

MANSION GLOBAL

Wood-Burning Stoves to Heat Your Home and Your Heart

There's an intimate and soothing ambiance to a room designed around one of these old-school devices, which friends and family can't help but gather around

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Each week, Mansion Global tackles a topic with an elite group of designers from around the world who work on luxury properties. This week, we look at tips for designing with a wood-burning stove.

Wood-burning stoves have a traditional charm that often goes hand in hand with centuries-old homes.

But unlike their great grandparents, today's iterations are more energy efficient, a lot less smoky and more environmentally friendly (wood is a renewable resource after all). And they're so darn cute with their little cabinets and visible flues. Crafted from materials including cast iron, stone or steel, these fire starters can be simple or ornate—and always add a rustic charm to any interior.

Here, advice from the design pros for making the most of a wood-burning stove in every space:

More: [Stripped-Down Bathrooms: Pulling off a Nude-Neutral Color Palette](#)

Let It Be the Centerpiece

“There is something very special about heating a room in such an analogue way. It appeals to something very human in us, keeping our loved ones warm and safe. Of course, at a very basic level, that affects the ambience of the room, but it's also important to consider that this piece will likely be a focal point in the room. To make the most of your wood-burning stove, position cushions and armchairs around it to create a cozy, intimate layout that celebrates the function and beauty of the piece.

“My favorite kind of stoves are the highly decorative, ceramic options topped with cast, glazed finials and baroque detailing. Nothing in the home should be functional at the cost of beauty. In some of the most beautiful, interesting homes, typically utilitarian items like radiators and stoves are focal points because the owner has chosen a more aesthetic option. Ceramic stoves can be wildly diverse. There are even towering Delft varieties with willow pattern decorations and punchy majolica options in glorious reds, greens, yellows and blues—straight out of a Mediterranean taverna.

“A disused chimney breast is the best spot for a stove. It can act as a focal point in a space in the same way the original fireplace would have been, and the room would have originally been designed for this kind of orientation.”

— **Matthew Williamson of London-Based Matthew Williamson Design**

Encourage the Cozy Vibes

“It creates a gathering spot for friends and family on cool fall evenings or icy winter days. The real appeal of wood-burning stoves, however, is their ability to bring people together. They can add such visual warmth to a space in addition to actual warmth. Everyone wants to congregate around a wood-burning stove.

“And one great thing about a wood-burning stove, as opposed to an open fireplace, is that you don’t have to worry about sparks flying out and damaging your rugs or furniture.

“There are plenty of wood-burning stoves that are very utilitarian, which can certainly be quite elegant in their own right, but there are also many stoves that are true objects of design. For instance, there are some stunning examples of wood-burning stoves from the Netherlands and Germany that are adorned with beautiful tiles, and I also particularly love the anthropomorphic cast iron stoves by Lalanne.

“I like to place a wood-burning stove as the centerpiece of a cozy, intimate environment with chairs positioned all around it. It makes the perfect spot for reading, drinking your coffee, and chatting with family or friends.”



A wood-burning stove makes a sitting area in a former horse stable-turned-entertaining space designed by Phillip Thomas so much cozier.

Aydin Arjomand

— Phillip Thomas, founder and principal of Phillip Thomas Inc. in New York



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Sotheby's will offer Sandro Botticelli's masterpiece *The Man of Sorrows* at a January auction in New York, where the painting of a resurrected Christ is expected to fetch more than US\$40 million.

Created in the late 15th or early 16th century by the famed Renaissance artist, the work is set to star in an Old Masters week sale series, Sotheby's announced Wednesday. The auction follows an exhibition launching this month in Hong Kong.

Sotheby's described *The Man of Sorrows* as "the defining masterpiece of Botticelli's late career" in promotional materials.

The painting was once owned by an English opera singer and her family and is now part of a private U.S. collection. It hits the auction block a year after Sotheby's record-setting US\$92.2 million sale of Botticelli's *Young Man Holding a Roundel* in January 2021.

That whopping sum might suggest it's a prime time for works by the famed Italian artist behind the mythological *Birth of Venus* who died in 1510.

Christopher Apostle, Sotheby's head of Old Master paintings in New York, says there's "never been a bad time for Botticelli. At least not since being—I wish you could see me making air quotes—rediscovered in the early 20th century by art historians."

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Heat More Efficiently

"Contemporary, cocoon, cast-iron traditional, there are many options for wood-burning stoves that will most certainly add warm energy to any space. One of my favorite examples of wood-burning stoves is at Whitepod in Switzerland, where each eco-pod is outfitted with one.

"Aside from the cozy look and feel, the heat output is one of the biggest advantages to a wood-burning stove—other fire sources are simply not as effective.

"The best place for a wood-burning stove is the living room so everyone can gather around it on a cold winter night, preferably with a warm drink in hand. If you are seeking to create a rustic cabin feel, be sure to keep lots of logs in stock too. They will also add to the ambience of the room."

— Sterling McDavid of Sterling McDavid Design in New York