

THE INTERSECTION OF OLD AND NEW

Mix up modern décor with the addition of antique and vintage pieces.

Vintage furniture stores continue to pop up across the city – Chic Antique in Lakeview, which opened this past June, is one of the latest. Each locally-owned shop holds a unique collection, poised to meet a growing consumer demand for pieces from the past. By adding an antique touch to modern décor, a house can transform into a home – a cozy quality brought to life through items with history. But how do you pull off that balance of the new and the old? Find out where to start by visiting these Chicago stores and exploring their vintage treasures.

GRAPHIC:

Brown leather armchair from Chic Antique \$275

Brown antique fan from Praha \$165

Light blue spotlight lamp from Room Service \$120

OR

Vintage teal dresser from Chic Antique \$575

Antique typewriter from Praha \$48

‘Fur’ backed chair from Room Service

CHIC ANTIQUE

Crystal Blackshaw is on the hunt for vintage damask wallpaper for the tiny hallway in her home. She’s looking for something that will get noticed – maybe fuchsia velvet damask flocking over a gold background. As owner of Chic Antique, Blackshaw collects vintage items, refinishes and refurbishes them, and displays them for sale in her “jewel box” of a store in Lakeview. After studying furniture and design at Portland State University and Portland Community College, she discovered that antiques were better made – and lasted longer – than mass-produced furniture. Blackshaw believes fashion and design throughout various periods in history have influenced the current trend in mixing modern and vintage décor. The result is a home with texture and layers, patterns and color.

To start, Blackshaw suggests looking around your own home or your parents’ or grandparents’ home, garage or estate sales, thrift stores, and flea markets, plus online sources such as eBay and Craigslist. If you find a piece you love, bring it home – or you might regret it. When it comes to vintage, each item is unique, so when it is gone, you won’t find another exactly like it. If something is not in perfect condition or does not fit your taste exactly, don’t be afraid to add a modern touch with new fabrics or a coat of paint.

Perhaps DIY is not your thing though, which is where Blackshaw can step in. When Chic Antique is open, there’s usually an attention-getting piece positioned right outside the door, beckoning passers-by to pop in for a visit. Shimmery-tile steps descend into the tiny garden level shop, which houses Blackshaw’s hand-picked treasures. Vintage dressers and side tables refreshed with hot pink or turquoise paint display accessories, such as small lamps and glittering jewelry. A closer look reveals an umbrella stand by the door, a gold-rimmed mirror on the wall, and a flapper dress hanging in the window. Depending on the type of piece, the price could beat what you would pay for mass-produced stuff – dressers range from \$425 to \$650 and side tables from \$120 to \$250. Plus you’ll own a one-of-a-kind item to give your home a unique look.

3435 N. Broadway, 773.857.2695, chicantiquechicago.com

ROOM SERVICE

Room Service sits among a number of antique stores within a few blocks radius in Andersonville. It feels like a curated gallery with a collection of estate sale finds and auction house purchases that exist in harmony with modern items such as candles and vases. Shop manager Lindsay Abati possesses a personal love of vintage as it can showcase good design from all time periods. Abati explains how easy it is to incorporate antiques into a home – start with one piece of furniture or a single accessory. Once you add it to your living space, she promises you'll see how a vintage piece can add a layer of life, character, and history.

Given the popularity of “Mad Men,” Abati encounters plenty of customers looking for that mid-century modern look. Luckily, Room Service features plenty of items from that era. Leather and metal retro chairs and stools, angular wood dressers and tables, and intricate metal figurines appear to be fresh from the “Mad Men” set. Alternatively, Abati finds a popular interest in farmhouse décor, especially in the fall. To bring home that cozy feel, combine a rustic piece of furniture with some of the modern candles and plants at Room Service. But Abati is not just speaking in theory – she has been filling her own condo with modern and vintage furniture. After completing her dining room, she now wants to furnish the living room with a cool couch and a sleek vintage credenza. Perhaps Room Service has just what she needs.

5438 N. Clark St., 773.878.5438, roomservice-chicago.com

PRAHA

Outside the vintage furniture store Praha, a sign encourages the neighborhood to “Czech out” the items inside. Owners Todd Nyenhuis and David Foster regularly stock the shop with new inventory from as far away as Europe – especially from Prague – or as close by as Wisconsin and Ohio. The artfully cluttered store, located in North Center, is divided into small mini-rooms and dotted with globes throughout. Following a path carved through the store like a maze, visitors can discover side tables priced around \$80 to \$90, antique typewriters around \$50, and trunks of all sizes. One area is set up like a vintage kitchen with a metal table and counter-height cabinet covered in red and yellow accessories. There seems to be an aesthetic – and a price range – for everyone, from bright green suitcases to brown antique radios, from small metal vintage letters for \$1.50 to a large pine cabinet on sale for \$495.

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