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MAY 2015

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THE TOP 10 KLISMOS CHAIRS

Designers Amy Lau and Brad Ford find that the graceful curves of this ancient Greek form transcend time, remaining as pertinent and practical as ever

You can't get more classic than the klismos, a chair developed by the ancient Greeks. Although no original specimens survive, period depictions on painted pottery and in carvings at the Acropolis of Athens have given us a clear idea of how they looked. Distinguished by a rounded backrest and curved, tapered legs, the chair is light, elegant, and remarkably ergonomic. The klismos resurfaced in the mid-18th century during a period of renewed interest in Greek architecture, was championed through

the 20th century by T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings, and continues to stake its delicate perch in homes today.

"That the klismos is still relevant says so much about how well designed it is," says decorator Brad Ford. "Its lines are incredibly graceful, and it stands up to any number of interpretations."

Designer Amy Lau agrees: "The klismos feels simultaneously old-world and contemporary. The key is its sculptural silhouette. It's expressive, unique, and completely timeless." ▷

THE EXPERTS

BRAD FORD

The Manhattan-based decorator is known for understated, sophisticated interiors with handcrafted touches. Last year he founded Field + Supply, an annual modern maker fair in New York's Ulster County. bradfordinid.com

AMY LAU

Lau's passion for modern art, bold color, and bespoke pieces has informed her luxurious residential projects and retail spaces since she founded her New York firm in 2001. amylaudesign.com



1 / SANTORINI CHAIR BY DRAGONETTE LTD.

BF: This is a fun one. It makes an impact in acrylic—it looks light and airy, but feels substantial. I would use it with a vanity or in a powder room for a modern effect.
AL: The acrylic is thick, but they've paid attention to the details, such as the faceting on the back and sides. It would be great on its own in a bath or bedroom.
 23" w. x 25" d. x 35" h.; \$4,800; dragonetteltd.com



2 / LAYTON CHAIR BY NOIR

BF: I really like the juxtaposition between the classical form and the rattan. And it's versatile—you could use it in a sophisticated setting or a more casual interior, like a beach house. It's superlight, too.
AL: The caning is well executed, even on the underside, where manufacturers often cut corners. I can see four around a breakfast table, or a single one in a living room.
 23.5" w. x 29.5" d. x 35.5" h.; \$925; hudsonboston.com



3 / GUSTAV SIDE CHAIR BY BERNHARDT

AL: This has a polished steel frame—it's rare to see a classical chair with such a playful, unexpected finish. I'd use it in a bar or game room, or place it beneath a glass chandelier.
BF: It definitely has a high glamour quotient. I'd try it as a one-off, maybe in a poolhouse, where its shimmer could echo the reflective quality of the water.
 22.5" w. x 23" d. x 36" h.; \$1,225; bernhardt.com



4 / ATHENS LOUNGE CHAIR BY THOMAS PHEASANT FOR BAKER

BF: This takes the klismos from a side chair to a lounge chair. The dark finish gives it a formal quality, and the tufting feels traditional. With the interesting bar across the back it would look great floating in a space.
AL: You could have a pair leading into a room, so that you approach them from behind. I love how the bronze accents mimic raffia.
 31" w. x 33" d. x 30" h.; \$7,518; bakerfurniture.com



5 / PALISADES DINING SIDE CHAIR BY ARHAUS

AL: A perfect example of the versatility of the klismos design—it can even be re-created as an aluminum outdoor chair. It's practical, but with an understated elegance.
BF: Sometimes outdoor furniture is overthought, with too many bells and whistles. This chair is simple enough that it could suit any number of settings, traditional or modern. It's also a terrific value.
 22" w. x 25" d. x 38" h.; \$699; arhaus.com

The opinions featured are those of ELLE DECOR's guest experts and do not necessarily represent those of the editors. All measurements and prices are approximate.