

THE SUNDAY TIMES SECTION 6 | MARCH 8, 2009

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POWER STRUGGLE

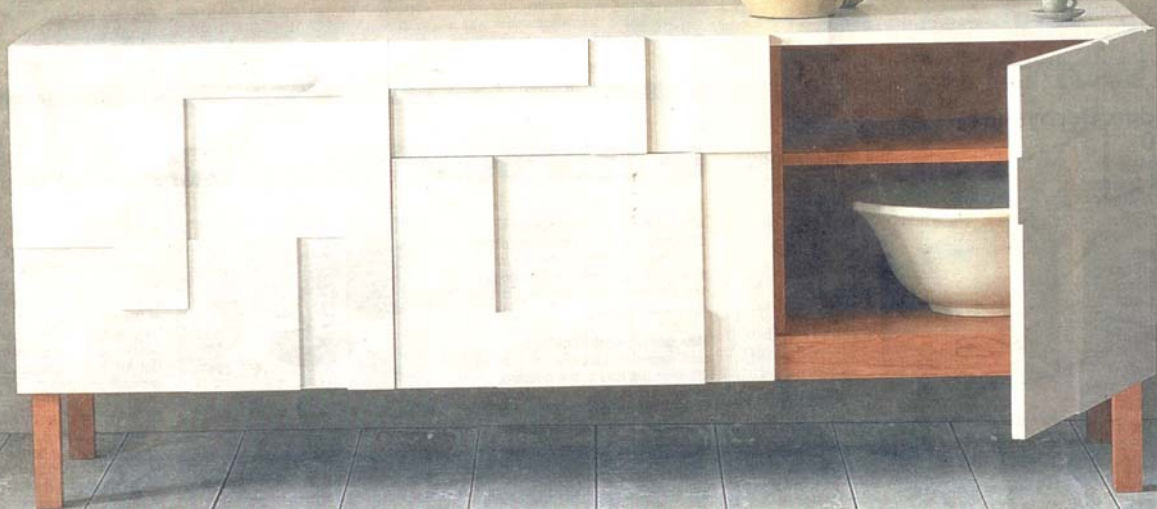
Wendy Holden on her battle against wind turbines **P4**

ARE WE THERE YET?

How to spot green shoots in your area **P6**

Go with the grain

Banish bling with this season's best designs in wood **P18**



Wooden heart

The rich textures and warm tones of wood make it the natural choice for an elegant, bling-free abode

KATRINA BURROUGHS



Lewis has a striped vase with a sliver of the spirit of Thirlwell's vessels (£35), and has launched a range of wooden kitchen utensils by the Nordic brand Sagaform. Look out for the wine carafe, which has a perfect oak globe as the stopper (£19.50; 0845 604 9049, www.johnlewis.com).

The wittiest new accessories are on show at a Crafts Council-sponsored exhibition called Wood. Prototype designs include Carl Clerkin's fox and rabbit coat hooks and Stephen Bretland's candleholders in the shape of tiny trestle tables. The show runs until April 19 at the William Morris Gallery, in Lloyd Park, London E17 (020 8527 3782, craftscouncil.org.uk). The products will be available to buy later this year at www.twentytwoone.co.uk.

In big-ticket basics — timber chairs, beds and tables — look for sculptural, contemporary forms. E15, a design label founded by the German architect Philipp Mainzer, has solid wood furniture, including the oak Shahnaz (with doors; £1,869) and Mahnaz (with drawers; £2,133) units, both by Mainzer, and the ingenious HP01 Tafel bench/table in oiled oak (main picture; £4,330; all products available from Viaduct, 020 7278 8456, www.viaduct.co.uk).

Creator of the most stylish solid-wood furniture on earth, Matthew Hilton offers elegant, pared-back designs such as the Fin dining chair (from £1,029) and the Fracture coffee table (from £2,467; both from De La Espada, 020 7096 1154, delaspada.com).

If you're looking for traditionally made pieces with a thoroughly modern edge, check out Pinch Design (020 7501 9262, www.pinchdesign.com). Using wood from sustainable sources, the

husband-and-wife design duo Russell Pinch and Oona Bannon produce subtle, beautiful furniture, such as the Alba console with decorative relief design (75cm by 180cm by 53cm; £3,995). Their groovy Twig benches and cubes in coppiced hazel are earthy and stylish (bench, 150cm by 45cm by 45cm, £1,425; cube, 45cm square, £810).

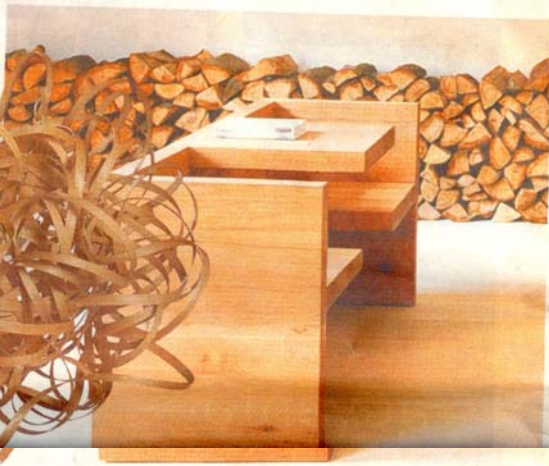
The solid-wood look needn't blow the budget. Marks & Spencer offers the Solid Wood Stool, which is similar

to E15's Backenzahn design, but a good deal cheaper (£149; 0845 603 1603, marksandspencer.com), and Oka has launched the well-priced Tribal console, a narrow trestle with a lovely top in distressed elm, ideal for hallways (£499; 0844 815 7380, okadirect.com).

As well as new arrivals, there are revivals. Two mid-20th-century icons from Ercol made a comeback at Liberty last month. The Butterfly chair has undergone a glossy black makeover

(£425) and the Love Seat has been refreshed with a quirky partial paint job in blue (£625; 01844 271800, ercol.com). At Isokon Plus, guardians of the Isokon brand, which has specialised in laminated birch-ply furniture since the 1930s, modernist classics such as the Penguin Donkey magazine rack are again proving extremely popular (£540; 020 8994 7032, isokonplus.com).

Commissioning furniture direct from a young designer/maker can be



INNER VISION

designcounsel@sunday-times.co.uk

Katrina Burroughs seeks out the best spring buys for your home



Take a bough £370

The Forest chair, by Fast Italy, is an elegant seat in pierced aluminium, with a motif of winter trees. Designed for garden use, it looks equally at home around the kitchen table, and can be stacked when not in use. Available in white, black, metallic grey, beige, olive green, silver, red, lilac and acid green.

81cm high; from Go Modern; 0845 652 0332, www.gomodern.co.uk



Natural light from £395

The Beata pendant light, designed by Russell Pinch of Pinch Design, is made by a milliner from the same material as Panama hats. Available in three tones, from bright white to nutmeg, it comes with a ceramic ceiling rose, a fabric braid cord and a bulb-holder.

Large (50cm by 34cm) £595, small (35cm by 31cm) £395; 020 7501 9262, www.pinchdesign.com

