

# Galerie



Custom Acanthus Major desk in olive burl wood by Fisher Weisman.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF FISHER WEISMAN

## Burl Wood Is Having a Major Design Moment and These Striking Pieces Prove Why

From large-scale furnishings to sculptural home accents, the wood's eye-catching swirl grain turns a simple design into something sublime

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With a vast array of varieties and infinite stain options, wood is one of the most versatile materials in furniture design. Artisans have found myriad ways to manipulate this natural element to create sculptural façades on cabinets, build shapely pedestals for dining tables, or construct geometric shelves. Frequently its organic form is left unchanged for remarkable live-edge cocktail tables, mantels, and more.

Truly special in the world of woodcraft is the use of burl, a bulbous protrusion found on many species of trees that when shaved, sculpted, and polished preserves a fantastical swirl pattern that can elevate even the simplest design into an eye-catching work of art. Some craftsmen prefer to add just a little, using the patterned wood as an inlay or for an accent piece; others choose to craft large-scale furnishings completely from burl to create a statement-making work.

And while the technique has been around for decades, peaking during the 1970s, it is enjoying a renaissance in the design world today, with many contemporary designers getting in on the action. (One only needed to take a lap around High Point last fall to be convinced.)

Whether you prefer a little or a lot, these visually rich burl wood works ranging from a modernist masterpiece by George Nakashima to a tabletop by multidisciplinary designer Jeffrey Forrest are sure to add a dynamic focal point to any interior.



Designer Alexandra Llewellyn's Butterfly backgammon board is made of Chilean natural laurel burl, ironwood or Macassar ebony, lined with leather.  
PHOTO: LES ATELIERS COURBET



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## Les Ateliers Courbet

Formerly the head of product development for The Prince's Foundation School of Traditional Arts, which was founded by the Prince of Wales to preserve and teach traditional craftsmanship, London artist Alexandra Llewellyn handcrafts remarkable backgammon boards from varieties of wood including Chilean natural laurel burl. With hand-painted or hand-applied prints, each work-of-art game board comes with chips available in semiprecious stones, wood, leather, and bespoke materials.



Custom Acanthus Major desk in olive burl wood by Fisher Weisman.

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## Fisher Weisman

This one-of-a-kind desk by Andrew Fisher elevates a solid block of olive burl wood on sculptural hand-cast bronze legs that capture the regal acanthus leaves found in many architectural designs.



Circa-1970s George Nakashima buckeye burl and parchment table lamp.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF 1ST DIBS

## George Nakashima

Perhaps no artisan is more famous for woodwork than George Nakashima. This table lamp from the 1970s combines the master craftsman's gift with live-edge wood and his meticulous minimalist aesthetic, blending a freeform buckeye burl base with a pristine parchment shade.



Grilli Zarafa bar cabinet from Artemest.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ARTEMEST

## Artemest

Brothers Giorgio and Giovanni Grilli launched their woodworking studio in Tuscany with a commitment to honoring the practices of traditional Italian cabinetmaking. Their Zarafa collection, including this striking bar cabinet, is made with a tumble of walnut burl marquetry inlay, surrounded by a sumptuous Macassar ebony veneer.



The Madison spring petal amber ash burl and white stainless-steel nesting tables from Jonathan Charles Fine Furniture.

## Jonathan Charles

Many of the English furniture designs in Jonathan Charles's collection feature striking examples of burl—from a piano black and amber ash burl chest to a whimsical bow-tie-shaped oak burl cocktail table to a walnut and mother-of-pearl dressing stool fit for royalty. These shapely nesting tables channel an antique spirit with a delicate floral inlay but bring in modern elements with stainless-steel legs.



The Chin Hua Garze nightstand in Malachite from Century.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CENTURY

## Century

Century's Chin Hua collection of furniture is designed around a remarkable selection of woods, from satin walnut to maple burl. This unique Garze nightstand captures the exquisite burl grain but transforms its look with the brand's deep malachite finish. Paired with modern acrylic panels, the final piece makes a bold design statement.



Rollend etagere from DuVisst.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DUVISST

## DuVisst

Using burled elm with a fumed eucalyptus veneer, the undulating Rollend étagerè is a luxurious showpiece for a curated collection of personal treasures but enhanced with warm brass and beige powder-coated aluminum, its a showstopper in its own right.



Shagreen chess set in chocolate by AERIN.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF AERIN



Shagreen checkers set in cream by AERIN.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF AERIN

## AERIN

Tastemaker Aerin Lauder's games collection is filled with sophisticated pieces that are both fun and functional. Chess and checkers get an elegant upgrade in these burl wood boards that are coupled with shagreen and brass game tokens and accents.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF BUNGALOW 5

## Bungalow 5

Bungalow 5's sunny [Emil collection](#) includes a rounded-edge étagère, minimalist console, and this striking two-drawer side table, all made from natural burl. Enhanced with decadent brushed brass accents and oak veneer drawer interiors, the piece will be a standout in any Art Deco–inspired interior.



Rufus drinks table by Bunny Williams Home.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF BUNNY WILLIAMS HOME

## Bunny Williams Home

A majestic perch for a sculptural work of art, a delicate table lamp, or robust orchid plant, the Rufus drinks table from Bunny Williams Home is framed in a warm brass trim. This petite piece makes a large impression in a small amount of space.



Stacklab's cut burl dining table top.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MAISON GERARD

## Maison Gerard

It was during a motorcycle trip through California that Jeffrey Forrest, the founder and creative director of Stacklab, discovered the Pacific Lumber Company's decommissioned Palco mill. Floating in the pond were a number of redwood logs whose large burls had rendered them unusable for lumber production. The Stacklab team developed a process to preserve the ancient burls in which they are processed, then merged with smoked resin to create a truly unique tabletop that's certified by the Forest Stewardship Council to have been sustainably harvested.