

HOME FURNISHINGS

Home furnishings lead all secondhand categories: Chairish

September 22, 2021



Chairish is encouraging consumers to buy more vintage home furnishings. Image credit: Chairish

By KATIE TAMOLA

Consumers are increasingly making thoughtful, sustainable purchases when it comes to home furnishings, leading to growth in secondhand furniture.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

During a presentation of Chairish's inaugural home furnishings resale report, experts from the online vintage furniture service discussed the immense increased interest in home furnishings and how findings indicate that this reverence for resale is here to stay. Leaders at Chairish also discussed its role in recommerce versus ecommerce, resale's indisputable and practical benefits for the environment and how vintage is the future of the sphere.

"All of us are really becoming more and more sensitized to climate change and environmental sensitivities in priorities and shopping," said Anna Brockway, cofounder and president of Chairish, San Francisco.

"There is a huge practical benefit to the resale category, particularly given all of the supply chain issues that we are all up against right now," she said. "Vintage by definition is immediately available and ready to ship, and that has huge advantages in this current environment."

The Chairish Recommerce Report includes research and data from Statista, using consumer surveys, official data, data sharing and secondary sources to analyze, model and forecast metrics including market size and share. Statista conducted a survey in 2021 of 3,485 Americans regarding recommerce in the furniture and home goods retail market. Additional sources include internal Chairish community data and independent secondary research.

Resale benefits

There is no denying that secondhand furniture is having a moment. In 2018, fashion dominated the resale category, consisting of about 49 percent of global retail sales, while home furnishings consisted of a relatively modest 11 percent.

In 2020, home became the fastest growing of all the resale categories, and the interest continues to increase, as experts believe habits formed in the fashion space are now migrating into the home space. Eighty percent of Gen Z respondents said that there is no stigma in buying used fashion, which is being reverberated in home offerings.



Secondhand furniture is in high demand. Image credit: Chairish

Seventy percent of shoppers plan to continue purchasing pre-owned products online after COVID-19, and that \$16.6 billion in secondhand furniture is expected to be sold by 2025, reflecting a 70 percent increase from 2018.

By 2027, sales of online furniture and homeware are expected to grow by 127 percent, reaching \$177.1 billion.

One factor propelling buyers towards the resale home furnishings include increased awareness of the environmental benefits of buying preowned items.

As consumers spend more time at home than ever before, issues such as sustainability have become top of mind while brands and publications have pivoted to virtual events to better reach audiences ([see story](#)).

Ninety percent of furniture is made overseas, where fewer regulations exist for pollution, labor and land management. Eighty percent of discarded home furnishings end up in a landfill, while only 0.3 percent can be recycled.

The concept of fast fashion has migrated into the home furnishings space, producing pieces with the intention of a short lifespan for a cheap price.



Consumers are more aware of the environmental factors behind their furniture purchases. Image credit: Chairish

Consumers are being more cognizant about their selection processes, opting for providers like Chairish that prioritize sustainability. Since 2013, the platform has re-homed 550,133 pieces of vintage, antiques and pre-owned furniture.

"I think what is happening is what used to seem like a cheap cheerful kind of fun, little purchase [is being looked at differently]," Ms. Brockway said. "People are starting to see it actually comes out at a pretty high cost, environmentally."

Seventy percent of consumers agree that addressing climate change is more important now than ever, and if more consumers purchase resale goods through the circular economy, by 2030 primary material consumption could be cut by 32 percent.

Chairish also announced its plans to offset 100 percent of estimated carbon emissions from U.S. shipping, a projected 588 metric tons over the year, the equivalent to more than 25,000 bags of waste or planting 9,700 trees.

The furniture service also advises consumers to choose pre-owned products over new, make quality and longevity a priority if purchasing new pieces, resell pieces when you are ready to move on, shop local when possible and

repair/reupholster your furniture when necessary.

What can vintage do for you?

Apart from the several environmental benefits of furniture resale, thrifting in the home space also offers consumers more opportunities to express themselves as well as their personal styles.

Eighty-six percent of shoppers love to hunt for pre-owned vintage and antique home furnishings, while 76 percent of shoppers like pre-owned home decor because of the individuality and uniqueness that the pieces offer.

Consumers are continuously engaging in resale and thoughtful processes to obtain meaningful pieces that they view as investments, from fashion to furniture.

Sustainability has become a pillar of fashion over the last several years, lending to a rapid acceleration of the resale and consignment market.

While younger generations have spearheaded the thrifting movement as a way to recycle apparel and save money, they are beginning to invest in higher-value vintage items. In its 2021 Luxury Resale Report, resale platform The RealReal charted the current state of luxury resale and how the pandemic is propelling consumers towards environmentally-conscious shopping practices ([see story](#)).

For several consumers, selection of a good is symbolic. Consumers, especially when thrifting, want to select products they associate positive feelings and memories with.

Auction house Sotheby's has launched a new series, "Why I Collect," in which six Los Angeles-based creatives share their personal collections of fashion, art and watches while explaining what drives them to collect.

Only three profiles have been published to the auction house's social accounts, but the series will ultimately include interviews of collectors from the industries of film, sports, music, fashion and more. From modern art to watches to sneakers, each individual shares varying perspectives on what inspires them and what they hope their collections say about them resonating with new generations of collectors ([see story](#)).

"There is also like a character and heart and kind of a softer benefit when it comes to vintage," Ms. Brockway said. "People like vintage and resale in general because of the thrill of the hunt, and the idea that they're getting something that's unique and one of a kind.

"And I think that is the really powerful triangle that comes together when you start talking about resale the environmental part, the availability and that kind of rational practical component, and this very emotional connection to vintage," she said.

© 2021 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.