

truth in decorating

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Text by Sophie Donelson · Photography by William A. Boyd Jr. · Produced by Alison Hall



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There's so much to like about a love seat. This sofa of diminutive stature is big on style and easy on the eyes. An elegant solution for a small space, love seats offer the plush comfort of a club chair in a profile generous enough for two—what could be more inviting?

The love seat has a pedigree that goes back to the 18th century, when upper-class Europeans were exchanging their austere wood seating for the more gracious embrace of upholstery. In those days, the two-seater was called a *tête-à-tête*—implying romantic intimacy—while a sofa for three was coyly dubbed the *indiscret*. Love seats, and some settees, are still built to accommodate two people, but are more

commonly used solo. Several models, in fact, are fashioned with cushioned arms that double as a headrest, a perfect detail for a party of one.

Because of their petite scale, love seats are suited to almost any space. Better yet, clever upholstery can transform one into a room's star attraction—just ask our experts Barclay Butera and Laura Kirar. Butera, a Los Angeles-based decorator and shop owner, recommends dressmaker details like tufting and waterfall skirts, while Kirar, a New York designer of home furnishings and interiors, opts for vibrant fabrics. The duo tested ten of ELLE DECOR's favorites, then debated which small sofas pack the biggest visual punch.

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**1 LOVESEAT BY WOOD, SPRING & DOWN FROM HOMER**  
 "This one would break up the right angles of a square room," declares Kirar. Butera concurs, observing that the curvilinear shape would pair nicely with a round ottoman. "I love the flair of the arm; it has such an unusual silhouette," he notes. "It looks like a piece of art." Height: 32"; width: 65"; depth: 22"; seat height: 19"; material: oak frame with foam-and-down fill; delivery: 8-12 weeks; price: \$6,800 c.o.m.



**6 CAMELBACK LOVESEAT BY RESTORATION HARDWARE**  
 Butera notes the shapely camelback lines and generous proportions: "It is truly a lounge sofa," he announces. Kirar agrees completely. "This is real deep," she says, "but it has a cuteness to it." She recommends keeping with playful feel by going with a bright fabric. Height: 36"; width: 58"; depth: 44"; seat height: 21"; material: hardwood frame in maple finish with polyurethane foam fill (also available in down fill) and linen upholstery (other fabrics and sizes available); delivery: 1-7 weeks; price: \$2,999



**2 HEDY TUFTED SETTEE BY LEE JOFA**  
 "This sofa is all about the details," Butera explains. "I'm a big fan of the tufted back and the updated vintage look." Kirar, too, is taken with its graceful contours, which remind her of old Hollywood films. "It's so smartly made," she says. "It's extremely comfortable, and loaded with dressmaker touches." Height: 32.5"; width: 56.5"; depth: 35"; seat height: 18"; material: hardwood frame with poly-Dacron fill; delivery: 4-6 weeks; price: \$4,610 c.o.m.



**7 VISCONTI SOFA BY CASAMILANO FROM PROPERTY**  
 "I see this one in a bachelor's apartment," Kirar remarks. "It has a masculine look and a very deep seat, yet it fits me perfectly." Butera points to the lumb pillow as a well-thought-out addition, and adds, "This has perhaps the most generous seat. And because the sofa is low-slung, it's downright seductive." Height: 30"; width: 48"; depth: 25.5"; seat height: 16.5"; material: solid wood frame in matte-black finish (other finishes and sizes available) with polyurethane foam fill; delivery: 12-16 weeks; price: \$4,800 c.o.m.



**3 VERONICA SLIPCOVER SETTEE BY CHARLOTTE MOSS FOR BRUNSCHWIG & FILS**  
 Kirar envisions this straight-back settee as a kitchen banquette. "It's almost dining height, so you could use two to flank a table," she suggests. Butera would double up, too, using a set in an entryway. "It's got a wonderful high back," he raves, "so elegant!" Height: 38"; width: 60"; depth: 29"; seat height: 19.5"; material: hardwood frame with down-and-feather-wrapped polyurethane fill; delivery: 8-10 weeks; price: \$3,990 c.o.m.



**8 WOODHOUSE LOVESEAT BY JONATHAN ADLER**  
 "A groovy sofa with firm cushions that keep it looking fresh," says Butera of this 1960s-style love seat. "I especially like the scalloped back and arms." The retro element resonates with Kirar, too, who is impressed that the piece has "a lot of looks for not a lot of money." Height: 32"; width: 64"; depth: 36"; seat height: 19"; material: hardwood frame in black finish (other finishes and sizes available) with down-wrapped foam fill (also available in foam fill) and cotton velvet upholstery (other fabrics available); delivery: 10-12 weeks; price: \$3,366



**4 SUNAPEE LOVESEAT BY KRAVET**  
 Butera gushes. "The shape is extremely versatile—you could go in so many directions depending on the fabric—plus, I'm crazy about casters!" Kirar sees potential for a bold statement: "Do a David Hicks on it," she exclaims. "I would contrast its traditional look with an acid-yellow fabric." Height: 36"; width: 62.5"; depth: 35.5"; seat height: 20"; material: hardwood frame in Van Dyke finish (other finishes and sizes available) with spring-blend down fill (other fills available) and brass casters; delivery: 4 weeks; price: \$3,080 c.o.m.



**9 ARGO 160 SOFA BY FRANCESCO ROTA FOR PAOLO LENTI FROM KARKULA**  
 "It looks like it's about to take off," jokes Kirar of the design. "It's really comfortable, though, and I like the sculptured shape of its arms." Butera thinks it would work best in an urban loft. "This is for fashion-forward people," he states. "It has a high-style, Japanese aesthetic." Height: 31"; width: 60"; depth: 30"; seat height: 19"; material: wood frame with lacquered-elm legs in grigio antracite finish (other finishes and sizes available) with down-wrapped foam fill; delivery: 12-14 weeks; price: \$5,415 c.o.m.



**5 ANGIE 67" SOFA BY MITCHELL GOLD - BOB WILLIAMS**  
 "You could upholster this with a classic awning stripe or try a colorful leather for a more modernist look," advises Kirar. Butera admires subtle touches like welting on the front, which he explains, "creates eye movement." Even better, he adds, "it's a terrific value." Height: 34"; width: 67"; depth: 36"; seat height: 19"; material: hardwood frame in coffee-bean finish (other finishes and sizes available) with leather-and-down fill (also available in poly-wrapped foam fill); delivery: 5 weeks; price: \$2,480 c.o.m.



**10 VANCE SETTEE BY GREYSTONE HOME COLLECTION**  
 "This is definitely a statement piece," pronounces Butera. "I would place it in a bedroom or use two to flank a fireplace." Kirar is taken with its streamlined yet glamorous profile. "It's got boudoir written all over it," she enthuses. "I'd cover it in a luxe mohair velvet." Height: 38"; width: 60"; depth: 29"; seat height: 19.5"; material: hardwood frame with feather-and-down-wrapped foam fill; delivery: 4 weeks; price: \$3,990 c.o.m.



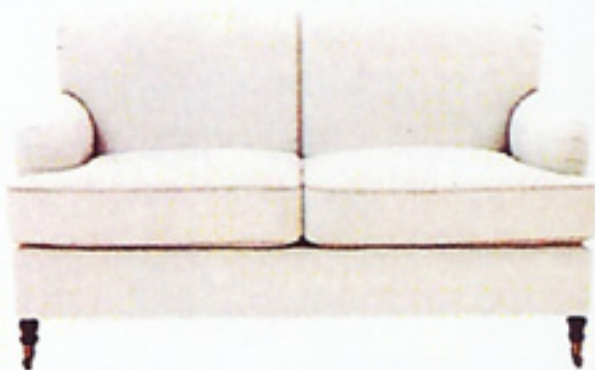
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**2 HEDY TUFTED SETTEE BY LEE JOFA**  
 "This sofa is all about the details," Butera explains. "I'm a big fan of the tufted back and the updated vintage look." Kirar, too, is taken with its graceful contours, which remind her of old Hollywood films. "It's so smartly made," she says. "It's extremely comfortable, and loaded with dressmaker touches." Height: 32.5"; width: 56.5"; depth: 35"; seat height: 18"; material: hardwood frame with poly-Dacron fill; delivery: 4-6 weeks; price: \$4,610 c.o.m.



**3 VERONICA SLIPCOVER SETTEE BY CHARLOTTE MOSS FOR BRUNSCHWIG & FILS**  
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#### 4 SUNAPEE LOVESEAT BY KRAVET

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Height: 36"; width: 62.5"; depth: 39.5"; seat height: 20"; material: hardwood frame in Van Dyke finish (other finishes and sizes available) with spring-blend down fill (other fills available) and brass casters; delivery: 4 weeks; price: \$3,080 c.o.m.

#### 5 ANGIE 67" SOFA BY MITCHELL GOLD + BOB WILLIAMS

"You could upholster this with a classic awning stripe or try a colorful leather for a more modernist look," advises Kirar. Butera admires subtle touches like welting on the front, which he explains, "creates eye movement." Even better, he adds, "It's a terrific value."

Height: 34"; width: 67"; depth: 36"; seat height: 19"; material: hardwood frame in coffee-bean finish (other finishes and sizes available) with feather-and-down fill (also available in poly-wrapped foam fill); delivery: 6 weeks; price: \$2,460 c.o.m.

#### 6 CAMELBACK LOVESEAT BY RESTORATION HARDWARE

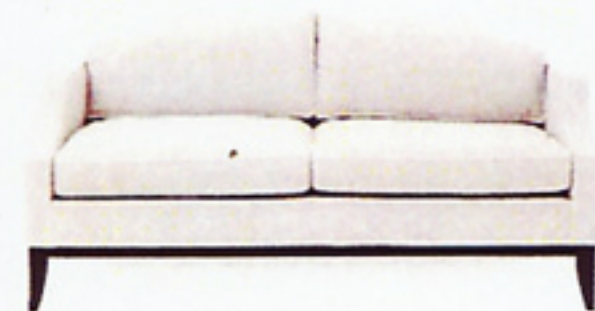
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Height: 36"; width: 59"; depth: 44"; seat height: 21"; material: hardwood frame in maple finish with poly-wrapped foam fill (also available in down fill) and linen upholstery (other fabrics and sizes available); delivery: 1-7 weeks; price: \$2,090



#### 7 VISCONTI SOFA BY CASAMILANO FROM PROPERTY

"I see this one in a bachelor's apartment," Kirar remarks. "It has a masculin look and a very deep seat, yet it fits me perfectly." Butera points to the lumbar pillow as a well-thought-out addition, and adds, "This has perhaps the most generous seat. And because the sofa is low-slung, it's downright seductive." Height: 30"; width: 49"; depth: 39.5"; seat height: 16.5"; material: solid-wood frame in matte-black finish (other finishes and sizes available) with polyurethane foam fill; delivery: 12-16 weeks; price: \$4,800 c.o.m.



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"A groovy sofa with firm cushions that keep it looking fresh," says Butera of this 1960s-style love seat. "I especially like the scalloped back and arms." The retro element resonates with Kirar, too, who is impressed that the piece has "a lot of looks for not a lot of money." Height: 32"; width: 64"; depth: 36"; seat height: 19"; material: hardwood frame in black finish (other finishes and sizes available) with down wrapped foam fill (also available in foam fill) and cotton velvet upholstery (other fabrics available); delivery: 10-12 weeks; price: \$3,000





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**10 VANCE SETTEE BY GREYSTONE HOME COLLECTION**

"This is definitely a statement piece," pronounces Butera. "I would place it in a bedroom or use two to flank a fireplace." Kirar is taken with its streamlined yet glamorous profile. "It's got boudoir written all over it," she enthuses. "I'd cover it in a luxe mohair velvet." Height: 35"; width: 52"; depth: 31.5"; seat height: 18"; material: hardwood frame with feather-and-down-wrapped foam fill; delivery: 4 weeks; price: \$5,500 c.o.m.