

# art deco style

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Styles don't just happen, they are usually developed as a response to what is happening in our world - Wars, famines, inventions, industry, medicine, theatre, arts, royalty, sports, communications, fashion, textiles, architecture, print, transport.

The art deco period is loosely defined as the period between the two world wars, and it encompasses a variety of design styles from early 1920's to late 1930's.

The conventional designers decorated every surface with stylised fruit and flower motifs, while the revolutionary designers turned to the aesthetics of machinery and uncluttered design.

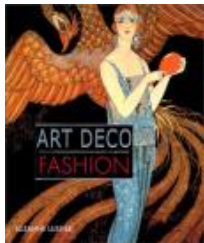


## 1920's inventions and events

- 1922 - first diabetic patient treated with insulin
- 1925 - first television pictures transmitted
- 1928 - flying doctor service commences
- 1928 - penicillin to treat infection discovered
- 1929 - stockmarket crash causes world crisis

## Things that changed lifestyles

- Stainless steel, invented earlier, became popular for food preparation, medical instruments, building construction and transport.
- In mid 1920's air-conditioning was first installed in department stores, followed by production plants, theatres, hospitals and food factories.
- The frozen food market changed the way we acquired and stored fish, meat, fruit and vegetables.
- The first self-service supermarket was opened at the end of the 1920's resulting in consolidation of food production and more convenience for consumers.



1920's fashion

- Paris led the world of fashion during the 1920's, and as the art deco movement was initiated by fashion and interior design, Paul Poiret was considered the dictator of what women should wear and the interior décor that would best compliment the clothes he designed.
- The explosion of colour and boldness of geometric designs brought an end to the delicate curves and ornate designs of the Art Nouveau period.
- Almost every fashion rule was broken in women's fashion; waistlines disappeared and hemlines rose.
- The discovery of Egyptian King Tutankhamen's tomb fuelled curiosity for exotic arts - bright fabrics and leather emerged in fashion and interior design.
- The roaring twenties became a time of huge social change, a time to have fun, dance and party.
- The rebellious fashions of the 1920's were eventually subdued by the stock market crash in 1929, and the depression that followed.

## What was happening in NZ?

1920 - Royal Visit

1921 - Yacht Racing

1922 - Wiltshire Wrecked

1923 - Motoring Hazards

1924 - All Blacks Team

1925 - USA Fleets Visit

1926 - Rongotai Airport

1928 - Tasman Flight

1929 - Murchison Earthquake

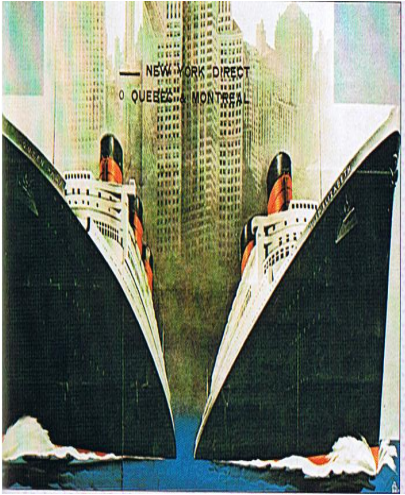


## Early art deco styles

Examples of the Clarice Cliff teapot and plate here illustrate the strong coloured and abstract floral motifs of earlier art deco.

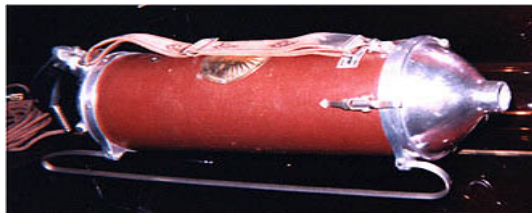
Above are examples of early bakelite objects such as the radio and clock. Some will remember the smell of hot bakelite around light fittings!

The art deco styles could be adapted to man-made objects regardless of their application or budget, and new forms of communication ensured its rapid spread worldwide.



### Transport

Speed and publicity were important aspects of the modern world in the 1920's, people moved faster and further than ever before.



### Accessories + homewares

Various shades of pink and green were popular during the art deco period, often combined with black and brown, and later with chrome and glass.



Coco Chanel



Aspirin



Electrolux



Graphics

### Advertising...

Improved communications opened up export markets, and poster advertising was found everywhere which is another record of colours from the period.

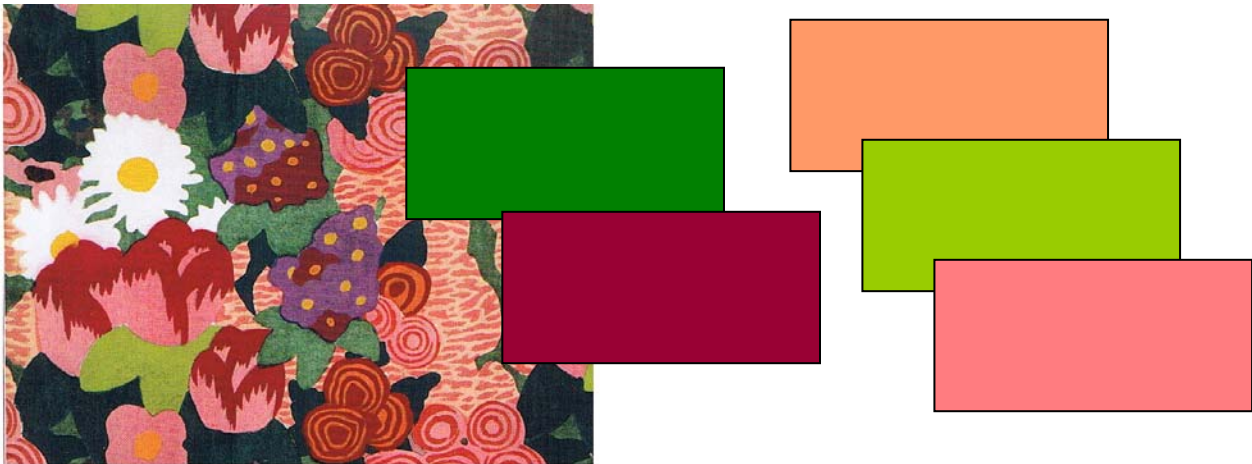




## 1920's more vibrant colours

Artists also picked up on these colours led by fashion.

## Textiles and colours



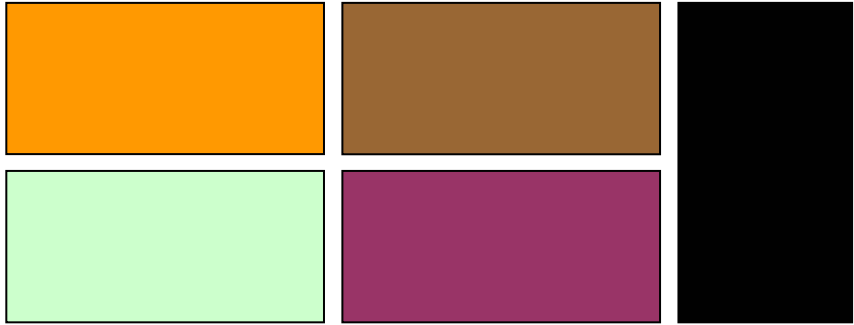
Resene Deluge, Resene Oxley, Resene Monarch, Resene Highball and Resene Cabaret.

## 1920's umbrella textile



Resene Barberry, Resene Deluge, Resene Crab Apple and Resene Black Forest.

## Stylised floral motifs



Resene Meteor, Resene Foam, Resene Quicksand, Resene Cosmic and Resene Bastille.

## Building and interiors

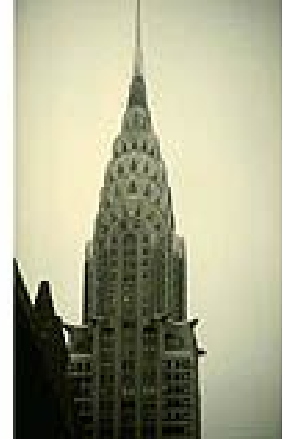
- Some of the most important art deco design went into the building of factories, but the enormous changes in industry have made it impossible to preserve them.
- New fortunes acquired during WW1 brought forward a clientele with new tastes and a new type of home to furnish, the interior design profession flourished as a result.
- The new middle class wanted homes that were easy to run, households were becoming smaller, kitchens no longer confined to the basement and staffed with cooks and maids and were repositioned near living and dining rooms.
- Bathrooms took on a new look with streamlined fittings and new labour-saving floor and wall coverings in jazzy designs.
- Dinner parties gave way to cocktail parties - a new society cult was born and so were cocktail dresses, cocktail cabinets, cocktail shakers and elegant cocktail glasses.



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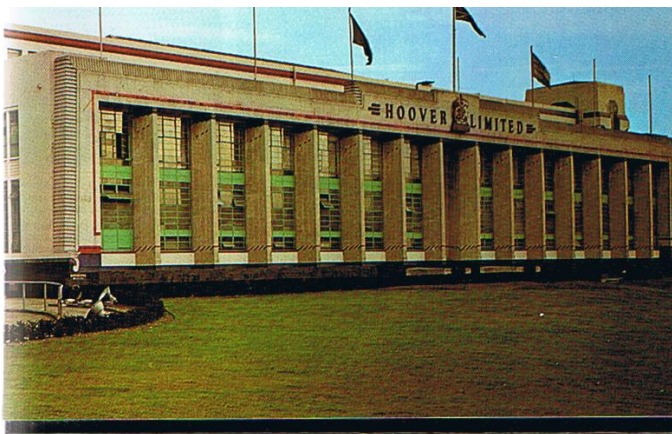
**Resene**

the paint the professionals use

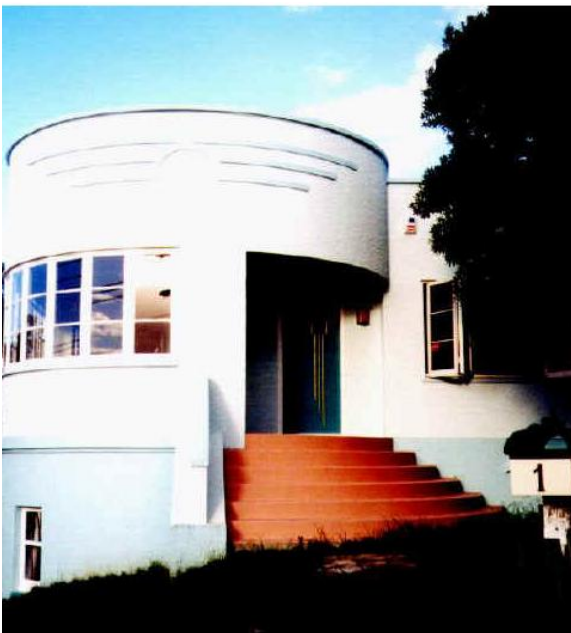


## Architecture

After the Wall Street crash in 1929, depression was in the air, but in some cases this led to a show of extravagance in commercial building.



The Hoover factory built in London in the early 1930's. Colours used here are similar to Resene Zombie contrasted with Resene Red Oxide.



### NZ architecture

This home has been restored and sensitively extended by Heritage Design Group in Auckland.

Curved walls, curved stairs and curved steel framed windows are popular features of art deco homes.

Often several shades of the same colour were used. Resene Foam and Resene Morning Glory are the colours selected for the exterior, while the door is a darker shade, with steps in complementary terracotta colour.

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## Local architecture

After the earthquake in Hawkes Bay, many buildings were rebuilt in the art deco style with curved lines, decorative trims and features.

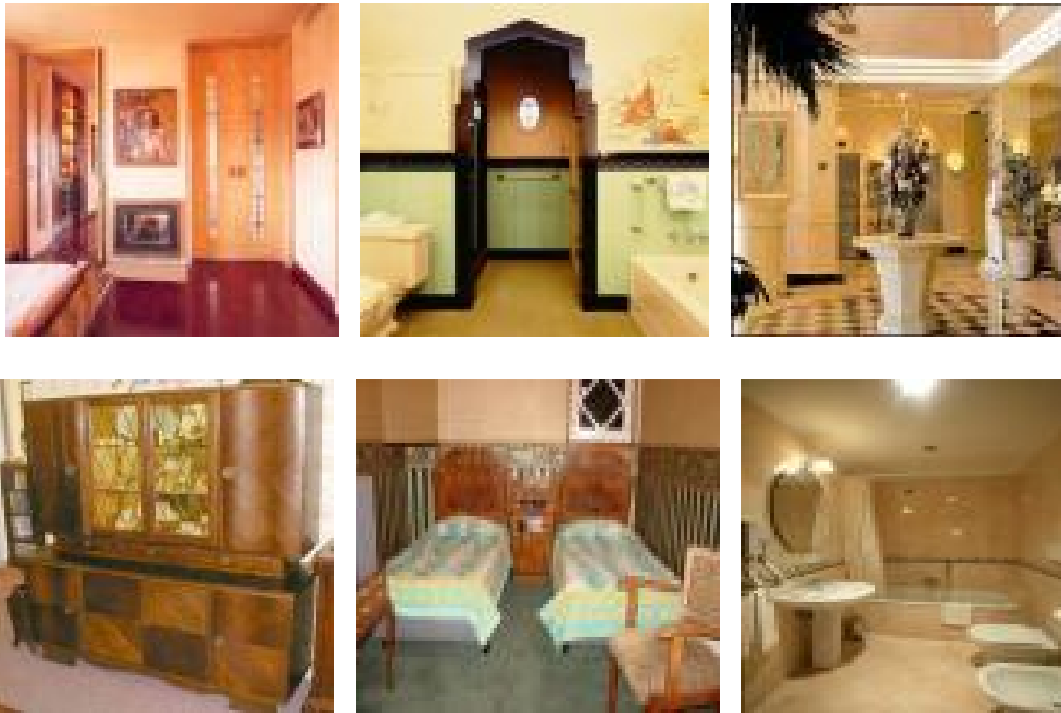


## 1930's NZ architecture

White is always popular for the exterior of plastered dwellings.

### Exteriors - key art deco elements

- Curved walls and windows.
- Curved stairs to front door entrance.
- Steel window joinery.
- Plastered walls.
- Flat roofing behind stepped parapets.
- Glass bricks.
- Terrazzo paving and tiles.
- Window awnings.
- Bay windows.
- Ornamental cornices and mouldings.
- Zigzag, chevron and sunburst detailing.
- Spanish Mission - Cordova tile roofing, corbel detailing, arched windows.
- Moderne - characterised by the application of Art Deco ornamentation.
- International Style - functional architecture - white cubic shapes and large windows arranged in bands.



### Interiors - 20's art deco

The earlier interiors were frequently in graduated pastel colours, creamy peaches and eau-de-nil greens teamed with ornate timber furniture and patterned rugs.



### Kitchen restorations

Both of these projects were completed by Heritage Design Group. The left is in warm yellow oxide colours such as Resene Rob Roy, Resene Marzipan and Resene Splash. The right is in graduated pinky tones similar to Resene Tutu, Resene Carousel Pink and Resene Pink Lace.





### Bathroom features

- Bathrooms featured tiles and glass bricks combined with chrome accessories.
- These newly accessible materials were a popular choice providing easy to maintain surfaces for homeowners.
- Mirrors and lights were decorating features of the bathroom.

### Shape of things to come

Chevrons      Sunbursts      Zigzags  
Bronze      Ivory      bony



## 1930's worldwide events

- 1931 - earth quake in Hawkes Bay in NZ
- 1933 - post office starts telex service
- 1934 - Jean Batten flies across world
- 1935 - nylon developed (stockings/plastic ware)
- 1937 - first prototype of jet engine built
- 1939 - Germany invades Poland - WW2...

## Local events in the 30's

- 1930 - The Depression
- 1931 - Napier Earthquake
- 1932 - Hungry Children
- 1933 - Trans-Tasman Flight
- 1934 - Jean Batten Flight
- 1935 - New Locomotives
- 1936 - Horse Racing
- 1937 - Yachts Everywhere
- 1938 - Crowd Control
- 1939 - Soldiers off to WW2

## 1930's events that changed our world

- Rutherford splits the atom - the beginning of atomic bombs and nuclear power ...
- Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany, and subsequently the Holocaust followed
- Japan invades China, resulting in the start of WW2 when Japan bombs Pearl Harbour
- Nylon was invented which revolutionalised industry, and this synthetic fibre is now used in the production of textiles, carpets, clothing, luggage, sportswear, automobiles, tools and all sorts of household gadgets.
- Television demonstrated at New York Trade Fair



Le Corbusier said ...

"a house should be a machine for living in"

- New technological advances made the aesthetics of machinery fashionable and pure geometry became the decorative theme of the 30's.
- Designers from the Bauhaus expressed their own brand of modernism. Simple designs were mass produced in materials of chromium, leather, glass, bakelite and enamel.
- Furniture and light fittings were much more streamlined, textiles were neutral, motifs such as zigzags, triangles and curves emerged.

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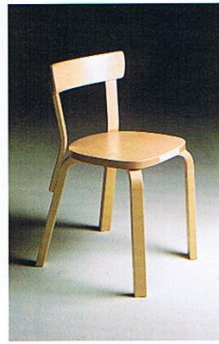
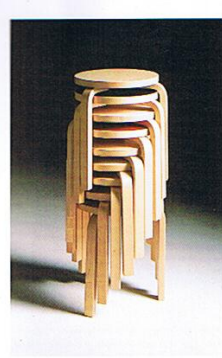
1930's classics ...

Chrome frames supported leather furniture.

1930's modernism...  
Graphics, jewellery, homewares and interiors were simplified  
in their design.



### Bauhaus style designs



Furniture in timber - simple lines



Chrome + glass or timber

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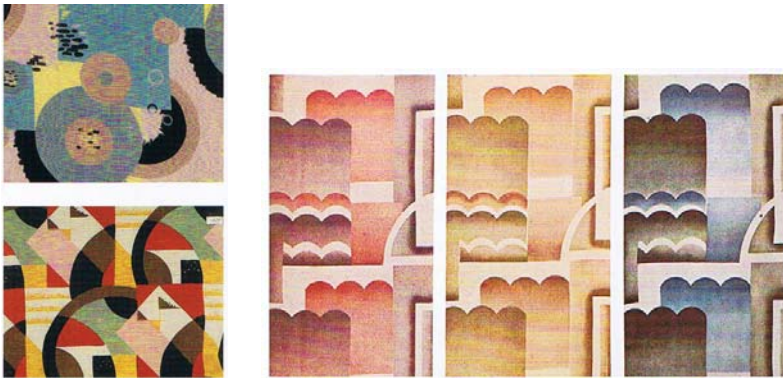


Designs were less ornate, some slightly industrial, all functional. New materials and industrial advancements enabled items to be mass-produced and offered at more affordable selling prices.



### Colours were more subdued

Fusion of opposing elements, straight lines and angles, gentle curves and simplicity.



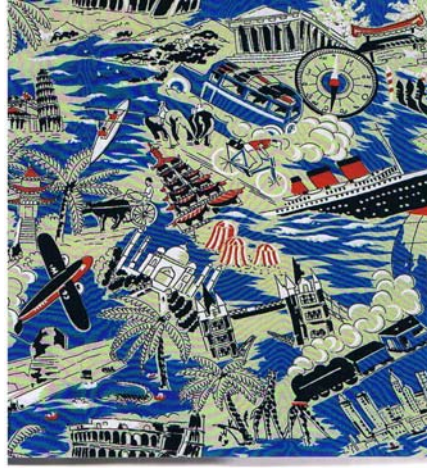
### Art deco textiles

These examples show more muted colours in geometric patterns. Chenille textiles and carpets were teamed with chrome, glass and timber furniture and fittings.



### Black and white and colour

Black and white floor tiles were popular as seen in this hotel bedroom. The clock below has Egyptian links in its decoration.



### Textiles and stories ....

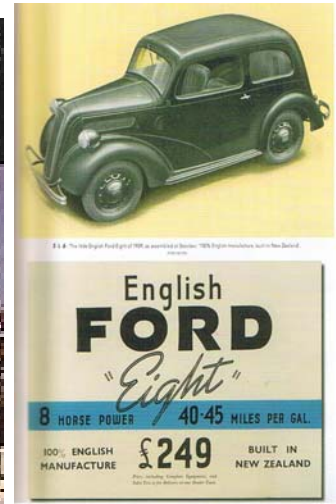
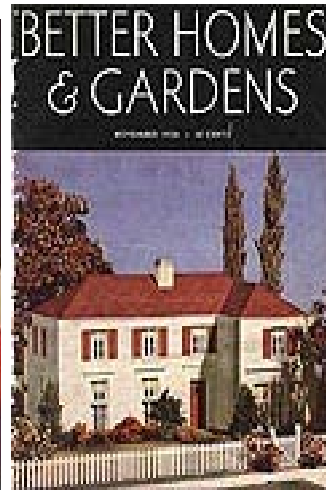
Travel and holidays to exotic places. Japanese fans and bullfights.

### Interiors - key art deco elements

- Curved fronts on timber furniture and cabinetry.
- Terrazzo benchtops and tiled flooring.
- Plastered ceilings, ornate cornices, sculptured details.
- Chenille textiles and patterned upholstery on furniture.
- Chrome and glass light fittings, door hardware and accessories.
- Decorative mirrors - sunburst designs or stepped panels.
- Bakelite handles, appliances and household objects.
- Coloured plastic household utensils, small appliances.
- Patterned floor rugs - similar to stained glass windows in design.
- Cocktail glasses, cocktail cabinets, cocktail shakers.
- Laminated timber stools and chairs, sometimes combined with leather.
- Timber panelling in light warm colours i.e. golden honey tones or oak.
- Dressing tables, writing bureaus, china cabinets, standard lamps.
- Tubular steel and coloured opaque glass furniture, such as seen in older tea trolleys.
- Ornamental clocks, china, porcelain, silverware and ceramics.
- Chrome and glass or chrome and leather furniture.



1930's fashions and patterns for the home-sewer



## Advertising cigarettes, gin, homes and cars

### What drives styles and colours?

- Events - war, famine, stock market.
- Celebrations - theatre, sports, royalty.
- Inventions - medicine, industry, transport.
- Communications - art, photography, print.
- Fashion - clothing, textiles, accessories.
- Building - architecture, interiors, furniture.
- New Zealand - lifestyles and events.

### Art deco colour ideas

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| • Graduated neutrals         | Resene Quarter to Triple Spanish White      |
| • Pale green and silver      | Resene Rainee, Mantle, Silver Chalice       |
| • Terracotta and cream       | Resene Bourbon, Splash, Milk Punch          |
| • Ochre and brown            | Resene Apache, Laser, Alpine, Zombie        |
| • Biscuit and greyed blue    | Resene Half Doeskin, Astronaut              |
| • Muted pastels              | Resene Link Water, Foam, Ghost, Vanilla Ice |
| • Graduated corals           | Resene Cosmos, Sundown, Geraldine           |
| • Black and white            | Resene Nero, Spanish White, Alabaster       |
| • Pale turquoise and taupe   | Resene Ashanti, Destiny, Otter              |
| • Beige and coral pink       | Resene Craigieburn, Japonica                |
| • Sunburst orange and yellow | Resene Gold Drop, Pizazz, Yellow Sea        |
| • Graduated olives           | Resene Planter, Highball, Gimlet,           |
| • Burgundy and steel blue    | Resene Bulgarian Rose, Astronaut            |
| • Salmon and black           | Resene Eunry, Cavern Pink, Quicksand        |

### Acknowledgements and references

- Heritage Design Group - [www.hdg.co.nz](http://www.hdg.co.nz) or ph: 0800 620 1939
- Colourwaves - [www.colourwaves.co.nz](http://www.colourwaves.co.nz) or ph: (09) 52 888 12
- Auckland Art Deco Society - [www.artdeco.org.nz](http://www.artdeco.org.nz)
- Art Deco Trust - Colours of Napier - [www.artdeconapier.com](http://www.artdeconapier.com)

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