



## From Junk to Funk

### FINDING THE GOOD HOME DECORATING STUFF IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA

IT USED TO BE THAT JUNK WAS A FOUR-LETTER WORD. OKAY, it's still a four-letter word in our world of minimalist tendencies, but junk isn't what it used to be. This is not your father's crap. Well, according to Zadoorian, it actually is your father's crap, but that's the whole point. Forget Sanford and Son ... Think HGTV and the DIY Network. Think designer junk. With a little help from Antiques Roadshow and eBay, we've begun consuming our past with unprecedented enthusiasm. "Patina" is bandied about in casual conversation; "retro" and "vintage" are often given more cred than "brand new;" in other words, junk now equals funk.

The Phoenix, AZ junking scene has exploded in the past few years partly due to the strength of the mid-century Modern revival. Now that Modern designs from the 1950s, '60s, and '70s have been deemed legitimate in the antiques market, everybody, it seems, wants a "retro" look. For those of us who love good post-war design, there's plenty to see in Phoenix. Each shop has its own flavor, so it's worth checking out all of them. And with junking so hot now, inventories move quickly. Visit often, and if you see something you like, grab it before somebody else does. The best part about junking is that you simply don't know where you're going

to find that perfect lamp, or that set of dishes you grew up with. More than anything, it's a treasure hunt full of surprises, frustrations, and plenty of history.

#### **BO'S FUNKY STUFF**

**5605 W. Glendale Ave., Glendale, 623.842.0220, \$-\$\$\$**

The name says it all: funky. Owner Bo Kvetko has been in the vintage business for more than 32 years, and it shows. His shop is a sprawling, intriguing collection of furniture, lighting, artwork, housewares, clothing, stereos, records, posters, toys, and more. Bo himself describes it as "seriously eclectic." If there's a specialty here, it's authenticity—something that's getting harder and harder to come by, according to Bo. Apparently, many people today are perfectly satisfied with reproductions – "they just want the look," he says. Bo doesn't mess with reproductions and as a result, Bo's Funky Stuff caters directly to our childhood memories. You can't get through the store without finding something that stops you dead in your tracks – suddenly and powerfully transporting you to another place and time. Sure, maybe you can't go home again, but a visit to Bo's is the next best thing ... and it's much cheaper than therapy.



D.A.'s Modern

### D.A.'S MODERN

**527 W. McDowell Rd., Ste. B, Phoenix, 602.252.0001**  
**\$-\$\$\$\$**

Anybody who's ever opened a box of Godiva chocolates ought to appreciate a visit to D.A.'s Modern. Here the emphasis is on quality, not quantity. Each piece is carefully selected and tastefully displayed in as much context as possible. Owner Doug Alvarez has been a dealer in several different shops around the Valley for years. Last year he decided to open his own – much to the delight of his urban-conscious neighbors: My Florist Café, Zoe's Kitchen, and ANTIQUES. D.A.'s Modern is a gallery of Modern furniture, as well as decorative and fine arts. Along with the "usual suspects" (Herman Miller, Knoll, etc.), you'll find plenty of "great unknowns." In fact, Alvarez says some of the pedigreed pieces that were so hot a few years ago have cooled off. These days, most people buying vintage Modern "want a look, not a label." When asked about the market for vintage Modern, Alvarez is optimistic. "Trends come and go, but the good pieces of Modern will always have a niche – Modern design has earned itself a level of recognition in the world of antiques." Thanks to Alvarez' eye for good design, it's all good stuff – and best of all, there's something for every budget.

### GO-KAT-GO

**5102 N. 7th St., Phoenix, 602.277.8528, www.go-kat-go.com \$-\$\$**

Chris Swanberg and Brandi Kvetko (Bo's daughter) have been

selling vintage furniture, lighting, and clothing in Phoenix for more than nine years – making them veterans of the vintage shopping scene here. Over that time, they've put together an incredible collection of clothing (both vintage and new), housewares, gifts, artwork, accessories, books, and magazines. Their real love, though, is "kustom culture" – the hot rod styles of the '50s through the '70s. This makes for a vintage shopping experience unlike anything else in Phoenix. Think *American Graffiti* meets HGTV. According to Kvetko, they try to stock "what you can't find anywhere else in town." To illustrate the point, she recently procured a circular bed complete with a television and a stereo built into its faux fur quarter-sphere canopy (it's probably sold by the time you read this). Even the hardcore Modernists can't help but enjoy such curiosities. As Kvetko notes, "everybody likes to look around-they're interested in the mix." Where else can you go to find "couches and shirts and car stuff" all under one roof?

### HAUS MOVED

**2440 E. Camelback Rd., Ste. 101, Biltmore Fashion Park, Phoenix, 602.277.0111, \$-\$\$\$\$**

Imagine what it would be like if a few pieces from the MoMA collection were mistakenly placed on the shelves in the museum's gift shop. That's sort of what it's like to visit Haus. Although Haus sells primarily new Modern design furniture (including classic pieces by Knoll), furnishings, and accessories, they mix in a handful of pristine vintage pieces as well. Gregory Gordon, one of the owners, says their goal is to bring good vintage Modern design to people who wouldn't ordinarily visit vintage shops. Besides, including vintage alongside contemporary interpretations of Modern design "adds some heart and soul to the space [and] makes it look like a real house." Both eras blend so seamlessly here customers sometimes can't tell the vintage from the new pieces. That's no surprise for Gordon, who says simply, "good Modern design is timeless."

### HOME AGAIN FURNISHINGS & ANTIQUES

**4955 N. 7th Ave., Phoenix, 602.424.0488, \$-\$\$\$**

Home Again is like several estate sales all in one place – you're as likely to find a set of flatware as a sofa, and pretty much everything in between (and in several different styles, which is just the point). Owner Bob Van Riper likes to offer customers "interesting well-preserved items in a wide variety, any style and price range." When Van Riper moved his store from its previous Sunnyslope location to join in the budding 7th Avenue scene, he expanded considerably and the rapid turnover makes this a worthwhile stop. According to Manager David Asher, "small-scale furniture with a lot of character is what really goes." Mid-century Danish pieces don't last more than a couple days. Asher says the "real antiques" do well too, often used to contrast with otherwise "straight-line" interiors. It's easy to get caught up in the mix but don't forget to look up – Home Again has a really great selection of artwork as well.



Modern Lighting

### MICHAEL TODD'S FURNITURE

626 W. Indian School Rd., Phoenix, 602.200.8887,  
www.michaeltoddsfurniture.com, \$-\$\$

At one time or another, most of us have rummaged through our parents' attic, fascinated by all the great stuff. A visit to Michael Todd's is almost like being back home, searching the attic for "treasures." You're bound to find something you didn't know you couldn't live without. Maybe that's because there are 35 dealers here and 10,000 square feet to browse. Or it could be because the prices are so reasonable. Either way, the place is one of the worst kept secrets in town. Co-owner Tom Devlin says that the store has long been a "dealer's treasure hunt." According to Devlin, about 20 percent of their business is from other dealers in town. "We do a huge business with interior decorators." Regulars come in two or three times a week to see what's new. Under the circumstances, some would think seriously about raising their prices – not these guys. Asked if he's bothered by his customers turning a profit, Devlin shakes his head, smiles, and says simply, "It's cool." Do you suppose your parents will be so forgiving when you liquidate their attic on eBay?

### MODERN LIGHTING

5016 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, 602.248.4908, \$\$-\$\$\$

As the name would suggest, the specialty here is lighting – there's at least one of every kind of lamp you can imagine, from

the kitschy-cute to the high-end classic "Artichoke" lamps in the front window. Walking into Modern Lighting, one is nearly overwhelmed with both the variety and sheer quantity of vintage lamps on display. It's tough to know where to start. Owner Peter Alper refers to his collection as "a mélange of good mid-century with an over-the-topness that doesn't hurt anybody." Alper has been selling, rewiring, and repairing lamps in Phoenix for more than 10 years, getting his start long before the mid-century Modern revival began. Over that time, he's seen the market for vintage lamps take off – thanks in part, Alper says, to Hollywood set designers using them so extensively for television sitcom and movie props. So for the Hollywood feel without all the paparazzi, a couple lamps from Modern Lighting might do the trick. And speaking of tricks, be sure to say hello to Alper's register watchdog—a cute, little design-savvy terrier.

### PHOENIX METRO RETRO

708 W. Montecito Ave., Phoenix, 602.279.0702,  
www.phoenixmetroretro.com, \$\$-\$\$\$

Owners Tom Butler and Karl Reese recently completed the build-out for their new space and fans of high-quality vintage Modern furniture have responded with open checkbooks. According to Reese, he and Butler have "kind of a focused agenda," and now have the space to make it happen. Their focus, Reese says, is mid-century Modern with an emphasis on Scandinavian design from the '50s, '60s, and '70s. "We do really well with teak – it's beautiful, and has lots of style, too," he says. The understated quality so often associated with mid-century Scandinavian furniture makes for easy mixing of styles. Reese promises to limit the knick-knack factor – not that there's anything wrong with knick-knacks ... "We just want to showcase every piece of furniture."

### RED MODERN FURNITURE

1319 E. McDowell Rd., Phoenix, 602.256.9620,  
www.redmodernfurniture.com, \$\$-\$\$\$\$

With 6,000 square feet to browse, Red Modern Furniture is the largest of the vintage Modern shops in town. Owner Jonathan Wayne specializes in rare and limited production examples of Modern design. According to Wayne, the rare pieces are always in demand – although the recent increase in reproductions and reissues has softened some of the interest. Wayne says the market is still very hot for rare vintage Danish, Italian, and Brazilian design-areas relatively unaffected by repros. A lot of the furniture at Red looks new, and it's no coincidence. Wayne has his own refinishing and reupholstering shop in the back of the store, which gives Red sort of a big-city, old-time-furniture-maker feel. Shoppers get to see a bit of the transformation process – from the "new arrival" stage to "showroom-ready." In the end, many of the pieces actually look better than new. (The hand-rubbed, black lacquer pieces are simply stunning!) Also check out the vintage clothing and impressive collection of vintage handbags and purses.



Red Modern Furniture

### RETRO REDUX

4303 N. 7th Ave., Phoenix, 602.234.0120,  
www.retro-redux.com, \$-\$\$\$

From amoeba-shaped ashtrays to '50s turquoise refrigerators to spaghetti lamps to vintage clothing and jewelry, Retro Redux has it all. This relative newcomer to the scene has helped to turn 7th Avenue into a hot spot for vintage shopping. The focus here, according to owner Beth Lipham, is on "vintage values." She likes to stock lots of "low-profile, classic-'50s wooden basics. People can anchor a room around pieces like that," she says. The strategy seems to be working. Lipham says Retro Redux has become a "destination for Heywood-Wakefield shoppers." The store is arranged in vignettes to make shopping easy ... and comfortable; so make yourself at home and take it all in. That's all part of the plan according to Lipham: "People don't want to work at furnishing their homes – they want it to be fun." For those who prefer their vintage wearable, be sure to check out the selection of clothing and costume jewelry—what Lipham calls "a boutique inside the store."

### SHIRLEY MAE'S

5515 N. 7th Ave., Phoenix, 602.274.4747, \$-\$\$

Over the past year, owner Zachery Hill (a.k.a. Shirley Mae) has moved from Michael Todd's to Retro Redux, and finally to his own place. Hill says he's wanted to open a shop of his own for some time, and this year was "the right time and the right opportunity." Now that he has a place of his own, he's been able to spread out (expanding into the space next door after being open less than three months!) and increase his inventory. At Shirley Mae's you'll find a wide selection of vintage furniture, lighting, housewares, artwork, and clothing, all of which is very reasonably priced. Hill calls this "affordable retro." This strategy has gone over very well with customers; some come in three and four times a week for a look. Shirley Mae's is like a catalog of 20th century American consumer culture—which has a very broad appeal, apparently. Each month Hill is visited by a few high-volume buyers who practically clean him out. The reason these customers don't visit more often? They're from Japan.

### THE GARDEN PARTY

4302 N. 7th Ave., Phoenix, 602.604.1831, \$-\$\$

The Garden Party got its start tucked quietly away in the back of Michael Todd's as an emporium for "Martha Stewart Modern" (think Martha's designer eye, minus all the ribbon and white house paint). Seeking greater visibility, owners Lewis Pizer and John Meinel found their own space last year. Don't be fooled by the name – there's a lot more than just garden furniture here. In fact, there's a whole range of furniture, lighting, and artwork. Describing The Garden Party's unique take on vintage shopping, Pizer says the store is loaded with "endless possibilities" that bring in a "cross-section of everybody." Among those endless possibilities is an extensive collection of vintage barware for those who prefer their martinis in period glassware.



Shirley Mae's