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DEBBIE CAVIT
Seeking Out The Best

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DEBBIE CAVIT, Seeking Out The BEST

CAVIT & CO HAS nothing but the best when it comes to home furnishings, and this summer is no exception. With shipments arriving regularly from all over Europe, owner and managing director Debbie Cavit has a huge range of New Zealand-exclusive furnishings for a uniquely beautiful home.

The new Cavit Casual collection is being launched before Christmas, which brings the store's classic high-quality style at a

more affordable price point, perfect for holiday houses, family rooms and children's rooms. In addition, the company is handling some of the world's premier brands of indoor and outdoor furniture, with a recent acquisition being a retail world exclusive: outdoor furniture by Glyn Peter Machin, whose exquisitely crafted pieces are normally found only on luxury yachts.

Because Cavit is committed to offering exactly what suits the New Zealand lifestyle, she's also working with a Brazilian designer to create furniture that's specifically suited to the tastes of her clients, customised to provide contemporary top-quality style. Cavit will also have on display by early December, the first pieces from the Ed Cruikshank collection from Queenstown. Ed worked with David Linley in London and has a very good eye for design and quality. Cavit will be handling the Cruikshank range in Auckland. Cruikshank have a standard collection and also offer a complete custom design service, so

THE TRENDS FOR 2010, SAYS CAVIT, INCLUDE EARLY TO MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY DESIGN. "AMETHYST AND GRAPE OR AUBERGINE – ARE COMING THROUGH QUITE STRONGLY, AS WELL AS SOME BURNT ORANGE AND PISTACHIO – BUT OF COURSE THESE ARE INTERSPERSED WITH NEUTRALS."

please discuss your requirements. And to complement your new table, look no further than William Yeoward's table linen – again available in New Zealand only through Cavit & Co.

Other brands that are available include Baker and McGuire furniture from the USA, Baxter leather upholstery from Italy, Ralph Lauren Home furniture and accessories, William Yeoward crystal and glassware, Michael Aram accessories from New York, Lalique,

and Frette. Frette, bed linen is a bit of a success story for Cavit & Co, because it took two years to talk the brand into supplying the store – but Frette have been pleasantly surprised by the sales considering the size of the New Zealand market and the cost of the product, which starts at just under \$1000 for a bed set.

"Once people experience sleeping on Frette," says Cavit with a knowing smile, "it's hard to go back. It's a worthwhile investment in quality of

life – the last thing you are aware of as you fall to sleep, and the first thing you are aware of when you wake up!"

Debbie Cavit says that her store caters to those people who don't want their home to look as though it came from a catalogue, but instead want to reflect their own tastes and personality. "People who come to us know who they are," Cavit says, "and what they want to live with. We help them create the homes they've always wanted – homes which will stand the test of time."

Those homes, Cavit explains, aren't quick-turnaround properties for sale. Instead, they are permanent homes that reflect their owners' unique personalities and styles. "We have some of the nicest, most charming clients," says Cavit. "They are secure in their style and are always looking for interesting things. I set this business up 18 years ago and I've personally selected every range."

When she was looking for the perfect location for her store back in 1991, Cavit knew that she wanted to be within the triangle that is created by the three suburbs of Parnell, Remuera and Newmarket. The Blind Institute Building was going to be demolished but the company submitted a proposal to the institute's chairman about why he should allow Cavit & Co to rent out the space rather than tearing it down. Since then the building has become one of Parnell's premier spots for shopping and eating, with Cavit & Co occupying a stunning space that now includes the Ralph Lauren Home Collection next door. The commute from work to home is little more than a short walk, and she loves living and working in the heart of the city.

Debbie Cavit herself is also a Parnell devotee who has been living in the suburb for three years and loves the central location. A mum to two adult daughters, she uses her spare time to improve her golf and enjoy fly fishing: "the most relaxing activity I have ever experienced," she says. In addition she supports the YWCA Future Leaders program, the Michael Hill Violin Competition and provides a scholarship for a promising design student to continue to Tertiary education from Onehunga High School. "I would like to make a difference to people who need it most."

Travel is also an important part of Cavit's life, as she heads off to Europe twice a year and through to the USA twice a year to seek out the latest top-of-the range items for the store. Paris is one of her favourite cities and she singles out Sunday mornings as one of life's great treats: "Going up to Sacre Coeur to listen to the choir of approximately 50 nuns who sing like angels, eating crepes and then going out to Clingancourt to rummage through the antiques." Experiences like that are what make her job a joy rather than a chore.

"I've got an amazing job actually, it's fantastic!" she says with a laugh. "I'm always going to beautiful places, dealing with wonderful suppliers and looking for lovely interesting things and dealing with charming clients. It can be nerve-wracking because you've got to buy things that the public will want to buy. You also can't be so far ahead of the trends that nobody understands it!"

The trends for 2010, says Cavit, are more diverse than ever and include a growing appreciation for early to mid-twentieth century design. "Amethyst and grape or aubergine – are coming through quite strongly, as well as some burnt orange and pistachio – but of course these are interspersed with neutrals."

"In between the bolder colours," she adds, "people are looking for softening interiors. Minimalism is losing traction, with people moving away from sterile; monochrome interiors. They are using fabrics in brocade and damask, colour and richness, and the mixing of old and new."

With so many years of industry expertise, Cavit says that one big mistake that high-end homeowners make is choosing furniture that isn't of a quality which matches their house. "I think that some of the home DIY shows give people the wrong understanding of what they need to have in their home," she adds. "I so often see amazing homes and apartments filled with less than adequate furniture and accessories. The European standard of allowing 10 to



FROM THE BEST IN CASUAL FURNITURE TO THE BEST IN BED LINEN TO THE BEST IN OBJECTS D'ART – DEBBIE CAVIT LOVES HER JOB AS THE OWNER AND DESIGNER FOR CAVIT & CO.

15 percent of the house value on furnishing the home, to do justice to the overall investment, enables you to have a home which looks wonderful both inside and out – that's \$300,000 on furnishing a \$3 million house."

With over 50 ranges available to the Cavit & Co team, it's impossible to display even a fraction of the products in the spacious showroom at 547a Parnell Road or on their website www.cavitco.com. That's why Debbie Cavit emphasises the importance of talking to the knowledgeable staff about precisely what you're looking for.

"I have selected what I believe to be the best of type from around the world," she says, "and everything I choose has a superlative design pedigree. Cavit & Co is not just a shop – we are a window to the world of design."