

DECORATION

the ultimate in luxurious living ideas

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Parisian Pad
A CALL OF DESTINY

Symbolist
Omar El-Nagdi

a new
moon

Ehrlich Architects in Dubai

UAE - Dhs 15



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technical tips

Picture Perfect;
The bed head



Marie-Noëlle Swiderski, a design professional since 1993, set up the Blanchard Design House in Dubai in September 2006. Her aim "to comfort her soul with beauty".



It may seem that a bed, is a bed, is a bed... Such progress has been made in beds and mattresses however, that the options to choose from are dizzying in their added features and fantastic offerings. Beyond how the bed feels, one looks for that 'wow' factor and this needs to be provided by more public aspects of the bed. One easy aspect of the bed setting to focus on to ensure maximum impact, is the bed head treatment.

More traditionally, the headboard has been mainly an extension, if not an integral part of the bed. If the bed frame was made of carved wood, so was the headboard. If the frame was upholstered, or wrought iron, so was the headboard. If the idea is to use the headboard as a piece in its own right, antique fire grates or ornate balcony guard rails have been known to feature as free standing headboards behind elegant yet unassuming beds.

In the case of an upholstered headboard, whether quite plain or with stitching, buttoning, piping, one has to consider the constraints of the fabric chosen. Fabrics come in set width rolls and one needs to bear in mind the joint between two widths of fabric if the material has a preferred direction. The alternative is to 'railroad' the fabric, ie. to use it in the other direction so as to privilege the greater length available.

When choosing a fabric to recover a headboard some thought should be given to its practicality in terms of maintenance. As much as it is not a great cause for concern, a solid, light coloured, delicate fabric will be more likely to mark after some use, whereas a weave, a texture or a pattern is more likely to stand the test of time and use. Apart from these considerations, decisions to make are whether the upholstered board requires a timber frame or other structure or detail to finish it.



Beyond these rather straightforward options, one may choose to leave the bed to stand alone and treat the whole wall behind it in a striking finish, as a greater scale headboard. This can be as simple as painting the wall in a contrasting colour to the other room walls. It can entail papering it in a texture, pattern or colour that calls for immediate attention. Alternatively, the wall can be panelled with timber or upholstered in fabric or leather (either straight onto the surface of the wall or in padded sections). I have seen a whole wall behind a bed featuring fantastic nickel nail detailing to its perimeter, thus creating a wonderful jewellery box effect for the bed and its linen against it. The wall can also become the backdrop of a collection of photographs, mirrors, candelabra, a blown up image or formidable piece of art.



The height of a headboard will do much to identify its style. Lower to medium height headboards relate better to more traditional interiors, with voluptuously carved wooden frames in distressed patinas, or harmoniously proportioned regal padded boards with refined detailing in nailing, beading, single or double piping, cords and tassels. A high headboard lends itself well to more contemporary styles, with monumental headboards made of single sheets of dramatic veneer or solid woods, full heights of walls treated as statement backdrops to designer beds or the simplest yet most luxurious mattress, divan and bedding available. The bed becomes the work of art and the headboard its frame.

“The headboard can also become, more functionally, a piece of furniture, a natural extension to the back of a bed.”