

Inar 328 (History of Furniture and Interior Decoration)
Middle Ages
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1. Early Christian Furniture
2. Dark Ages
3. Romanesque
4. Gothic

1. Early Christian Period:

Early Christian furniture was of two distinct types. The common people had very little furniture. The few items they had were lightly built and usually designed so that they could be easily folded and put away, leaving additional space in cramped environments. Church and palace furniture, however, was built of solid, heavy timber, designed to last, and designed for the space it was to occupy.

2. Dark Age Styles: c. 450-1100 A.D.

- From the collapse of Roman Empire to the end of the Middle Ages
- The Medieval period (from the fall of the last Roman Emperor, in 476 AD, to the fall of Constantinople, in 1453) was the era in which furniture began to develop its MODERN CHARACTERISTICS
- However, the period known as Dark Ages in Europe is also rather rich although the left material culture is not too many.
- However, the period known as Dark Ages in Europe is also rather rich although the left material culture is not too many.
- Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Kingdom) Styles
- Viking Styles
- Ottonian style
- Carolingian styles
- Frankish Styles
- Byzantine Empire
- Two international styles originated:
 - 1. Romanesque
 - 2. Gothic

Family Life and Houses in the Medieval Period

Early Medieval Europe was a place of unrest; the medieval era was a time when not only nations but also lords of the manor fought for supremacy and battled to establish boundaries and kingdoms. Medieval history abounds with struggles between countries, between rival barons, and between neighbors. Large aspects of the medieval age are still in darkness to us today.

Medieval life was uncertain, and families were often on the move: fleeing from conflict, or traveling to lend support to the warlord of their choice. Journeying from one dark, draughty castle or medieval manor to another, their possessions needed to be portable, and needed to provide maximum protection from the bleak of Northern European winters.

If you just remember these films you could understand the life style in this period. The Lord of the Rings, Beowulf and Arthur.

Inside the Medieval Home

Keith D. Lilley described the interior of a Medieval Home as follows:

“Perhaps the most visible outward reflection of a person’s wealth and social status was the home they lived in, the lifestyle they followed, and the clothes they wore. The nature of

domestic furnishings and belongings that were used to decorate and embellish the medieval home clearly would have depended upon the financial status of the householder, which was largely determined by their occupational position. From a late-fifteenth century probate inventory. Hanawalt offers this description of a hall in a property belonging to a reasonably 'middling' sort of craftsman called Richard Bele living in London:

"The walls were hung with cloth painted with designs and, as was typical in these halls, with old weaponry. Furniture was sparse, consisting of a few chairs and a folding table made in Lodnon. A container for holy water hung by the door. A fire-place, burning either wood or coal, heated the room... the buttery and the kitchen contained such luxuries as candlesticks, pewter pots and chating dish. Most of the valuables ... were kept in the chief chamber (solar: a private room on an upper floor and for many households the only withdrawing room or bed chamber) in chests and cupboards. The house also included a sparsely furnished roof for a maid and, finally, the garret, where the apprentice might sleep and which was also sparsely furnished, with old and broken furnishings."

Alexander Neckham, a travelling scholar also wrote colourful images of the medieval homes:

"Let a curtain go around the walls decently, or a scenic canopy, for the avoiding of spiders and flies ... near the bed let there be placed a chair to which a stool may be added, and a bench nearby the bed. On the bed itself should cover this on which a cushion for the head can be placed. Then sheets of cooton,i or at least pure linen, should be laid ... A perch should be nearby on which can rest a hawk .. from another pole leter there hang clothing."

"In the well to do Medieval home, the bedchamber was altogether separate from the part of the house used for more 'public functions' such as entertaining guests. The place for this was the hall (aulem). In and 'affluent household' of the later twelfth century, the hall would have had 'a raised floor, or dais, at the fireplace end, where those who were of higher rank sat and ate', while the the cooked 'food was carried up from the kitchen without mucj respect for distance'. Eating was a less formal occasion inthe home of lower-status people as recorded by Roman de Renart with the following words: 'for a poor man who has no money does not sit by the fire, nor sit at a table, rather he eats on his lap.'

Also as Neckham described the kitchen consists of these: *"There should be a small table on which cabbage may be minced, and also lentils, peasi shelled beans, beans in the pod, millet, onions, and otehr vegetables o fthe kind that can be cut up. There should also be pots, tripodds, a mortar, a hatchet, a pestle... The chief cook should have a cupboard (capanna) in the kitchen where he may store away aromatic spices, and bread flour sifted throug a sieve. Let there be also a cleaning place where the entrails and feather o fducks and other domestic fowl can be removed and the birds cleaned...; in the pantry let there be shaggy towels (gausapes), tablecloth, and an ordianry hand-towel which shall hang from a pole to avoid mice. Knives should be kept in the pantry, an engraved saucedish, a saltcelalr, a cheesecontainer, a candalebra, a lantern, a candlestick, and baskets. In the cellar or store room should be casks, tuns, w,neskins, cups, cup cases (henapiers), spoons, skewers, basins, baskets, pure wine, cider, beer etc. ((This part is quoted from: Keith D. Lilley (). Urban Life in the middle ages 1000-1450, p. 216-217)*

Secular buildings (non-religious) survives in limited fragments and ruins. Great baths and palaces were built by the Eastern Roman Empire following earlier Roman practice, but almost nothing remained.

Some houses in Venice date from the era of Byzantine influences. These are typically several stories in height. Each floor is laid out with a broad central hall space lighted from front and back with smaller rooms opening from both sides. Byzantine influence can also be traced in the architecture of medieval Greece and Italy.

Textiles were the central focus of medieval decor. Light, portable, and multifunctional, textiles were used as room dividers, wall hangings, floor or bed coverings, or protection from the cold. Colorful fabrics added brightness and life to dark rooms where glassless windows

were of necessity small and shuttered against the weather.

Medieval homes were the origin of the expression 'bed and board', since these were the items of furniture necessary to life in the medieval age. Medieval peasant furniture probably consisted of the 'bed and board' only, with perhaps a few cushions, mats and hangings to provide warmth. The 'board' referred to the chief furnishing of the great dining hall where both the owners and the dependents of medieval manor homes gathered together at meal times. Originally, the 'board' was just that - a board, probably supported on tree trunks. This evolved into the portable trestle table that could be easily transported or packed away when not in use.

In the medieval period, the '**cup borde**' was a board used to store cups. The 'cup borde' gradually acquired the characteristics of the **modern cupboard**, with shelves and doors. Later in the medieval age the buffet was used for storage in the dining hall.

Benches and **stools** were commonly used for sitting in medieval times - only the rich and important, or perhaps occasionally the privileged head of the house, ever used an actual chair. Folding chairs were popular amongst the medieval aristocracy, since they could easily be transported when on the move.

Beds in Saxon times consisted of a board often placed in a recess, hung about with curtains for warmth and privacy. A rough mattress made of straw was covered with decorative fabric. The Normans brought with them from medieval France a more elaborate **bed** style, where iron railings were used to hang the curtains, and both coverings and curtains were rich, elaborate and highly prized. These gradually developed into the **huge four poster beds**, heavily carved and richly hung. The Great Bed of Ware, now in a museum, was eleven feet square. However, despite the expensive and decorative hangings and covers, early beds were still based on a mattress of straw. It was only in the 14th century that feather beds began to be used. A feather mattress was a prized family possession in the later medieval era.

The best examples of **medieval design**, not only in furniture but also in medieval art and architecture, are found in churches and cathedrals. The church alone was neutral in times of conflicts, and was more or less exempt from the nomadic lifestyle that so influenced medieval furniture characteristics. Such medieval antiques as are still in existence are mostly examples of the more solid, permanent style of furniture only possible in churches.

Medieval home decor is again becoming popular, and medieval furniture replicas are 'in'. Medieval home designs can be fun, with lots of scope for using bright fabrics and interesting lighting effects.

Use of **tapestries** and **hangings** to cover the walls, **rush matting** for the floors, **carvings** or **stencils** in ancient heraldic designs, simple but sturdy medieval furniture, "Lord of the Rings" style weapons, armor or shields as decoration, and plenty of small candle-type light fixtures. Medieval interior decor is all about colour and warmth, use of textures and textiles, and simply made, practical furniture. Life in the middle ages was harsh, but also full of excitement, fun and romance.

Byzantine Houses and Furniture

General Characteristics of Byzantine Style:

Partly Oriental, partly classical Greek and Roman.

Lack of timber source in Constantinople.

Stone buildings, superbly carved with surface ornaments, which is also found on furnitures.

Ivory: used for ornamentation, in form of the veneers or as solid pieces.

Byzantine furniture was of two distinct types. The common people had very little furniture. The few items they had were lightly built and usually designed so that they could be easily folded and put away, leaving additional space in cramped environments. Church and palace furniture, however, was built of solid, heavy timber, designed to last, and designed for the space it was to occupy.

Palace Furniture: Byzantine palace furniture can still be seen in museums today. The throne of Queen Marie, for example, is skillfully turned and richly carved. The back is inlaid with silver embossed in an intricate design. Palace furniture included heavy, carved and pillared chairs, tables with inlaid worktops, cabinets and storage chests.

Chests, Stools, Tables & Beds

Chests were also used by the common people, and were often fitted with locks and keys. Folding stools were popular. These could be built entirely of wood, a combination of wood and fabric or, occasionally, from metal. Folding tables were also much used as they were portable and easily moved out of the way when not in use. Beds could be folding stretchers, simple sleeping platforms, frames strung with cords - or just a mattress on the ground.

Byzantine Furniture

A number of carved caskets are in museums today. One of these is the Projecta's Casket: Late 4th cent. Wedding casket: The inscription calls for the marriage couple, while the decoration is largely pagan. British Museum.

➤ **Wooden Tables**

➤ **Marble Tables:** Small table tops like this were used to celebrate feasts for the dead at gravesites throughout the early Byzantine world. They were often supported on bases elaborately carved with messages promising humankind's salvation. At the lower edge of the table, four sheep, representing the blessed according to Matthew 25:33–40, flank a *chi-rho*, the monogram for the name of Christ based on the first two letters of his name in Greek. The tables are often called sigma tables due to their resemblance to the Greek letter of that name.

Constantinople became the center of Christendom - the "New Rome" - after its foundation by the Emperor Constantine in 330. The Byzantine period straddled the Antique period and the Middle Ages; the style had its roots planted in two soils, the classicizing influence of the Greco-Roman past, and the orientalism of Persia and the Middle East. The official language of the Empire was Greek rather than Latin, culturally separating it from the Latin West. The pull towards the hieratic, sumptuous decoration of Byzantium was the strongest.

Byzantine art, furniture and textiles were sought after throughout Western Europe right up until 1453, when Constantinople fell to the Turks. These products set the tone for style and luxury, and influenced architecture and design through the Early Christian, Romanesque and Gothic periods.

Charlemagne was known to have ordered his coronation robes from the workshops of the Emperor in Constantinople. The Crusaders returned from the Middle East bearing goods and booty, and went about establishing trading ties to ensure continued supply. Venice, as the eastern gateway port, was under the influence well into the Renaissance. Celtic and Germanic art show oriental influences in their use of interlace and animal imagery, as can be seen in the design of a buckle from the 7th century found at Sutton Hoo in Britain. Byzantine silks and textiles were used to decorate Romanesque and Gothic churches.

Equally extravagant thrones were often depicted in murals and ivories, and were generally of four types: those featuring animal legs, those with turned legs, those that were encrusted or inlaid with stones, and those having "architectural" features. An ivory from the 11th century, right, portrays a throne inset with what appears to be jewels. Given the ostentation of Byzantine court life, these depictions cannot be dismissed as artistic fantasy. The use of precious stones in furniture is described in various texts. One can relate this tendency to the Greeks' use of gold and ivory in marble statues. The Christian meaning is rooted in mysticism: the stones reflect the crystalline light of God, and represent symmetry, perfection and permanence. In fact, there are connections between Greek, Persian and Byzantine art in this outlook. Planets and astrological signs have always been associated with stones. Understandably, encrusted throne furniture has virtually vanished, leaving only these

depictions as evidence. The valuable stones no doubt became part of the national treasury reserves during the long darkness of the Middle Ages.

High-backed thrones with an architectural shell motif are seen in ivories as well, such as this ivory of Virgin and Child from Constantinople. The origin of the shell motif is found in Greek art, where it was used to symbolize the genitals of Aphrodite. Roman architectural decoration and carved sarcophagi used the motif, and it can be found applied to Byzantine architectural decoration as well. Carved ivories, used as devotional objects, often depicted an enthroned Mother and Child or other Holy figures, seated on thrones with animal legs and high backs in rounded or pointed shapes.

Byzantine Influence in the West

In the West, Byzantine influence was evident; goods from Constantinople were highly prized. Byzantine silks and other textiles were imported in great quantities. Their designs were a medium for transmitting ornamental motifs and decorative detail. Charlemagne's father, Pepin, gifted the Abbey of Saint-Calmin with a silk reliquary cover in the 9th century, and his son was buried with similar rich textiles, as seen in this blue wool serge fragment.

The **baldaquin**, or **canopy**, often draped with fabric in the antique style, makes an appearance in manuscripts and ivories of the Merovingian and Carolingian period. A late 9th century codex shows the Carolingian King Charles the Bald seated in a jewel-encrusted throne above which sits a domed canopy. A Byzantine ivory set into the cover of the Gospel Book of the Emperor Otto III (c. 1000) shows a bed under a canopy. This idea of the canopied bed will be taken up in the west in the Gothic period

Cupboards and chests in the Byzantine style persisted into the late Middle Ages. These simple storage units were often the only item of portable furniture other than folding stools. Usually raised on short legs, they were of primitive construction, and featured scrollwork and animal images. Byzantine manuscripts that pictured furniture were in circulation in Western Europe from early on. One such, the Codex Amiatinus (c. 690) shows the prophet Ezra in his apartment, with a large, gable-topped cupboard behind him. It appears to have been decorated with painted designs, an inexpensive simulation of the inlay that was a feature of Byzantine design.

Carolingian Furniture: Revival of Roman Style

Carolingian art is the roughly 120-year period from about AD 780 to 900 - during the reign of Charlemagne and his immediate heirs — popularly known as the Carolingian Renaissance. For the first time, Northern European kings patronized classical Mediterranean Roman art forms, blending classical forms with Germanic ones, creating entirely new innovations in figurine line drawing and setting the stage for the rise of Romanesque art and eventually Gothic art in the West.

Charlemagne was the force behind a revival of "Roman" classicism in the 9th century. This was to be the first of many neo-classical revivals to be attempted in Europe. The Romanesque architecture was rough, static and grandiose, a synthesis of Roman and Barbarian influences. Its furniture was a synthesis of Celtic, Scandinavian and German influences, with the addition of late Antique forms and Byzantine ornament. The interlace of "Barbaric" ornament, native to the Germanic tribes that had invaded Europe, was restricted to popular furniture, such as in the Viking bench seen here. The aristocracy wanted something grander, and turned to the Roman example. Eventually, in the North the Romanesque style refined itself into the Gothic, but in Italy it maintained its characteristics until it emerged into the full neo-classicism of the Renaissance.

Carolingians found a taste for Mediterranean art when Charlemagne set out to rival the splendour of the Lateran in Rome where he had been crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 800. As symbolic representative of Rome (and by title), he sought the *renovatio* (revival) of Roman culture and learning in the West, and thus became a patron of the arts. He wished to establish

himself as the heir to the great rulers of the past, to emulate and symbolically link the artistic achievements of Early Christian and Byzantine culture with his own.

History of Romanesque Furniture

As Christianity continued to grow, so did the need for churches that could accommodate larger numbers of worshippers. Again looking to the past, architects revived the **heavy round arches, vaulting systems, and large interior spaces** of Roman buildings to create massive **ROMANESQUE** churches. With a large portion of the population illiterate, sculpture served to illustrate the stories of the Bible, and large-scale sculpture appeared on capitals of columns, on jambs and spaces around doorways, and especially on the tympanum, a large semicircular space above the entrance to the church.

The new style of sculpture, however, did not return to Roman ideals – the classical works were too calm and serene for the religious intensity of these Christians. Instead, artists returned to the method of portraying the most important figures as the largest and replaced the classical canon of proportions with stretch limbs and distorted figures appropriate to the demons of the last Judgment or to the Apostles' fervor.

What is Romanesque?

- Describes art and architecture of 10th to mid-12th centuries in Europe.
- Stems from renewed interest in monumental architecture, sculpture, and mural painting.
- Depicts (almost always) Christian themes, in Christian settings.
- Pilgrimage and monasticism are keys to the development and evolution of the style.

Characteristics of Romanesque Furniture:

- Romanesque is a compound of many influences: Roman, Byzantine, Carolingian, Ottonian, Frankish, Viking, Celtic, Saracenic.
- They contain architectural elements: Round arches supported on pillars. The chief feature is a number of small arcades running in the whole building.
- Forms are usually angular.
- They are rather massive looking and heavy.

Romanesque art has been called the art of Christendom. The term refers to the Latin-based geographic area of post-Empire Western Europe that had inherited the traditions of the classical past - including the present-day Italy, France southern Britain, Spain, Germany, and Austria. The style united motifs from Late Antique Rome, Byzantium and the Barbarians, but here the pull of the classical past was strongest. Western furniture and decoration became, from this time forward, that of Christendom.

Since the common people of this era lived very simply, Romanesque furniture was predominantly designed for churches and for the aristocracy. The poorer classes would make with a rough bed, or just a mattress of straw on the ground, perhaps a storage chest or two, and a board supported by tree trunks that served as a dining table

Thus, in the Reformation of the 16th century, the divisions within Christianity were reflected in the arts, accounting for the divergence of such styles as Shaker and Spanish Baroque furniture

Church furniture was ornate, decorated with either carvings or paintings in an imitation of the old Roman furniture styles. Arches and curves were the design theme, both in the shape of the item itself, and the carved paneling and decoration. Simple animal and plant forms were also used in carving. Many items were brightly painted to lighten up gloomy interiors

Romanesque furniture is most appropriately characterized as "architectural". Some architectural motifs transferred to furniture:

- Rounded arches set over piers or columns

- Columns are often incised with pattern - dogtooth or diaper designs - that recall the patterned columns in Durham Cathedral
- Chair backs imitating the church façade, with posts and finials that resemble its twin spires.
- Pictures of Romanesque furniture show carved chests, simple stools, benches and trestle tables, and roughly carved pillared bedsteads. Chairs as we know them, with back and arm rests, were mainly the prerogative of important personages such as bishops and overlords. Such chairs were often heavily decorated with carving, painting and inlays, and were a symbol of power.

Scandinavia has always been a perfect location for craftsmen working in wood. "The soft woods of northern Scandinavia and the hard woods of Denmark and south Sweden provided an inexhaustible source of raw material for the carpenter's craft" (Foote and Wilson, *The Viking Achievement*, p. 178).

Woodworking would have been a common skill at least at the level of being able to execute simple repairs, as even modern homeowners know today. Some more skilled craftsmen, as with the Mästermyr artisan, would have been more of a general "handyman" and perhaps were itinerant craftsmen at times. Specialists in various wood arts did exist, however, for the Old Norse literature records specialized boat-builders as well as expert homebuilders and carpenters.

The woodworker's art spans a variety of related disciplines. In the Viking Age, wood was used for homes, for ships, for barns and other buildings, as well as for farming implements and household objects, and many other uses. Some woodwork was very plain, others enormously complex with decoration carved and painted on.

Viking Furniture

The most common "furniture" in the Viking Age would have been the seating provided by wall-benches in homes, formed of wooden supports and an earthen fill, making a raised narrow platform around the edges of the room. Finds of furniture do not really become plentiful until the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Certainly other furnishings were known, however. The most common home furnishings found are **stools** and **chests**. Chests seem often to have had bolts or padlocks that are surprisingly modern-looking. The largest concentrations of furniture finds come from the Oseberg and Gokstad ship burials in the ninth and tenth centuries. These burials included chairs, beds, and chests. Since these three types of furniture tend to be the ones most commonly used by re-enactors, there are also a number of accessible articles with plans, diagrams and "how to" information for all three types (see Reconstructions, Plans and "How To" Articles below).

- The three-legged stool appears to have been the most common type of seating, found in both domestic contexts and in workshops. Most seem to have "D"-shaped seats, with one leg at either of the two corners and the third at the midpoint of the curved side.
- Chairs in the Viking Age are rare, and are usually thought to have belonged to wealthy or high-ranking persons. By the end of the Viking Age, chairs are found in ecclesiastical contexts as well
- **The Four Poster Beds:** For centuries, the bed has been a sign of wealth, the richer the nobleman, the better the bed, which is probably why many people still aspire to owning a four poster bed, the bed of kings, and the king of beds. Saxon and Norman furniture would have been basic in quantity and quality. The two essentials in their lives were "bed and board," a phrase still used today; the 'board' was literally a board or boards, set up on trestles or tree stumps used for a table and a bed. The bed clothes would consist of pillows, quilts and fur rugs, and would have only been for the wealthy, everyone else would have slept on the floor of the hall, around the fire.

Romanesque Revival & Reproductions

In the late 19th century, styles of architecture copying the Romanesque and Gothic architectural style from about 1050 became popular in the United States. The Romanesque Chateausque style was a symbol of affluence, and the super-rich built themselves imitation medieval castles. Furniture, artwork and sculpture Romanesque style was used to decorate these mansions lavishly, using some genuine antiques but mostly imitation and reproduction items.

Romanesque shingle style houses were also a popular architectural feature of 19th century America. Loosely copying Romanesque styles, the Romanesque Shingle style was composed of geometric shapes coupled together with shingles.

These styles brought about an interest in all things Romanesque, and the Romanesque influence can still be seen today in richly carved and painted furniture, and ornately decorated articles such as Cellini's Romanesque flatware, flatware, which has become a collector's item.

Gothic Furniture & Decor

Medieval Gothic Furniture

The Gothic styles of architecture, art and furniture date from the 12th century through to the 16th century. With the Byzantine influence introduced to Europe by the crusaders, as well as Islamic and arabesque elements, furniture and architecture became more ornate, and the typical Gothic motif of the pointed arch became prevalent in furniture design as well as in buildings.

Styles & Wood

Gothic wood furniture was mostly made from **oak**, although local softwoods were also used towards the end of the period. Medieval Gothic style furniture was heavily carved and decorated. Religious themes were popular in carvings, as were heraldic symbols such as griffins, lions or hawks. Floral themes were also widely used, and the royal fleur-de-lis furniture motif dates from this era. Paintings and inlays were also used for furniture decoration so that the whole effect was much more ornate than the furniture of earlier eras. Furniture pieces were large and solid, following the lines of Gothic church furniture.

Gothic architecture involved the use of pointed arches, flying buttresses, and other dramatic innovations to create spectacular spatial effects, but 12th-century furniture design was not influenced by the novel style. The new cathedrals were expressions of affluence, but for their interiors the rich patrons of the church appear to have favored simple, functional oak furniture enriched with tapestries and metalwork. The decorative elements of the Gothic, particularly the pointed arch, were not employed in furniture ornament until about 1400. Then, for more than a century, tracery and arches were carved on the panels of chairs, on chests, and on tables of every size.

In the 15th century a few new forms were introduced. One was a type of sideboard with a small storage area set on tall legs; it had display space on the top of the enclosure as well as on a shelf below it. Cupboards were made with either one or two tiers of storage areas enclosed with doors. Another important storage piece was the armoire, with tall doors enclosing an area of 1.5 m to 2 m (4 ft to 6 ft). Along with such architectural motifs as arches, columns, and foliate patterns appeared decorative carving based on hanging textiles, a motif known as linen fold. As a primarily northern European style, Gothic remained influential in furniture design into the early 16th century.

Typical Gothic Furniture:

Gothic furniture craft paved the way for the Renaissance period to follow, and many new items of furniture appeared at this time. The armoire for clothes storage, the buffet for eating utensils, and tables with drawers was first seen in this period. Gothic cabinet furniture progressed a long way from the simple storage chests and coffer of earlier times.

Gothic Home Decor Revival

In the 18th century, Gothic revival furniture and architecture became popular in England. This theme spread to the United States in the 19th century, and reproduction Gothic furniture of this period is quite common. Many Victorian pieces feature the ornate carving and the soaring, pointed arches of Gothic origin. This style was known as "Gothick". The Gothick style was perhaps most popular in Victorian church furnishings, since it fitted in well with the ancient church buildings still surviving from medieval times.

Gothic home decor has again become popular in recent times. The mystical, magical *aura* of the Gothic era, with its strange ceremonies and magic rites, has caught the imagination of artists, writers and designers. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" inspired an era of fantasy literature wherein dark castles, evil warlords and heroic warriors performed daring deeds and overcame evil with bravery, skill, cunning and the help of strange mythical beings.

Featuring outlandish symbols such as the Gothic bat, home decor Gothic style gives scope for imagination, creativeness and fun. Gothic decor makes use of rich tapestries and hangings, along with heavy and ornately carved furniture. Stone walls or paneling are ideal for the Gothic look. Decor ideas for Gothic rooms include plenty of candles, stained glass, brass and pewter. Curtains are likely to be heavy and feature rich colors such as wine, ruby, purple, black and gold. Murals and heraldic carvings are typically Gothic. Victorian reproduction Gothic furniture is perfect for this type of decor, and there are many good modern reproductions available as well. The Gothic look is 'in', not only for ancient manor houses and castles, but also for modern homes.

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