

Seating's finely tailored wardrobe: seven custom slipcovers for scene-stealing occasional chairs



2

ELEGANT ARMOR
Protect prized pieces from daily wear, insects, and dust with full-body suiting that can be whisked off when guests arrive.

5

INFORMAL SUITING
Soften a formal Parsons chair with a rambling floral and kick pleats, a sofa detail that boasts a higher hem than other pleats.

6

VICTORIAN FRILLS
Balance a table's rigid geometry with tieback details on the seating, a feminine touch sure to put dinner guests at ease.

7

EPIC REVEALS
Pair bare seat backs with a dramatic cushion cover like this ruched linen, ideal for elegant yet simple silhouettes.

1

SULTRY SHEERS
Highlight a chair's strong architecture with a diaphanous fabric; contrasting trim gives it shape and definition.

3

OPEN NECKLINES
Let fine woodwork shine in slipcovers designed with shapely cutouts. Inverted corner pleats on the seat add volume and flounce.

4

POWER PLEATS
Mix high fashion with heft: A couture knife-pleated cotton or linen underskirt beneath a box cushion adds style and structure.

as summer millionaires. The de rigueur look continued until the 1950s and '60s brought experiments with then-high-tech materials like plastics and vinyls, pushing them out of vogue.

"But there's something so 'right now' about slipcovers," says Lopez-Quesada.

"Now that we are all at home more, we have to do more living in every room." The covers not only help with longevity of fabrics, but they bring welcome variety. "You can have a marvelous velvet sofa for winter and then start your spring off with a fresh white cotton one."

Across the Atlantic, Luther M. Quintana, Jr., of New York's Luther Quintana Upholstery agrees, even suggesting that the demand for slipcovers rivals that of traditional upholstery. "At this point, people want fabrics that feel as comfortable as their furniture sits," says

PHOTOGRAPHY: BECKY LUGART-STAYNER; STYLING: RACHAEL BURROW AND SARA CLARK

Quintana. "Upholstery has an inherent rigidity to it, and right now people are seeking more relaxed lines for their furnishings." He's accentuating classic forms like Marshall Field-style tub chairs with flowing, gown-like covers and loosely gathered, tailored skirts. "Some

1 Colefax And Fowler **Anise Trellis fabric**, to the trade; cowtan.com. • **Cambridge cord** with tape, to the trade; samuelandsons.com. • Mundus and J. & J. Kohn **Classic Bentwood chair**, \$4,800 for 8; lolofrenchantiques.com. 2 **235 Green Olive ikat fabric**, \$78 per yard; teixitsvicens.com. 3 **Dalton fabric**, to the trade; janeshelton.com. • **Chroma trim**, to the trade; fabricut.com. 4 **Iridee Blue fabric**, \$114 per yard; aletaonline.com. 5 **Maramaris fabric**, to the trade; martynlawrencebullard.com. 6 **Vita fabric**, to the trade; lisafinetextiles.com. • **Alix linen gimp trim**, to the trade; fschumacher.com. 7 Paolo Moschino for Nicholas Haslam **Palmyra fabric**, to the trade; leejofa.com. • **Cambridge cord** with tape, to the trade; samuelandsons.com. **ON THE WINDOW: Canterbury Sheet fabric**, to the trade; kerryjoycetextiles.com. • **Bronze 8-inch surface bolt**, \$154; houseofantiquehardware.com.



In Singapore, Elizabeth Hay uses a geometric jacquard (Pierre Frey) to cover a pair of armchairs.

A STRONG FINISH



Four custom closures with refined workmanship, inspired by those embraced by dapper couturiers



FROG CLOSURE

A highly ornamental fastener frequently used on 17th- and 18th-century military uniforms as well as Eastern dress



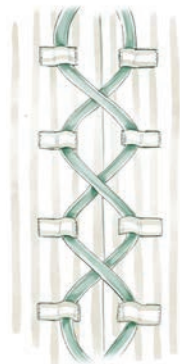
POINTED TABS

More utilitarian in appearance, these closures work well on fitted slipcovers with less frill, more tailored definition.



CORSETING

Like the back of a ball gown, the crisscross closure brings urbane showmanship to even the most basic slipcovers.



BUTTON LOOP

These tiny one-button closures keep hardware simple and discreet, similar to how it appears on the back of a blouse or skirt.



like the hem to puddle slightly in the style of Belgian-designer Axel Vervoordt," notes Quintana. He's also seen a sudden rush on box-pleat skirted detailings, which he attributes to recent projects by young Paris-based designer Fabrizio Casiraghi featuring generously sized track-arm sofas dressed with pert, welcoming

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covers that stand out against meticulously edited antiques. "Until this year, I'd never seen so many tassels and brushed-fringe trims come through our workshop or received so many requests for scalloped hems. After so much time in their homes, people are going for all the bells and whistles right now." ◆