

The complex gold finish on Crystorama's Garland chandelier brings an updated look to a traditional shape.



RUSH IS ON FOR GOLD'S

GLAMOUR, WARMTH

By Mary Beth Breckenridge
Beacon Journal home writer
Designers are once again going for gold.

The metal has been on the decorative outs for a couple of decades, but it's making its way back into home decor — this time in a burnished, warmer form.

Gold and other yellow metallics are showing up in furniture, lighting, even fabrics and wallcoverings. They bring a little glimmer to a room, a little understated glamour.

This isn't some ornate casbah look or a return to staid Colonial style, however. Today's gold metals are soft and subdued, often with the complex look of handcrafting.

Doty Horn, who runs the color marketing firm ColorVoyant in Holicong, Pa., thinks gold's resurgence is tied to the economic recovery, but not because of its association with money. Gold is in the

yellow family, which she said is a happy, positive color.

"It's a sign of optimism," she said.

Rose gold is especially popular now, Horn said, its pinkish hue adding complexity without the hardness and rustiness of copper. Brass is coming back, too, although in a lower-luster finish.

Indeed, "the finish really is key," she said. Shiny gold is out. Gold with a more complex, matte finish is in.

The reappearance of gold is also an indication of the renewed popularity of traditional design, albeit with a fresher, more modern twist, said Jennifer McConnell, vice president of design for furniture maker Pearson Co.

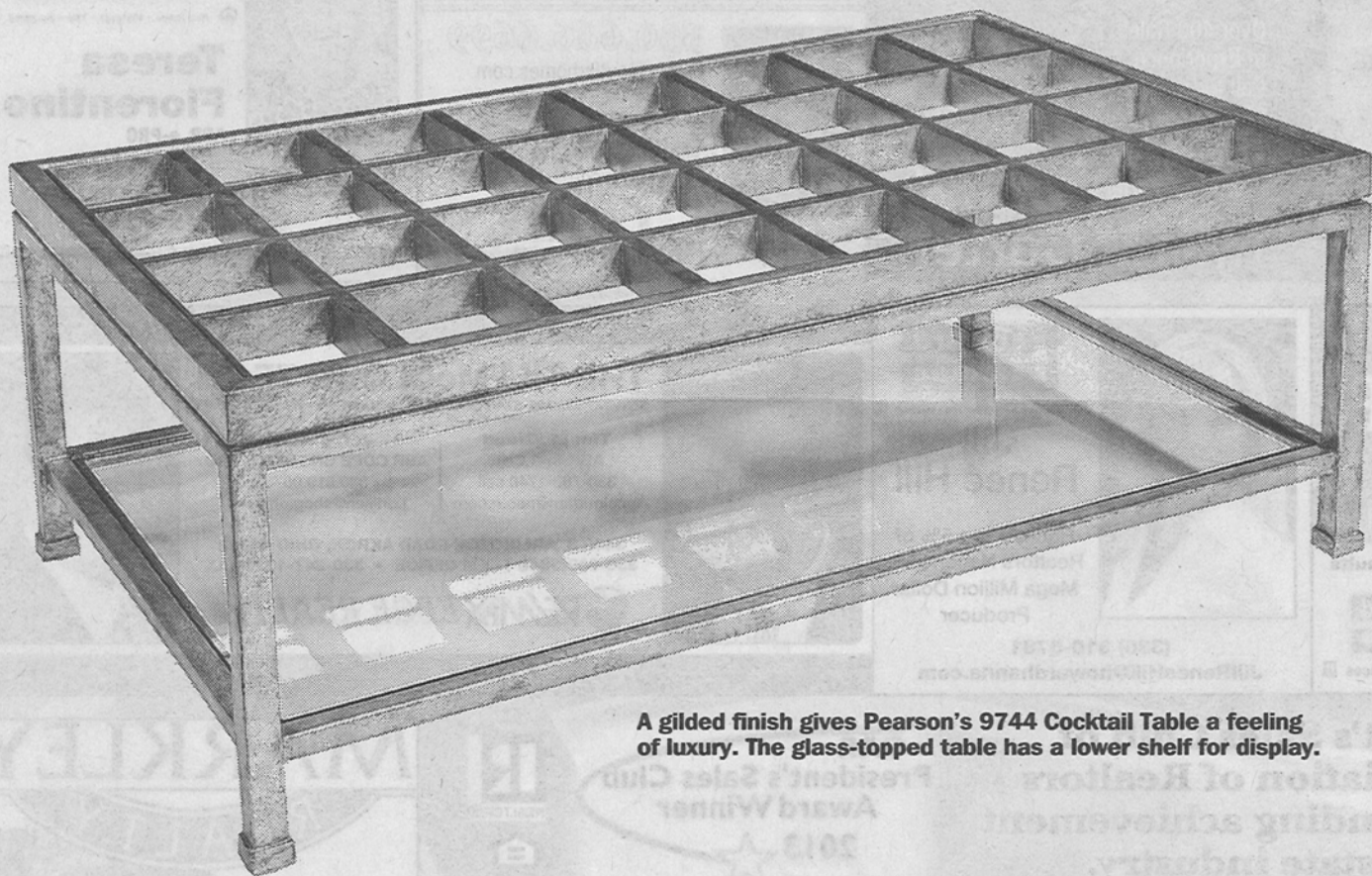
McConnell likes adding little gold accents to furniture pieces — maybe a gold-leafed stretcher on a bench

Please see **Gold, H7**



The doors of Baker Furniture's St. Honore Chest have a detailed design and gold finish that make the piece a "showstopper," the company says.

Designers adding touch of metal to home decor, as buyers feel optimism, seek traditional elegance



A gilded finish gives Pearson's 9744 Cocktail Table a feeling of luxury. The glass-topped table has a lower shelf for display.

Gold

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or antique brass ferrules on the tips of a chair's legs. Nailhead trim in gold metals is starting to replace chrome, she said, and gold leaf is popular on accent tables as a way of adding just a bit of glitz to a room.

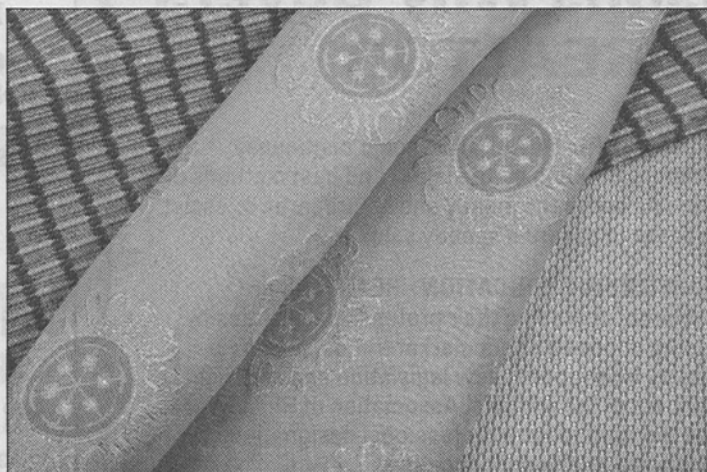
Even shiny brass has its place in the gold comeback, although McConnell tends to use it in small doses and often in combination with antique brass so it doesn't look dated.

Her company introduced a modern cabinet last season with an ivory shagreen front and an Art Deco starburst motif inlaid with gold leaf, as well as some polished brass accents. "You would never in a million years think Williamsburg," she said.

Nor would dated colonial decor come to mind from some of the pieces being offered by trend-setter Baker Furniture.

Baker's use of gold runs the gamut from subtle touches such as the handle on the back of a chair to eye-catching details such as the carved, gold-leafed doors on a chest.

And "sometimes a room needs a showstopper — that one piece that catches everyone's eye," James Nauyok, Baker's vice president for product development and visual display, said in an email. Gold gives a piece like that its drama.



Chella Textile's Facet, Medallion and Quicksilver outdoor fabrics are woven with metallic yarns for a hint of glitz. The polyolefin fabrics are for indoors and out.

Brad Kleinberg, president of chandelier maker Crystorama, said the new gold appeals mainly to younger consumers with a keen interest in style.

With the economy strengthening, those consumers are feeling freer to be more fashion-forward in their home design choices, he said. So they're throwing off safe choices like chrome and satin nickel and reaching for something with a little elegance and bling, something a little more cutting-edge.

Crystorama specializes in updating traditional lighting designs, so Kleinberg said it's using a lot of multilayered finishes to give its gold chandeliers the hand-worked look that's on trend now. Those finishes often start with a layer of gold leaf and sometimes have a little silver

in them, he said. Some even have a sandlike texture.

This contemporary take on gold may be complex, but it's hardly fussy. That sets it apart from the older uses of gold, which tended to be more ornate, Bath Township interior designer Christine Haught said.

Haught said she recently removed some elaborate French candelabras that had decorated her own fireplace mantel for years, because she'd grown tired of them and wanted a more streamlined look. But she could imagine incorporating gold into a room in a simpler shape, perhaps in a small piece like a side table or in combination with other metals.

Gold and other metals bring an ethereal, almost magical quality to a space, she said. "They're the

jewelry of design."

And as such, they're best used judiciously.

Pearson's McConnell, for example, likes the idea of bringing gold in via accents. A sofa upholstered in linen, for example, could be updated with throw pillows made from a fabric shot through with gold metallic threads. Or a bathroom could be updated by replacing the cabinet pulls and faucet with brass or bronze.

Color consultant Horn thinks such restraint is wise.

"The gold metallic [trend] is kind of a flash," Horn said — fine for items that can be changed easily, but not for more permanent elements such as flooring or wallcoverings. She might put wallcovering with gold details on an accent wall, she said, but she wouldn't paper an entire room in it.

Haught and fellow interior designer Eric Jones agree.

Haught doesn't foresee gold metals coming back in popularity to the point of becoming common in such widely used elements as door hardware and plumbing fixtures. And Jones, of Akron's Jones Group Interiors, said most clients still cringe at their use.

"Anytime you suggest brass to someone, the answer is, ewwww, no," he said.

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