

ULTIMATE homesandgardens

Settees that sizzle

compiled by Helen Peterson

Goodbye to slouchy couches

Take a seat on your sofa. Do you feel upright and at ease, or are your knees jutting up as your backside sags further down into oblivion? While some people may like that cocooning effect, most people want a firm, comfortable seating arrangement.

The interiordec.about website offers tips for buying a sofa with **substance**.

Frame Construction

When considering a sofa, ask about its construction. The best ones are made from kiln-dried hardwoods (oak, maple, poplar etc.), while inexpensive furniture is made from softer wood like pine. Interior construction is important as well. Cheap furniture is stapled together and has badly constructed corner bracing. Better frames are securely screwed together.

Now for Style...

This medieval living room arrangement, conceived and designed by Louanne Litke (right) of **Arlene's Interiors**, was part of an HGTV program called *Love It or Lose It*, filmed recently in a West Side Vancouver home. The redone room features a sofa of rich, pewter-toned fabrics. This is royal living at it's very best. The Arlene's city location at 751 Terminal Ave. stocks reams of fabric selections, and more, for do-it-yourselfers. Tel: 604-608-1177; www.arlenes.com.



Break with the traditional. Flea markets and antique stores often have some interesting artistic offerings. You may have to sacrifice comfort but your guests will ooh and aah at the one-of-a-kindness of pieces such as this funky corner settee, recently bid for on eBay. Go to www.eBay.ca to register, and have fun shopping or simply e-browsing.

At **Kroehler Coastal Home**, well-made, affordable pieces run the gamut from sophisticated, top-grain leather sofas, chairs and ottomans to plush sofas and sectionals like this curvy one, good for deep conversations. Visit Risa or Brian at Kroehler - 1401 West 8th Ave.; Tel 604-732-6824; www.coastalhome.ca.



You're always guaranteed to find something comfortable, durable and highly stylish at **Sofa So Good** on Cambie Street. Sometimes just sitting alone in luxurious comfort in a heart-backed chenille-covered occasional chair is all you need. Go to 2219 Cambie and check out the awesome selection. Tel: 604-879-4878; www.sofasogood.ca.

Seat Construction

Find out how the seat support system is made. Often a furniture store will have a cutaway model of the interior of upholstered pieces. Does it have quality eight-way tied springs or cheaper wire coils?

Cushion and Pillow Filling

The cushion and pillow filling are important to the feel of a sofa. Upholstery foam is inexpensive and comes in several thicknesses and weights, however the best cushions have down fillings; another type uses down pads wrapped around a core of foam.

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- **The Master Gardeners** get you ready for fall. Grass maintenance.

METROPOLITAN WOMAN

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- **Fall Trend Report** - Layne Christensen unveils all the hot designer looks for fall 2005.
- **New York Minute** - fresh from the streets of Madison and Fifth Avenues, Helen Peterson offers up a taste of Manhattan street wear.
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