

FINANCIAL TIMES

# how to spend it

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**LUX LARGESSE**  
DINING ROOMS  
GO BIG ON LIGHTS





From top: Minimal ceiling light from Stefan Axel, \$1,750; LIT Spire large chandelier shell suspension, \$1,200; Octo brass and glass steel chandelier, \$79,000



*The best over-dining lamps should function in a similar way to jewellery, "to create drama and mood"*

proximity to the designers and artisans who create the items you live with," says Hradilko.

Turnstone and Lighting Outlet Octo also provides adjustable hanging heights for its designs, even with its rock chandeliers (many of which measure up to a meter in width). A 1m-diameter deep pendant Chameleon chandelier (GL2194) was recently made for Kelly Higgins' new apartment and hung above her dining table. "What they created for me was amazing," says Higgins, who has since sold the property, complete with chandelier. "The people who bought the apartment really wanted it - I sold it terribly." Today, Octo's bespoke chandelier service - which creates pieces of any configuration and size - now makes up 40 per cent of all its chandelier sales, which are up 15 per cent on last year, and 50 to 60 per cent of which are specified for over dining tables.

While bespoke is the way forward if you're looking for a contemporary design, lesser-art offerings, larger and larger off-the-peg lights in order to compete with those that are made to measure. Kite Turnwood - which recently opened a new showroom in Old Hampton Road - offers a Tuscan-made, 100cm-diameter, LED-lit glass chandelier of hand-blown, LED-lit glass.

"Vandel" for over the dining table, which in its largest incarnation measures 1m in length (GL224, pictured on page 99). German design studio Studio Brechtman has just launched a new 117cm over-table lamp, Aki, with Italian manufacturer I Tiv, which is made from wooden layers of polished wood and emits LED light along its joined-up branches (GL140). Andier Aeri's extremely floral brass pendant across your table - features his (GL796, pictured top). And the award-winning Spanish lighting house, LIT, which specialises in innovative wood-veneer lamps, has just unveiled a number of large pendants, including the exciting Ralodrop design, 96cm wide and 150cm in height (GL300), and the rather remarkable Spire, which features a number of concave

"There wasn't a standard fitting big enough for it on the market," she says. "But every company will work on bespoke designs now - you can get anything you want."

Apparatus Studio is one such company. Run by the New York duo, Gabriel Hradilko and Jeremy Anderson, the company creates painted glass and brass designs that are intended to emit "a warm glow that is both timeless and thoroughly modern." According to Hradilko, the best over-dining lamps should function in a similar way to jewellery. "It is a way to purchase an interior design, create drama and mood," he explains. The company's portfolio includes the geometric Cloudlight,

made up of either 19 or 37 frosted glass orbs hung from aged brass fronds (from £1,800, pictured on next page), and the exposed bulb and brass-arm Compass chandelier (from £2,900), but the duo also do a lot of bespoke work: recent installations of versions of their designs have included a double Compass chandelier for a home in East Hampton, specified by interior designers Bryan Goyffall and Eric Durr, and a number of Compass chandeliers in the MI Clarence Bar in Bangkok. The duo has their customers in the Shanghai, the draw for their customers in the Shanghai-in-New York aspect of the lighting collection. "In an age of mass production, real luxury lies in your

Oliver Kahn Pendant  
handles a pair and a half  
chandeliers, £1,000, from  
Aston 21st, 21st Avenue,  
Chesham, Bucks HP8 3JG



circle of curly wood veneer inside a large circle, and is also 90cm wide (CL200, pictured on previous page). The effect is of sunbath and movement, and the lamps sit, as with most of L2D's pendant offerings, designed to work brilliantly as a single entity or as clusters.

Indeed, the cluster is the correct word for in-pendant lighting – and for good reason. Barratt-Campbell says that a grouping of the same or more pendant lamps can be a “really beautiful and more affordable way” to create an impact over a dining table, particularly when those tables aren’t super-sized. Thomas Howden, who creates beautifully modern pendant lamps with a slightly rustic feel for his new

label Hand & Eye, agrees. “A cluster of smaller lamps can actually sometimes be a better option,” he says. “A very big lamp can make a space feel temporary or even a little oppressive.” In fact, Howden’s largest design is the Persepolis, a hand-turned teak timber shallow dome with a red lac that measures 50cm (E800). Although he has made larger versions, he says, “For us, if a lamp is going to get really big then it should really because like a room, by creating its own sense of enclosure.”

This is particularly the effect a number of designers are going for. Oliver’s newest pendant chandelier, Sea & Cloud, is a mass of organic-looking cast bronze beads,

## Low is key with impact lighting. Fiona Barratt-Campbell favours a hanging height of 180cm off the ground

each housing a tempered glass drop illuminated by LEDs. These can be arranged in anything from circles to lines, and placed vertically or horizontally (from £978 to £49,380, example on previous page, £71,600). According to Oliver’s Joanna Blakey: “The trick as being a light source, it can help to act as a soft room-divide without blocking the spacious feel of an open-plan space, but it still has a ‘wow factor’.” Instead it does, especially when hung low. Low is the key with the same impact drives lighting. Barratt-Campbell favours a hanging height of 180cm off the ground. “It is quite low,” she says, “but as long as it’s fully over a table so none is going to bang their head.” And Oliver’s Harriet Maxwell Macdonald, who runs the company’s New York operation, recommends going “quite considerably lower than one that’s in the middle of a room, so that it’s relative to a table”. She also has sage advice for lighting a dinner: “You must have your lighting on a dimmer switch. Bright light is incredibly off-putting when you’re eating, and horribly unromantic. If you can just about see your food, I always think that’s ideal.” +

### LEADING LIGHTS

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