

Design Fundamentals for
Non-Designers:
Learn the Basics + Background
of Event Design

A GOOD DAY

“Every great design begins with an
even better story.”

Lorinda Mamo, Designer



Setting the stage

Design is made up of:
Client Story / Guest Experience
Design Foundation / History
Event Vision
Vendor Partnerships

A photograph of a forest setting, likely for an event. A large tree with golden, autumnal leaves stands prominently in the center. To the left, a white, sail-like structure is visible. In the foreground, a table is set with several ornate chairs and lit candles, creating a warm, intimate atmosphere. The background is filled with tall, dark evergreen trees.

Guest Experience

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Cultivating the Guest Experience

- Our goal is to tell our clients' stories through rich design
- Many clients don't know how to articulate their design vision (or even understand the terminology)
- Guests come to events with expectations, we need to meet & exceed them in order to enrich the experience
- Opportunity to elevate the design with our insight

Questions to ask during onboarding & discovery

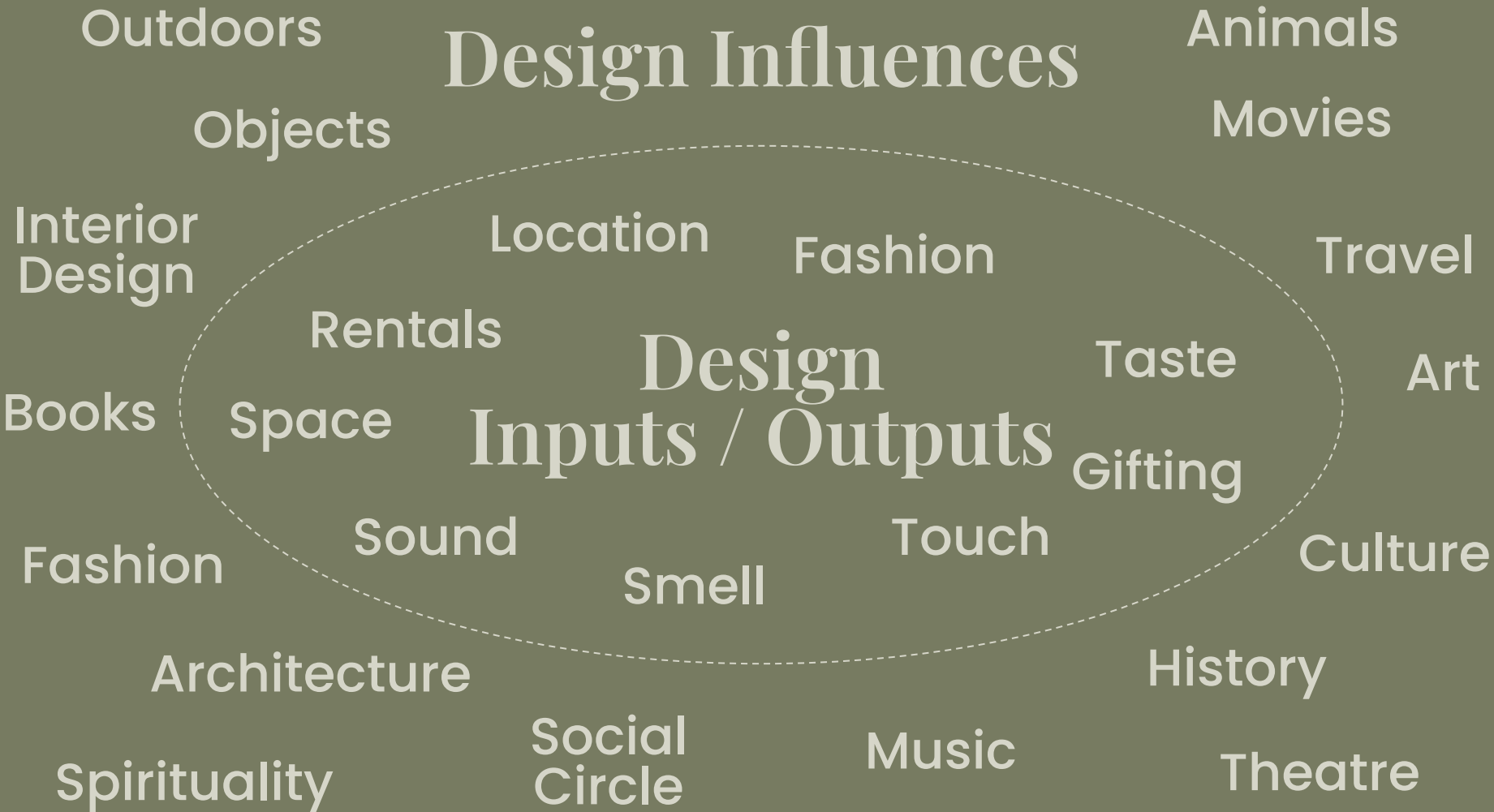
- How do you want your guests to feel at your event?
- What emotions do you want to convey?
- Where will guests be travelling from?
- Describe your event in 3 words
- Describe your guests in 3 words
- Tell me about your favorite trips/food/movies/books (insert phrase here)



Design Foundation

Location Fashion
Rentals Design Taste
Space Inputs / Outputs Gifting
Sound Touch
Smell

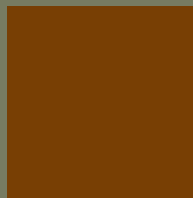
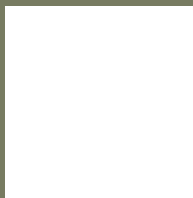
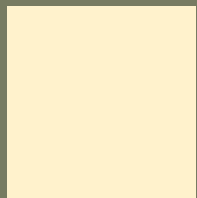
Design Influences



Design Styles

Traditional

Traditional style often includes silk, linen and velvet fabrics. Patterns in damask, florals, stripes and plaids with ornately detailed dark wood, inspired by 18th and 19th century designs. Layered in color and texture, traditional style interiors bring a sense of history and glamour to a space.



Design Styles

Art Deco

Geometric style, featuring lots of gold, black and white details. Deep jewel tones can be brought in to enhance the look.

Embroidery, beading and mixed metals can be translated into linens and accessories.

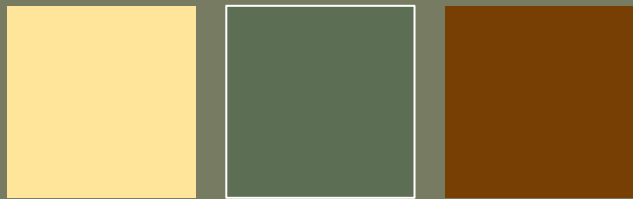


Design Styles

Art Nouveau

Nature inspired organic design, featuring warm woods, heavy embroidery and lots of lush patterned florals. Florals are structured, creating repeated textures and patterns.

Stone elements can be brought in to elevate as well as copper.

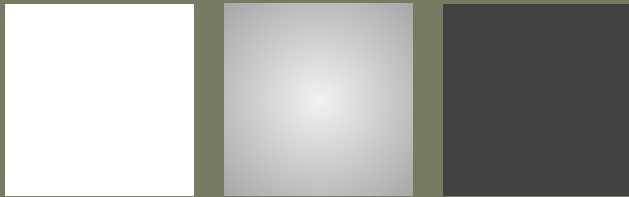


Design Styles

Modern

Contemporary style with a very clean, utilitarian experience. Mixed metals, gloss blacks and whites with saturated pops of color.

Designs are about being practical and functional with all details serving a purpose for the guest experience.

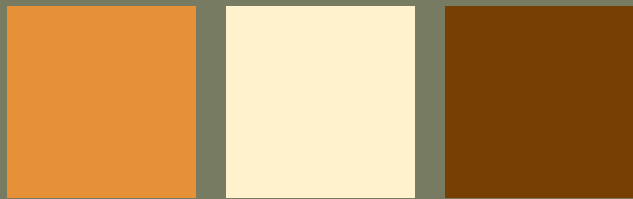


Design Styles

Boho

An eclectic style, featuring lots of lush layered, watercolor details and pops of greenery.

Textures like leather, suede and gauzy cottons can be seen in this style. Woods are warm and raw textured with natural shapes and unvarnished.



Design Styles

Minimalism

A super clean style featured tone-on-tone design or single color applications. Every design element serves a function with little embellishment.

To elevate the look, mix textures of the same color to give a luxurious feeling while giving a cohesive, clean aesthetic.



Design Styles

Maximalism

More is more is more style – featured many layered, competing prints. Design style is about giving the eye many things to look at, referencing a number of different design periods.

Elevate the look with metallic accents and solid pops of color to give some breathing room.



Design Styles

Grunge / Loft

Exposed concrete or brick, natural elements and lots of light to counterbalance the cold feeling of the stone.

Mixed metals and leather can elevate the look.

This style can be a container for another style to add juxtaposition.



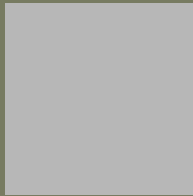
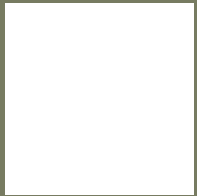
Design Styles

Cape Cod

A soft, wood based style – lots of beadboard, slats and white washed materials.

Painted or light washed wood, with pastel and ocean based colors can warm up the look.

Copper or bronze accents elevate – incorporating a clean aesthetic.



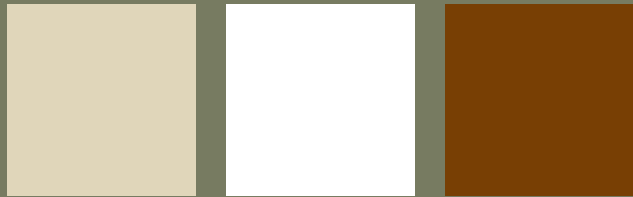
Design Styles

Rustic / Country

Raw, natural woods, light filled spaces and very traditional grounded feeling.

Organic shapes over perfect clean lines, with a homey, lived in feeling.

Stone and hammered metals can elevate the look.



Design Styles

Mid Century Modern

Mad Men meets vintage styling – this style features lots of warm earth tones, medium toned woods.

This style is about bringing the nature indoors and patterns are a mix of organic and geometric, often competing for dominance.

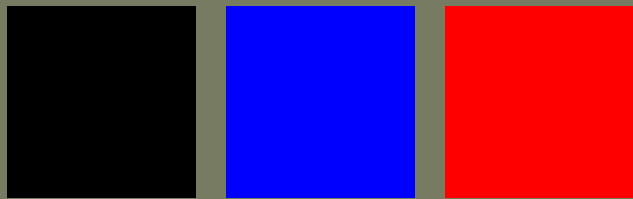


Design Styles

Pop Art

Dominated by bright, primary and saturated colors, pop style features juxtaposing patterns that give the eye a lot to look at.

Acrylic elevates this style with pops of neon to enhance the look.



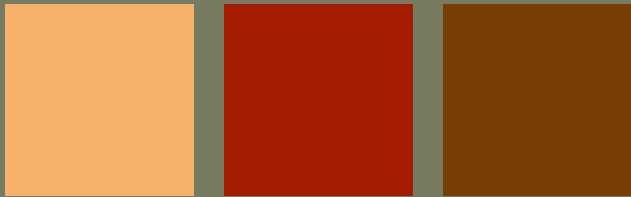
A GOOD DAY



Design Styles Arts & Crafts

Patterns rooted in nature, lots of lush florals and natural wood dominate this style. A craftsman based style, handmade details and layered with details at every turn.

The goal of this style to show all the elements in their natural glory, enhancing what nature creates.



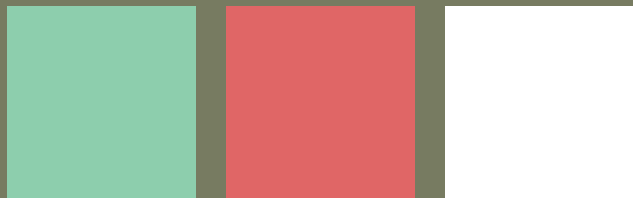
Design Styles

Kitsch / Retro

Saturated muted hues, lots of pattern mixing and chrome accents are core to this look.

An eclectic mix of future looking styles counterbalanced with vintage functionality.

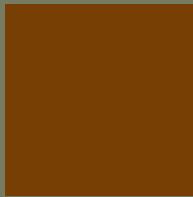
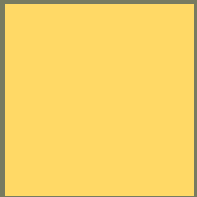
Bold graphic prints are mixed with solid saturated color blocking.



Design Styles

Psychedelic / 60s

Pastels and lots of golden earthy colors make up this style. Featuring trippy, busy prints, these style is influenced by pattern mixing, textures like leather, crochet, linen and greenery.



Design Styles

Disco / 70s

Deep saturated colors, with a lot of glitter and mirrored elements. Lacquered details and highly polished surfaces elevate the look, with suede and leather counter balanced with loose weave, flowy fabrics.



Design Styles

Islamic / Moroccan

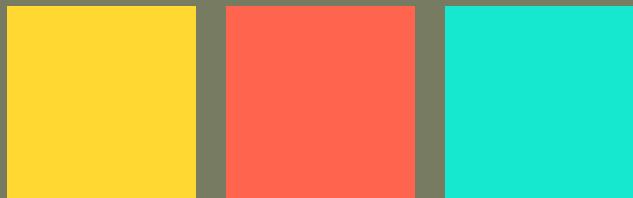
Ornate, geometric styling, with a lot of pattern mixing. Colors can vary greatly, but grid based patterns dominate this style. Glossy textures and well as mirrored and metallic can elevate the look. Arches, lattice and layered are cornerstones of this design style.



Design Styles South Asian

A colorful explosion, featuring intricate embroidery, beading, silks and satins.

Designs reference a handmade feeling with layered colors and textures. Painted woods, cottons and saturated painted metals.



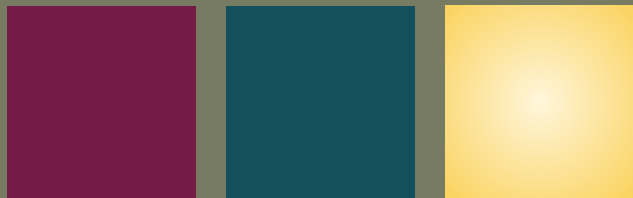
Design Styles

Victorian

Ornate, heavy materials, with layered velvets, leathers and suedes.

Lots of floral prints, bold colors competing styles of furniture.

Gold accents ground this style with beading and embroidery elevating the look in patterns of vines, florals and leaves.

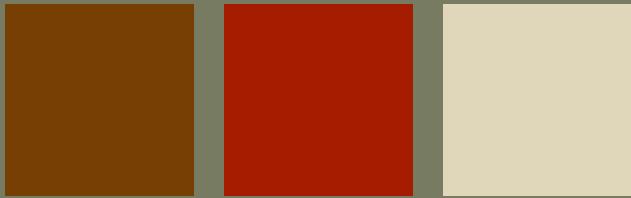


Design Styles

Renaissance

A traditional leaning design style, featuring classical elements like columns, ornate moulding and references to ancient rome and greece.

Arches, domes and repeated design patterns can give order to this style style.



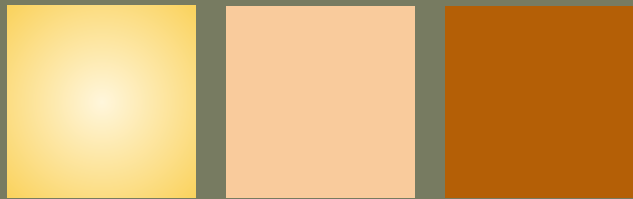
Design Styles

Baroque

A heavy, ornate style, featuring intricate moulding and inlays.

Wood accents, deep tones and gold everywhere. Floral styles include layered roses and lush bouquets.

Painterly textures inspired by paintings can personalize the look.

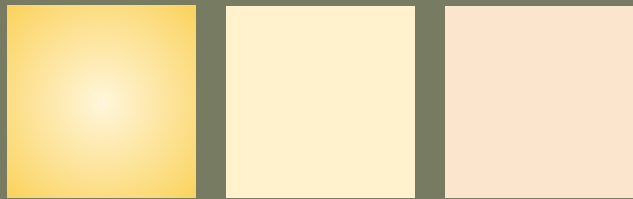


Design Styles

Rococo

A light, soft, playful style with ornate details throughout. Lots of gold, blush, pale yellows and heavy tone on tone embroidery.

Details include painted wood, damask prints and supple velvet.



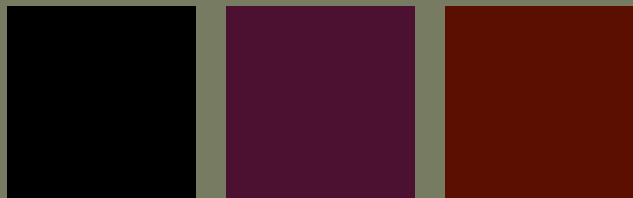
Design Styles

Gothic

Heavy, dark textures and fabrics dominate this style. Lots of black, charcoal and deep plums and burgundys.

Velvet, leather, fringe, super ornate layered details with lots of lush floral.

Lacquered details elevate the aesthetic.



Design Styles

Palm Beach

Tropical inspired design with a mix of pastels and saturated hues. Rattan / wicker, canvas textures and prints add a pop to this overall look.

This is a print friendly design with common styles like flamingos, palm leaves, pineapples and shells being staples.



Design Styles

Chinese / Asian

More geometric in design, Asian influence can be seen with warm woods, traditional chinese red and lots of gold detailing. Prints include native florals, bamboo textures and polished wood.



Design Styles

Japanese

Clean, zen like experiences with very minimalist design references. A very light color palette with a medium tone wood is one of the core styles. Pops of color can be integrated in a natural palette not to disturb the calm feeling built by subtle textures.

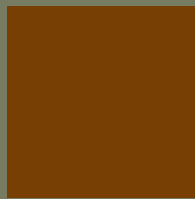
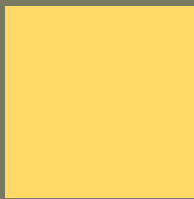
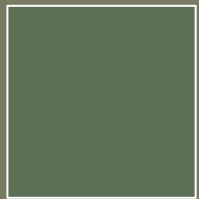


Design Styles

Thai / Balinese

A very nature inspired style, these feature raw woods, wicker, straw and rattan. Lots of lush greenery balance out the warm hues.

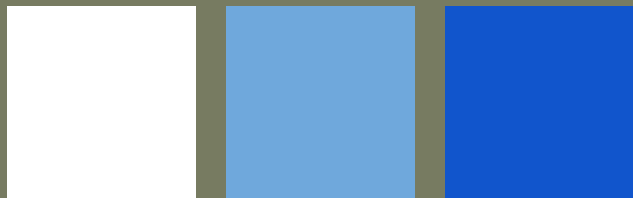
Organic textures like hemp, linen and silk can elevate the style.



Design Styles

Mediterranean

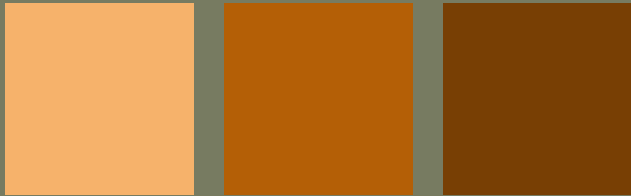
Inspired by the Greek Isles, this style is very clean with elements of eclecticism. Natural stone is balanced with bright whites, and tons of ocean blues. A white wash / light wood can warm up the hues.



Design Styles

Tuscan

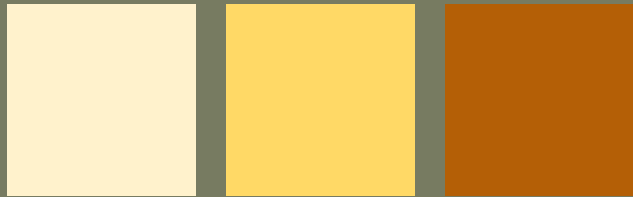
Featuring elements like Marble, Limestone and Travertine, this style blends an inside-outside feeling with lots of stone mixed with warm sunlit textures. Bronze and Antinque Gold are nice metallic accents as well as rust, burnt orange and warm washed textures.



Design Styles Southwest

Think warm sunsets, sand, rocks and lots of natural wood. Woolen textures, leather, embroidery and eclectic fabrics. Hammered metals like bronze and copper can elevate the experience.

Clay accents, succulents / desert based plants can bring in the rustic touch.

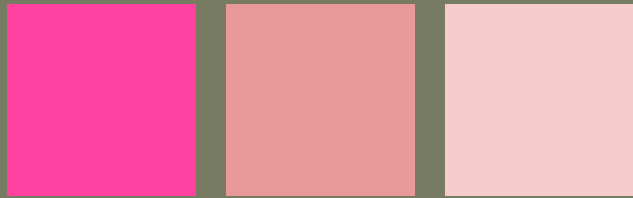


Design Styles

Barbi-core / Trends

Capitalizing on latest trends from pop culture, these designs tend to explode on the design scene and can get stale within a few years. These styles are very “of the moment”.

Start looking for these trends is the latest fashion runways as they change so quickly.



Combining Multiple Styles

- Don't be afraid to mix styles!
- Finding like colors and textures can allow you to mix easily, building on a look that feels more curated and thoughtful.



Combining Multiple Styles

- When mixing, decide on one core style, then pull elements from others that add harmony to the look.
- If mixing patterns from different styles, I find using contrasting elements help. I don't typically pull floral patterns from 2-3 different styles, but it could be a floral, a stripe, and a geometric style.



Crafting the Vision

Save The Date
Rebecca & Kristoph
are getting married
August 14, 2021
Saratoga, California

Vows

Vows

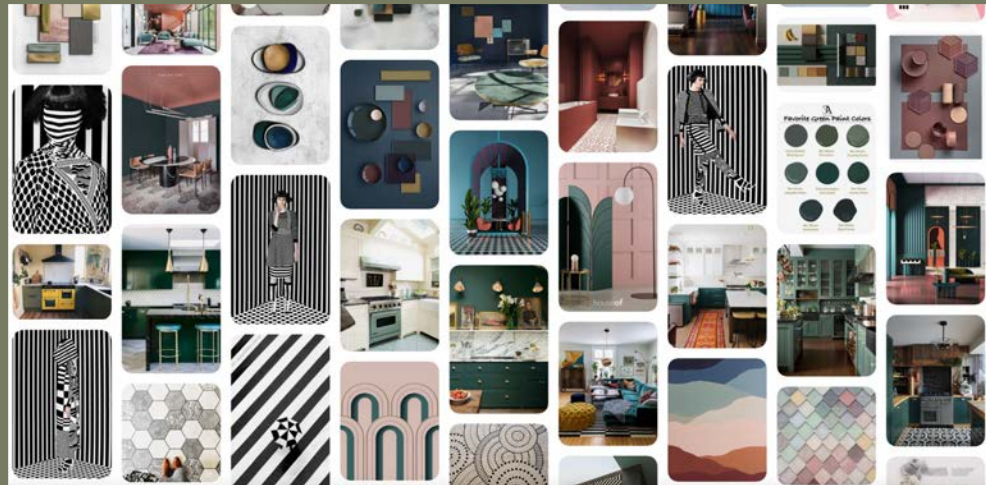
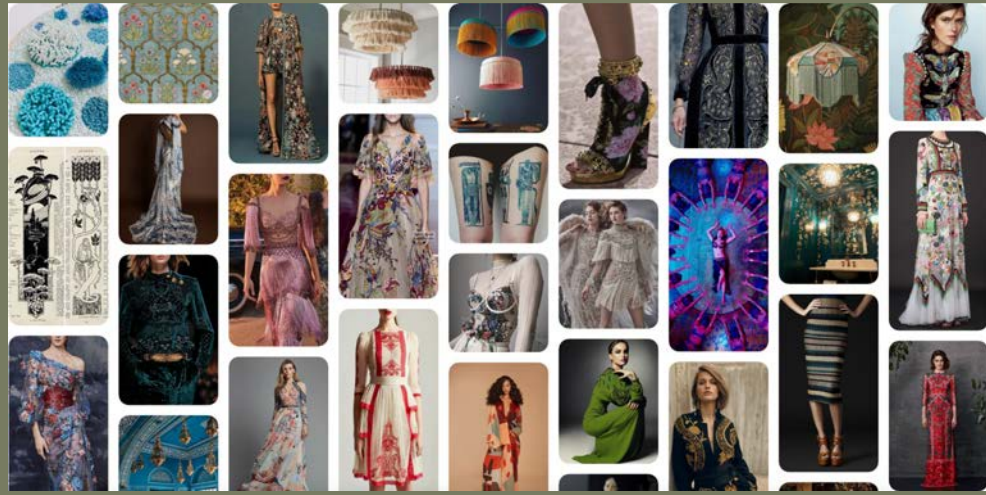
Kindly reply by July 15

Names

— Excited to attend
— Unable to make it

Building a Mood Board

- Start by pulling references from a lot of different places.
- From there, cull down to a visual story that evokes textures, details and feelings you want to get across.



Talking About Design

- When presenting vision to clients and vendor partners, use terms they would be familiar with.
- Discuss what you like about each reference, and give space for reaction.
- Don't be afraid to show designs that have nothing to do with the final product, this is about getting a feeling across.



Translating to the Real World

- When talking with vendors, share the inspiration and vision behind design.
- Talk about the textures, smells, sensory experience these elements will bring.





Vendor Partnerships

Vendor Conversations

- Creating a cohesive design while working with multiple vendors can be a challenge.
- Giving vendors space to bring ideas based off of outside references allows for more creative freedom.
- Try not to send exact references to reproduce, this limits creativity and will only produce designs that already exist in the world.
- Discuss their goals for the project, and see how they want to contribute to the design vision.
- Are there any new “XYZ” you’re looking to try? Showcase? etc.

Questions?



Download our slides