



# Wonderlands Of Fabulous Finds

Talking Shops: One Man's Trash is Another Man's Treasure

*Interior stylist Bettina Deda and tile artist Margie Tweedie interviewed seven retro, vintage, and antique dealers around Sydney to find out more about their passion and what covetable treasures they have on display.*

## Tangerine and Teal

Based on Sydney's Northern Beaches, Tangerine and Teal buys, restores and sells mid-century, retro and vintage Australian furniture and collectables.

### **How do you define Retro?**

Retro to me is trends, objects, fashion or things from the 50's to 70's although now the 80's are being referred to as retro too. The word retro comes from retrospective, meaning to look back. Often these retro pieces or styles hold a sense of nostalgia or memories. Many of our customers today buy a similar piece to one their parents or grandparents owned.

### **What do you specialise in?**

We specialise in Australian made furniture from the late 50's to late 60's, a style called 'mid-century modern'. Features of this style are a classic, simple look with clean lines. Our Australian makers include Parker, Chiswell, Danish Deluxe, Hans Hayson, Featherston and Fler. We also sell some pieces from Denmark and England, which we have sourced locally.

### **What is the most unusual and/or most famous retro piece you have stocked?**

One of my favourite pieces I have stocked was a huge executive desk made in Brazilian rosewood designed by George Korody in Australia in the 60's, named the 'Boomerang Desk' due to its shape. This was such an impressive piece due to its size and rarity. George Korody was a Hungarian-born architect who founded 'Artes Studios' – the leading interior design store of its time in Australia – in the late 1940s. The desk is now in a large Perth real estate agency head office.

### **Where do you source your products?**

Our furniture comes from various sources including furniture auctions, Ebay, people downsizing. Lots of great pieces come up from Melbourne and interstate. Sourcing great pieces takes a lot of time, knowledge and a good eye. We do lots of research into the designer and maker and ensure we are always accurate in identifying the maker before selling the item.

### **Who are your customers?**

We have varied customers with a range of ages and budgets, most have a passion for mid century design and once you start collecting pieces it can get very addictive. We have a waiting list for some items as they are so hard to find, and our customers are willing to wait for the right pieces. Mid-century pieces can be mixed in with contemporary pieces to create a more personal and liveable home.

Sacha Staniford | [www.tangerineandteal.com](http://www.tangerineandteal.com)

IMAGE CREDIT: TANGERINE AND TEAL

## Lunatiques Vintage and Design Collective

Lunatiques has recently taken over the premises and dealers of Mitchell Road Emporium and now houses a collective of over 30 dealers on 3,000 square metres, specialising in anything old from different eras. Customers will also find complimentary services such as upholstery, restoration workshops, and custom-made furniture.

### How do you define Retro?

Retro to us is anything 50s, 60s, 70s & now 80s. Most of us recognise retro as anything well-designed and of excellent craftsmanship.

### What do you specialise in?

We love anything rustic and full of character. We love design and anything wacky that will make a space pop.

### What is the most unusual and/or most famous retro piece you have stocked?

We have had and have many: from old Featherston chairs to a 19th Century French zinc bath.

### Where do you source your products?

For us, it is now mainly word of mouth or country sales.

### Who are your customers?

Interior Designers, Decorators, Stylists and also a lot of commercial buyers such as people that are setting up cafes, restaurants, pubs, etc., and, of course, the general public.

Laura Lalaurette | [www.mitchellroademporium.com.au](http://www.mitchellroademporium.com.au)



**“Retro to us is anything 50s, 60s, 70s & now 80s”**

## The Itchy Kitty

The Itchy Kitty is a small vintage wares shop on the fringe of the vibrant Enmore Road shopping strip; a retro jumble of homewares, decorative whatnots and compact furniture pieces. Products range from the iconic mid-century staples – such as Barsony and Tretechikoff – to the absolute cheesy cheap and cheerful in the \$5 suitcase out the front.

### How do you define Retro?

I have always thought of Retro as a specific aesthetic collection of design approach and materials that came about in the immediate Post-War period. To me it is about a combination of optimism and the future, now firmly rooted in the past from the late 1940's with elements into the early 70's. I understand that the term is much broader to most people.

### What do you specialise in?

Mostly items from the 1930's to 1980's, Art Deco to Super Mario! I specifically like to discover and sell anything from the Atomic era. I also have a strong leaning towards anything Kitsch! I attempt to keep everything with a degree of character and affordable. My Mum, now in her eighties calls it all junk, but it's curated junk!

### What is the most unusual and/or most famous retro piece you have stocked?

Maybe not so unusual or rare to most folks, but I LOVED an original 1981 Galaga table top arcade game machine. It brought back memories of pocket money spent in a dilapidated former department store in George Street, then called Maxi's Roller Rink.

### Where do you source your products?

I am lucky with my sourcing, the special vintage elves and fairies come in the night and miraculously do it all for me!

### Who are your customers?

My customers are Inner West locals and people from other places drawn to the area. I love Enmore where I am located for this eclectic mix... keeps me on my toes some days that's for sure!

Jonathan James | [www.theitchykittyvintage.com](http://www.theitchykittyvintage.com)



IMAGE CREDIT: THE ITCHY KITTY

*“Retro is a particular style with a particular warmth and nostalgic feel”*

## Collectika

Located in Enmore and started about four years ago, Collectika offers a range of quality Scandinavian-influenced and designed furniture. Andrei has been collecting/selling/hoarding mid-century (mainly Australian) designer furniture for the past 10 to 15 years. They also stock books, cushions, candles, bags, and ceramics from local businesses and artists.

### **How do you define Retro?**

The word “Retro” can be used quite loosely these days. We believe that Mid-Century, the 1950s, 1960s and even 1970s designed furniture, homewares and the living are what constitutes Retro. Obviously we have pieces produced or designed in earlier periods of the century that influenced the revolution of mid-century design and culture. Retro is a particular style, from teak veneer sideboards and Ladderax storage systems, to laminate top dining tables and bentwood dining chairs. These designs have a particular warmth and nostalgic feel.

### **What do you specialise in?**

Here at Collectika, our main focus is quality design. We find that a lot of Australian design from the 1950s and 60s was swept under the rug for quite some time, but now thankfully, is beginning to resurface in the Australian lifestyle. Designers like Paul Kafka, Parker Furniture, FLER, Summertone and Chiswell see the praise and popularity they deserve. Over the years, we have acquired a taste for Mid-Century design from Australia and abroad. We stock Scandinavian furniture and glassware (Grete Jalk, Arabia, etc.) as well as vintage Italian and West German ceramics (Bitossi, etc.). We also stock new ceramics from local artists, blankets and pillows from overseas, as well as books and records in collaboration with “TITLE - music, book and film”

### **What is the most unusual and/or most famous retro piece you have stocked?**

We'll go with unusual, for example, a plywood, spindle back, wire-ware leg easy chair Andrei had picked up from an antique store in Goulburn. A very primitive design, dating back to perhaps the early 50s, maybe even late 40s. We have no idea who designed this miraculous piece, but we love it. It's intricacy and detailing of its arms and era crossing design, from its wire legs capped with cylindrical timber ends to its spindle back, is so innovative.

### **Where do you source your products?**

All over! Andrei is on the road a lot, so he comes across many people running out of space and willing to sell off their pieces. We also make a lot of online enquiries, and we have people contacting us quite often wanting to offload and sell to us.

### **Who are your customers?**

Our clientele varies. We stock quite a diverse range in living and furnishing. We have a lot of set designers, interior designers and art directors that acquire our stock mainly for film, advertising or photo shoot sets. The majority of our clientele though, are people looking to reinvent their living spaces, or add to it... people who are looking for a sofa that want a little bit of history and character; something with a bit of life... or perhaps a refreshing dining suite or coffee table. Our products are vintage, but we do focus on bringing new life to each piece. We usually do this through timber restoration or fabric re-upholstery. Our clients are very much interested in Mid-Century furniture, and they usually know what they are looking for or what would work for them. We also stock new products like ceramics, hats, blankets, books and records. These products usually attract a more diverse clientele who may be collectors of records or CDs, book enthusiasts or just looking for gifts for friends or family.

Andrei Meintjes | [collectika.com.au](http://collectika.com.au)

*“A lot of Australian design from the 1950s and 60s was swept under the rug”*



**collectika:**  
retro, vintage &  
contemporary design



**“ Style – All who have it share one thing: Originality! – Diana Vreeland ”**

## Manly Antique Centre

Manly Antique Centre houses a range of antique and vintage dealers in a warehouse on 800 sqm on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

### How do you define Retro?

Retro is a style combined with a certain age: I would say between the 50s and early 90s, but usually associated with the 70s. Chronologically it follows Art Nouveau, Art Deco, 1950s Deco Revival (I call this period Kitsch), Retro.

### What do you specialise in?

We do not specialise, we pride ourselves in the variety and have a wide range of mostly antique pieces mixed with retro and vintage furniture and quality collectables.

### What is the most unusual and/or most famous retro piece you have stocked?

I have been dealing with antiques and retro pieces for 50 years now. I have seen many stunning and unusual pieces – There is no ONE piece that stands out!!

### Where do you source your products?

I am lucky; most people find me. I have a long list of clients I have dealt with over the years... sometimes four generations of the same family. They call me and offer me their items because they are moving or downsizing, for example. People can either call or email me and send pictures of their pieces, or they can bring them in the shop.

### Who are your customers?

We attract a wide range of people from all ages. Since we opened the Manly Vale store eight years ago, I realised that we have never had more young customers than now. Young people obviously love beautiful pieces with a history, and they realise that it is much cheaper to buy antique furniture now than it has ever been. Today, to buy wisely is a good investment.

Anthony Belvanas | [www.manlyantiquecentre.com.au](http://www.manlyantiquecentre.com.au)

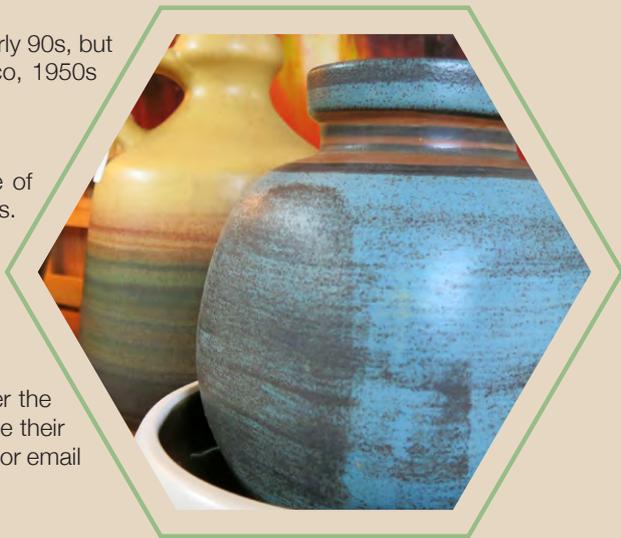


IMAGE CREDIT: BETTINA DE DA

## All Buttons Great and Small

From the simple to the exotic, All Buttons Great and Small has an extravagant selection of buttons from Europe and the rest of the world. Established in 1989, the collection has grown to cater for all aspects of popular fashion.

### How do you define Retro?

When the term 'retro' was originally used in the 1960s, it was describing the period of fashion and accessories of the 1950s. Today, retro can mean any periods in fashion from the past, but usually onwards from the mid 20th century. Some people describe it as being "old fashioned" but suggested in a positive light, as in an earlier time when life was simpler and less complicated.

### What do you specialise in?

We are a button and fastening specialist. We house over 15,000 different varieties of buttons and fastenings in our collection, from simple tailor's buttons to extravagant hand crafted adornments.

### What is the most unusual and/or most famous retro piece you have stocked?

The most unusual retro pieces we stock were hand crafted in Spain and France, from resin and passementerie ribbon. We had some when we originally opened the shop in 1989 and have recently found another source of these beauties for our current customers.

### Where do you source your products?

Our products come from every continent. Some people approach us with their stock, but mostly, we travel the world searching out the unusual for our customers.

### Who are your customers?

All of our customers are creatives who appreciate fine detail and have an eye for beauty and quality. This includes both the professional and the non-professional maker, as well as industry, film and television, theatre. We have provided buttons for many films made in Australia, most notably for Oscar and Lucinda, Moulin Rouge, Australia, to name a few. The designers were looking for exceptional fine details to fit in with their retro and period themes. We have worked with Angus Strathie in both his role as costume designer for Opera Australia, as well as in his collaboration with Catherine Martin in Baz Luhrmann's film Moulin Rouge. As well as being outfitters to Bananas in Pyjamas and Rat in the Hat (with those large white buttons), we recently had the pleasure of being featured through the arched window on the ABC's iconic Playschool.

Lucy Godoroja | [www.allbuttons.com.au](http://www.allbuttons.com.au)

## Mitchell Road Antique and Design Centre

Located in Bourke Road, Mitchell Road Antique and Design Centre is home to over 60 dealers. They sell everything from antiques to art, industrial to indie, Victoriana to vintage and deco to retro in a 2,300 square metre warehouse.

### *How do you define Retro?*

The definition of retro as a prefix is simply 'back', or when used as an adjective it means something associated with, or revived from the past. However, as definitions evolve, the word settles into a more convenient meaning ... something a little different from the original. Thus, the term 'retro' today can mean many things related to "going back", however it mostly means an item or a certain style associated with the many designs of the mid 20th century era.

### *What do you specialise in?*

You could say we specialise in everything! We sell antiques to art, industrial to indie, Victoriana to vintage and deco to retro plus so much more. We are in a huge 2,300 square meter warehouse with over 60 dealers and 150 stalls, which bring as much variety to the place as there are characters and personal likes of dealers. They are also clever at knowing what others like, what the trends are in interior design & fashion and what varieties of collectables are out there. Amazingly they also seem to have crystal balls or psychic powers, making them able to offer items that customers didn't even realise they loved and had to have!

### *What is the most unusual and/or most famous retro piece you have stocked?*

We have a plethora of unusual items always in store, and famous ones come in as well. You can find bizarre jewellery made of human hair or kangaroo claws, a huge New Guinea Shamans outfit & amazing industrial lights cleverly sculpted from rare 1900's car & machinery parts.

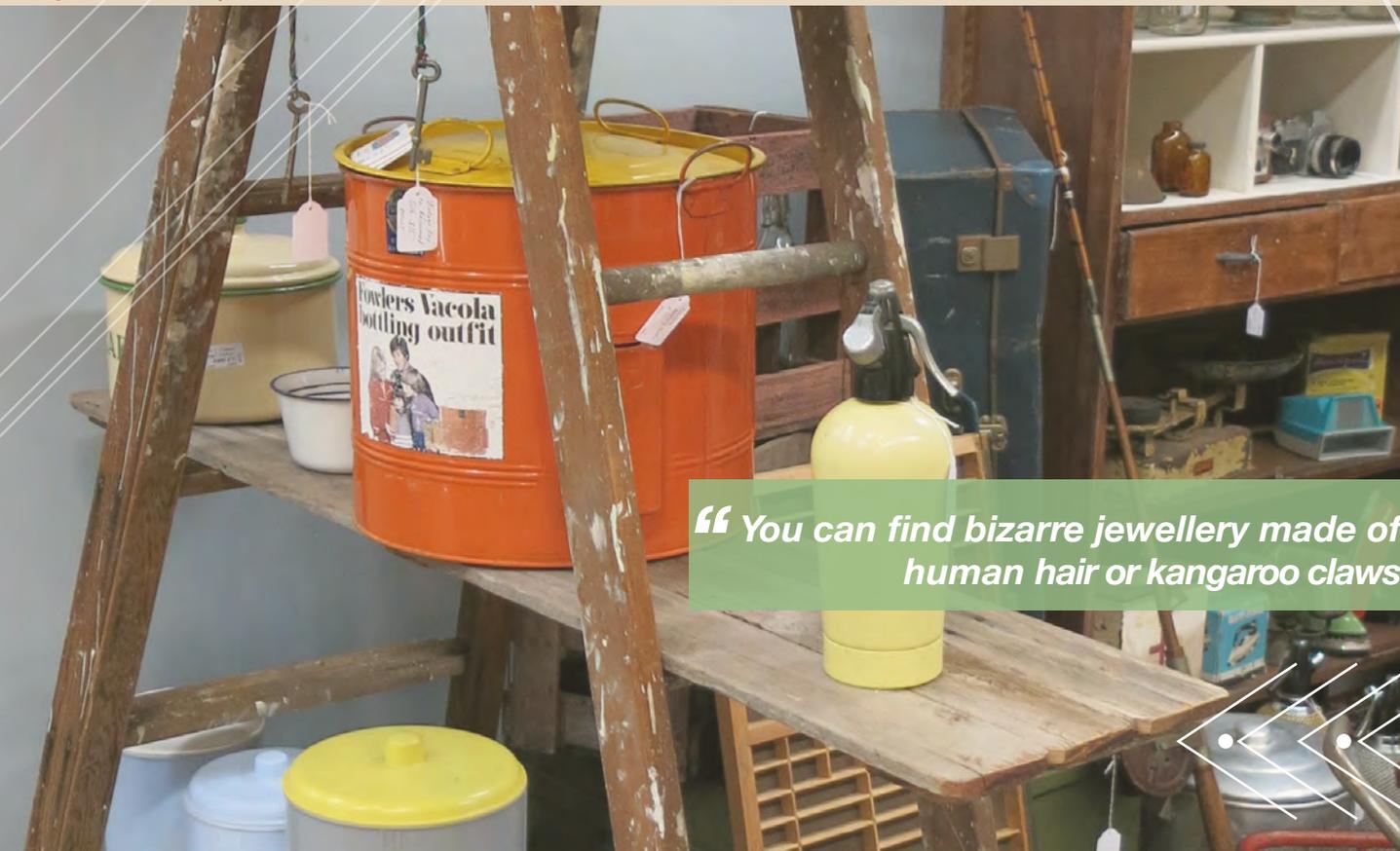
### *Where do you source your products?*

As the centre is a conglomeration of over 60 dealers we cannot say any one place the products are sourced from except, to coin a phrase ... 'from anywhere and everywhere'.

### *Who are your customers?*

Our many thousands of highly valued customers come from all walks of life and many different professions. We have young children come in just as enthused about the vintage toys as their Mums and Dads. We have grandma buying the rare china she may have broken in the past and young couples decorating economically as they start their life together. Professionals are dressing up their office with stylish mid-century furniture, and we have celebrities shopping for unusual pieces of vintage fashion so they can stand out from the crowd! We also have many stylists and photographers come to hire items or our variety of spaces for film, advertisements, magazine shoots or promotions. Because of our extensive selection of items we literally have something for everyone! This brings people in for a diverse range of reasons, likes and interests. Part of the joy of having the antique and design centre is that others share our passion for reusing and saving our precious history from going into landfill.

Lyn Richardson | [www.mitchellroad.com.au](http://www.mitchellroad.com.au)



**“ You can find bizarre jewellery made of human hair or kangaroo claws ”**



*“Retro is all things funky, groovy, colourful... classic mid-century shapes”*

## Vampt Vintage Design

Vampt Vintage Design specialises in highly collectable and unique pieces of vintage and mid-century modern design. The main showroom and sale store is in Surry Hills; their warehouse showroom is located in Brookvale, offering an in-house upholstery and restoration service.

### **How do you define Retro?**

Retro in my eyes is a term, phase or categorised style for all things funky, groovy, colourful, and that are a classic mid-century organic design or shape. Things like moulded plastics, organic moulded plywood forms and tub shaped injection moulded chairs, etc. in bright colours. It's a pretty broad term that can be interpreted in many ways, but that's how I see it: Fun, funky and affordable.

### **What do you specialise in?**

We specialise in Scandinavian vintage/ Danish modern, and all other design classics like Eames, Saarinen, Featherston. Authentic mid-century vintage classics. No copies or remakes. Sustainable design.

### **What is the most unusual and/or most famous retro piece you have stocked?**

Over the past 14 years we have sourced, collected and sold so many great pieces, so it's hard to say which would be the most famous. We found a Saarinen oval marble top table and six chairs in a farmhouse down in the Southern Highlands. It had been stored in a barn for many years and we had to shift the marble top with a tractor on forks. We had to fight off all the other local dealers to get it, and it's the only such set we have had since.

### **Where do you source your products?**

We buy all over Scandinavia and wider Europe. We ship to our warehouse in Denmark and store until we load our 40ft containers and ship back to Australia. We have another container just about to be packed and we ship between three and six containers per year depending on our buying habits or retail needs. We also buy all over Australia. Because of our web presence, we get offered more things than we can buy so our local products come to us mostly these days.

### **Who are your customers?**

Our customers are very broad. Predominantly people who want to invest in sustainable authentic vintage pieces made from rare woods, designed and produced by world famous designers and manufacturers and who want to add character and style to their space. Whether all or part vintage, it is a necessary part of every space to have a few feature pieces with provenance and design. We offer a trade back on all pieces we sell in case your circumstances change. So it's a bit of a no brainer and a guarantee that what you buy from us will retain value and is a quality piece.

And we have a property styling service. We can offer advice for single piece solutions or whole space refits, property styling for sale and for shoots for architecturally designed homes. We just love to share our passion and hope that we can help our customers see what we see.

Dave Beeman | [www.vamptvintage.com](http://www.vamptvintage.com)

*“Our customers want to invest in sustainable authentic vintage pieces”*

**Bettina Deda**

[www.bdcourdesign.net.au](http://www.bdcourdesign.net.au)



**Margie Tweedie**

[www.margantiledesign.com.au](http://www.margantiledesign.com.au)

