

# Home

## The wallpaper revival

For years the last word in naff, damask and flock are subtly being rehabilitated into stylish homes, says VICTORIA O'BRIEN

Wallpaper used to be a dirty word in the interiors lexicon. Sure, some smooth-talking design aficionados used it as an ironic magazine title (as in, *Wallpaper\** — the stuff that surrounds you), but whichever way you cut it, wallpaper still bore the old connotations of seaside landladies' front rooms. It certainly wasn't cool, directional or cutting edge.

The wallpaper revival has happened as a direct riposte to bland minimalism and its clinical interior landscapes, which camouflaged everything against pure, arctic-white walls. "Feature walls" are the current buzz words, allowing you to get away with wild pattern, hedonistic colour and even riveting textures.

Flock wallpaper (once the very antithesis of good taste, and only ever seen in late-night curry houses), has made a comeback as the most luxurious and decadent of wall coverings. It's velvety to touch, and

delivery time of six to eight weeks. George Spencer Designs also makes flock wallpaper, using real wool, with prices from £230 per roll, and a minimum order of eight rolls.

However, much cheaper wallpapers can look just as glamorous, even if they are smooth to the touch. B&Q has bought out a brilliant range of boldly patterned wallpapers called the Tate range, with traditional floral, acanthus and damask motifs in eye-catching combinations of hot pink and gold, powder blue and gold, or silvery graphite and blackboard black. At just £20 per roll, the price gives you freedom to experiment. Use the pink as a background for your headboard in the bedroom, the blue to modernise a dining room, and the black in a hallway — but only, ever, on a single wall.

Traditional manufacturers such as Farrow & Ball are still producing hand-blocked wallpapers, with floral patterns that, when seen in a clean combination of delft blue and bright white, bring freshness and modernity.



at £35 per roll. Watts of Westminster, famous for selling fabrics and wallpapers to the clergy and MPs, has wonderful historical papers, such as the Venetian Bottle Green damask, at £102 per roll.

Roof: Cole & Son, Rajapur, £35 per roll. Side: Farrow & Ball, Silvergate, £54.99 per roll. Front: Jocelyn Warner, Kew, £59 per roll



