

ELLE DECOR

luscious
colors!

The New Classic Cool

Romantic Style
in Paris

Glamorous Family Living

Ultrachic
Small Spaces



spring fever



The 10 Most Stylish Barstools

Designers Matthew Patrick Smyth and Katie Ridder weigh in on ELLE DECOR's prize perches

Text by Peter Rubster • Photography by Pierre Chassoux • Produced by Teri Mike

Long the province of high-tops and cocktail lounges, barstools have come into their own at home. "I've bought more barstools for clients in the past year than ever before," says interior decorator Katie Ridder. "Usually as perches in the kitchen, either for eating or doing homework." Fellow decorator Matthew Patrick Smyth has also witnessed the increase in supply and demand. "It used to be a challenge to find a stool that didn't look like it had escaped from a flea-bait," he says. "Now designers are coming up with many examples that are as stylish

and practical as any other piece of well-thought-out furniture." There are a couple of points to keep in mind, however. "First of all, always judge a barstool from the back," advises Smyth. "The front will be tucked under a counter most of the time, so you really won't see it much." And because the seating tends to be casual, people don't necessarily sit as straight or still. "Children in particular like to bounce around them," Ridder adds, "so be sure to choose a model that's stable and sturdy as well as great-looking."