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All About Antique Furniture

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1. Antique Furniture Shopping Options

You have decided to give your home a comfortable and elegant vintage look and feel. This is a great idea, but you have to be prepared to devote time and effort to finding and buying the perfect pieces of antique furniture for your house. It is now easier than ever to find places from which you can buy functional and beautiful objects. The key to success is to know where you look. Learn more about your shopping options in order to find the best buy every time you are on the hunt for a gorgeous antique piece.

The most obvious places to buy antique furniture are the shops of antique furniture dealers. You can readily find these in your local area, if not in the town you live in. They should have some great items on stock. If they do not, then you can ask for catalogues. Most antique dealers keep close contact with fellow dealers from all over the country. Some have connections with foreign dealers as well. So even if they do not have what you are looking for they should be able to get it for you.

It is essential for you to purchase antique furniture from a reputable dealer. You should not hesitate to ask others about the person and their business. You might want to learn more about the pieces they offer - where they come from and how they are valued.

Many antique furniture collectors prefer to get pieces from auctions. You should watch for announcement of any auctions in your local area. You will find ads in newspapers, on museum information boards and even online. It is important for you to choose auctions at which the items for sale come with an auction house guarantee. Auctions give you a great opportunity to get good bargains, but you have to keep in mind that sometimes the prices can be inflated and go way over the actual value of the pieces.

A lot of people find online shopping to be easier, quicker and much more convenient. It is now possible for you to buy antique furniture on the internet. You can choose to visit the websites of dealers or the popular auction ones. Generally, you cannot rely on the objects sold online to be cheaper. Usually, the ones sold in auctions might have a slightly lower price, but you should not expect to make huge bargains.

Online antique furniture shopping is slightly different from the standard one. Again, it is important for you to research the seller and you should do this thoroughly. Check their past record of sales, if available. Do not miss to join antique furniture forums and social network groups. This is the best way to ask around about the seller and determine their reputation.

The problem with buying antique furniture online is that you might not get an exact feel of the piece. You have to look at all pictures extremely carefully, but you have to keep in mind that they might turn out to be misleading.

Hence, you might want to get a second opinion, preferably a professional one. You should also check whether you have any return options and what they are.

You do not have to wait for the right pieces of antique furniture to find you; be proactive and check out yard sales. In many cases, the owners do not have a clue about the actual value of old objects and they often sell them for much less. This is what happens at flea markets as well. You will find it fun to go around these – it is just like treasure hunting. You should definitely look for newspaper, magazine and online ads from individual antique furniture sellers.

Overall, there are plenty of places to buy antique furniture from. It is crucial to deal with reputable sellers who offer some type of guarantee for the items they are selling. More importantly, you should do your homework first and evaluate carefully each antique furniture piece that you are planning to buy.

2. Making a Profit from Antique Furniture

The passionate collectors are usually good traders as well. They know how to enrich their collections and make good money at the same time. Selling antique furniture can be an extremely profitable venture, irrespective of the scale on which you trade. You will certainly make good money even if you just want to get rid of some old pieces stuck in your attic. The key is to know the little tricks.

You have to take selling antique furniture seriously. If you plan to develop a business, it is essential for you to know how to buy the right pieces for less and sell them for more. The best way you can do this is to learn the specifics of the antique furniture market. The demand is determined by a number of factors. The main one is comfort and convenience. Buyers want to use pieces of furniture that are functional and comfortable. That is why desks and chairs are more in demand than beds and wardrobes, for instance. It is best if the items you are selling are easy to maintain. Most people find it difficult to clean and protect from damage pieces that are very elaborate.

Size does matter in the antique furniture business. Items that are very large are usually harder to sell. It is more difficult to find matching furniture pieces for them. In addition, the transportation and maintenance costs are usually quite high. That is why you might consider selling smaller items. They will certainly sell more quickly and, in most cases, more profitably.

It is a good idea to follow the antique furniture market demand trends. Remember that taste is a major determinant of demand and consequently, of prices. Thus, it is a great idea for you to closely follow antique furniture magazines as well as any online forums. You might also want to pay more frequent visits to antique stores and auctions. This will allow you to get a better idea of the current demand trends as well as of the supply.

The key to selling an antique furniture item profitably is to set the price correctly. There are a number of factors that determine the value of an antique piece.

Rarity is important and so is the history of an item. Believe it or not, you will be able to sell an object for much more if it has or was involved in a unique story. Even though the rarity and history are essential, the major determinant of the value of an antique furniture item is its quality. The proportionate pieces with fewer or no marks and stains will sell for more. If the finish is excellently preserved, this will certainly boost the prices as well.

You need to evaluate a piece of antique furniture in order to set its optimal price. You can start by doing some research on the item you have. You will find plenty of information about it in various books on antique furniture. You will get valuable hints regarding its rarity, history and quality, comparative to its counterparts. You should also check out antique shops and auction sites to see how similar items are priced. It is a good idea to ask an antique dealer for advice on pricing the piece. Keep in mind that dealers usually give you a wholesale price, which is usually around two times less than what you can sell the item for to a buyer. If you are willing to pay for a professional evaluation of your antique furniture item, this is a fine option as well.

Where to sell antique furniture is another important question. You can consider doing it online. This is an easy and inexpensive way to reach a lot of potential buyers. You can also place ads in newspapers and magazines. It is possible for you to offer your piece to an auction house, but you have to check the conditions under which they will sell your item carefully.

Once you start selling antique furniture pieces, you have to build a name for yourself. Establish a good reputation by being honest to customers and by being knowledgeable about the items you offer for sale. Use your selling skills - be communicative, responsive and positive.

3. Restoring Antique Furniture

You are a proud owner of an antique piece of furniture. The question is what to do with it next. It is a good idea to find a way to fit the piece in your home. In this way, you can enjoy it to the fullest, even if you plan to sell it later on. Before you place the item in any of your rooms, you have to consider restoring it first.

There are two main ways to go about restoring furniture. You can restore a piece of furniture by cleaning it thoroughly and mending it if necessary. It is also possible to refinish the item. This involves removing the old finish and adding a new one. For restoration professionals, refinishing is not the same as restoring. Removing the old finish and adding new one will actually renovate the piece. While it may look more beautiful, this may actually lead to a decrease in its monetary value.

You are highly recommended to opt for the cleaning and possible fixing rather than for refinishing. However, if you want the piece of furniture for home use only and do not plan to sell it, then it is quite possible to give the old item some gloss. Here you will find a description of both methods for restoring antique furniture.

In order to restore antique furniture by cleaning it, you will need some basic tools such as cloths and a bristle brush. You can use a modern day wood stain remover or lemon juice for hard to remove stains. The latter will not damage the surface in any way. You might want to use a product for cleaning any metal parts, but it is best to leave the natural patina. You will also need wax and some soap, if your piece of furniture is upholstered.

Once you have the necessary materials, you can start with restoring the antique furniture item. You can readily remove the dust using a vacuum cleaner. This is particularly beneficial if the piece is large. Just remember to use a brush that will not scratch the wood. The next step is to use a damp cloth for more thorough cleaning. If there are any stains left, do not hesitate to use the bristle brush and the lemon juice. Damp a cloth in water with some soap in it. Rub the upholstery gently with it. Make sure the surface dries quickly. After you are done cleaning, you can readily wax the wood by placing some wax on a soft dry cloth.

If there are any repairs necessary, the work might be a little bit harder. If you have the missing pieces, you can readily glue them using an appropriate glue product for furniture pieces. However, in case these do not come with the item, you have to devote some time to looking for them. It is essential for you to try and find antique replacement parts of the same type and with the same shape and ornamentations. If this is not possible, then you can consider taking your furniture piece to a professional. They will be able to offer some adequate solutions.

Refinishing an antique furniture piece is more difficult. You will need a stripper product, a lacquer thinner, a wood bleach product, stain and finish. You will have to use a brush, a medium coarse steel wool, 100-grit sandpaper and some soft cloths. The first step is to remove the old finish. You have to apply the stripper gently making one or two strokes with the brush only. After the chemicals take effect, which usually happens in 2 to 3 minutes, you have to use the steel wool to remove the old finish. Then you need to use the lacquer thinner to remove the stripper.

Once the old finish is gone, you should take the wood bleach and apply it to every stained spot and water mark that needs cleaning. Then use the sandpaper to make the wooden surface super clean and smooth. Apply the stain next. Remember to wipe off any excess amounts so that they do not damage the wood. Leave the stain to dry for 24 hours. The final step is to apply the finish using a soft cloth or a brush.

4. Repairing Antique Furniture

Old pieces of furniture have unique fascination. They can add beauty to any décor with their unique designs. Moreover, they can bring unique coziness to any home. At the same time, most antique furniture pieces bear the marks of time. That is why they might need some repairs done. You can do most of the repairs on your own using basic tools and materials. You will do a great job, as long as you have the right instructions at hand.

As a start, you have to identify what is wrong with your piece of antique furniture. Most items have only some types of marks and stains that are fairly easy to remove. Hence, you can readily start from there.

Water stains are extremely common, so you need to know how to remove them without damaging the wooden surface. The more recent water stains are white. They can be easily removed. You can choose to use a chemical compound called amalgamator. All you have to do is dampen a soft cloth in it and apply it gently to the water stain without rubbing. Simply touch the surface and press a bit so that the amalgamator can penetrate into the stain. If the mark does not disappear after a few minutes, then you need to do it again. Remember that the cloth should be damp but not wet when you apply it to the water stain.

If the water stain cannot be removed with amalgamator you need to use the softest steel wool to rub it. Make sure you do it gently. If this does not work, then you need to use 600-grit sandpaper. You can damp the sandpaper in some soapy water, which will act as a lubricant. Rubbing the stained surface with the sandpaper should work.

It is fairly easy to fix scratches and nicks on wooden surfaces. You need to use an appropriate stain for the purpose. You are highly recommended to get pigmented oil stain for best results. The first step you have to perform is to clean the wooden surface carefully to remove any dust or spots. Then you need to apply the stain using a soft cloth. Make sure to cover the entire scratched surface. After applying the stain, take another clean cloth and wipe the excess immediately. Then allow the surface to dry, preferably for 24 hours. The final step is to apply new finish using a cloth.

For more stubborn stains, such as dark water marks and cigarette stains, you might have to consider refinishing the wooden piece of antique furniture. You have to take into account the fact that the look of the item will be changed and that its original value might fall. Still, this step is necessary for repair, if the surface is heavily damaged.

You need to strip the finish using an appropriate stripper. It is best to apply it with a brush. Then you have to remove the stripper using a lacquer thinner. You can use wood bleach to remove all stubborn wood stains. Just make sure you follow the instructions for using the product closely. Again, you can remove the more stubborn stains using steel wool and sandpaper. It is best to rely on coarser ones for best result. The next step is to apply stain, just as described above. After it dries apply the finish and your antique furniture piece will be as good as new.

It is not impossible for old wooden pieces to break, even if they are not heavily used. If a leg, back or bar is damaged beyond gluing, then you have to look for a replacement part immediately. It is important for it to match the style and size of the broken piece. In addition, it should have a matching joint so that it can fit your furniture piece. If you cannot find a match, then you can consider having the item repaired professionally.

Overall, any serious antique furniture repairs will not be necessary, as long as you maintain the pieces you have well. It is a good idea to protect wooden surfaces from water and cigarette stains. In addition, you should be careful not to scratch the finish.

5. Best Ways to Recognize Antique Furniture

Nothing can compare to the beauty of a piece of art. There are antique furniture pieces that deserve to be called masterpieces. They will certainly give your decor an incomparable look and feel. In addition, antique pieces of furniture are a great investment. Their value is only going to increase with time. The benefits of collecting antique furniture are many and varied. The key to success in this hobby is to recognize the pieces. This will allow you to evaluate them and decide whether they are worth your attention and money or not.

Learning how to recognize antique furniture is not a very hard task, but it requires dedication. As a start, you have to do some reading and find out more about the different styles of furniture. You will find plenty of information considering the fact that there have been various decorative art movements throughout the ages. As an antique furniture collector, you should pay greater attention to the designs of the pieces from the different styles. The sizes and shapes matter a lot, but the true hints will come from the decorative motifs of the piece of furniture. The ornamentation will show you which the style of the piece of furniture is.

Most of the pieces of antique furniture are made from wood, even though there are some exquisite metal pieces as well. For this reason, you have to learn how to recognize the making of the pieces. The most popular technique used in the past and even to this day is called veneering. It involves the making of the structure from coarse and less expensive wood. Then the ready piece is covered with thin layers of wood, which have more impressive natural shades and can be polished to give a unique dazzle. Veneering techniques have changed with the movement from one style to another. Some furniture makers had unique methods for producing their pieces. Hence, it is a good idea to look into veneering more closely to recognize antique furniture.

The most important task is to make sure your antique furniture is not a fake. Generally, you can expect the old wooden pieces to have coarser and sometimes uneven surfaces. The coloring is hardly ever the same on the entire piece if it has been used in the past. It is perfectly natural for light to have left its marks forming some lighter spots. In addition, the parts which have been touched frequently tend to be darker and shinier. When looking at antique furniture, you have to check the joints specifically. The older types have various styles including dovetail and mortise. They are wider and often larger than their modern day counterparts. More importantly, the joints were hammered by hand, so they will not to be perfectly uniform in the same piece of furniture.

There are various signs of aging that will show the aging of a wooden piece. Wood shrinks with time and this does not happen evenly.

Hence, you can expect the shape of the piece to be somewhat imperfect. You can do some measurements to check how much the wood has shrunk on different sides. It is perfectly natural for wood to crack with time, so you should not hesitate to run your hand on the surface to feel any cracks and warps.

It is perhaps a little bit more difficult to recognize metal pieces and wooden ones that have metal ornaments. With time, the metallic surfaces become oxidized. In turn, a unique coloring called patina is formed. This is your best hint for recognizing aged metal pieces. The different metals, such as iron, bronze and silver have varying patina shades, which you should look into. The problem with recognizing the age of a piece is that patina can be artificially made using modern technology. Therefore, you should look for other signs of aging, such as bending, scratches from use and darker spots.

Overall, you have to be well prepared to recognize antique furniture. You have to inspect each piece thoroughly using your knowledge and to an extent, your instinct. You might find the task difficult at first, so it is best to take as much advice as possible. Still, with time you will be able to recognize the different pieces more easily.

6. Caring for Your Antique Furniture

A piece of antique furniture can double or treble its value as long as it is preserved in its original condition. Taking care for such objects is not a hard task, but you have to give it some thought and be disciplined in regard to cleaning and maintenance. You have to start preserving the antique piece the minute you take it home.

There is an important matter that should be addressed first. Some people choose to refinish an antique furniture piece because the original finish has lost some of its natural properties. In most cases, this will be a mistake. Refinishing such an item will most likely lead to a fall in its value. However, in some cases, when the finish is not original or it is covered by paint or heavily damaged, you might consider refinishing. In any case it is best to consult a professional restoration specialist working with antique furniture for advice.

It is best to clean the piece of furniture, if it has any obvious marks or scratches. Generally, you should perform only basic cleaning. You have to use a very soft cloth and dampen it just a little bit to prevent it from scratching the wooden surface. Then you have to clean the item carefully. Any sticky stains can be removed by using just a little bit of lemon juice. It will not damage the surface. White water stains can be removed with a substance called amalgamator. You should not remove the naturally formed patina on any metal surfaces or ornamentations. Its preservation is essential for the value of the piece.

If there is heavy scratching on the wooden surface, you should treat it with pigmented oil stain. Make sure you use a high quality one that cannot alter the appearance and strength of the finish. Follow all instructions for the stain's application and remember to wipe off the excess after applying the substance.

After all the cleansing is done you have to wax the piece of antique furniture with high quality wax. Do not use sprays that contain silicon, as that can damage the antique finish.

You have to find the best spot for your antique furniture item. It is best to choose the place first and then move the piece since frequent transportation might cause ungluing of joints and other damage. You should not keep antique furniture items under direct sunlight as the solar UV rays can damage the finish. It is best not to put your piece near a window. If sunlight will reach the item use thick drapery to protect it.

You should not place your antique furniture piece near heating sources, such as radiators, fireplaces or stoves. It is also best for the item not to be facing air conditioning vents. Generally, an excessive amount of heat can damage wood by causing it to shrink. Exposure to humidity is equally dangerous. Mold can start forming on the wooden surfaces. Moreover, the wood will expand, which can lead to cracks and more serious damages. You have to keep your antique piece of furniture in a place that is not too hot or too cold nor too humid or too dry. If necessary, you can consider using a humidifier or dehumidifier.

Before you place your piece of antique furniture, ensure that you know how to handle it. Chairs should always be held by the seat when moved from one place to another. Do not hold such a piece by the back or handles. A different rule applies to tables. They should always be taken by the apron legs. If you are handling an armoire or a cupboard, you have to remove the drawers and shelves first. Generally, you should always lift and never drag antique furniture pieces.

The problem with pest infestation should be prevented effectively. It is best to have your house checked and treated for pests that can cause damage to wood regularly. If there is infestation affecting your antique furniture, make sure you consult a professional restorer before you undertake any action.

Last but not least, make sure you protect your antique furniture piece well. Do not leave anything containing liquids on it. If water is spilled on it, wipe it off immediately. Check the piece regularly and clean it with a soft damp cloth when necessary.

7. Most Popular Styles of Antique Furniture

Collecting antique pieces of furniture is an extremely rewarding task. However, before you start buying items you need to do your homework. It is essential for any collector to recognize the different styles of antique furniture. This will help you recognize them, date them and evaluate them. Here is a quick guide to the most popular styles of antique furniture.

Before you get to know the different styles in more details, you have to learn the difference between style and period. When antique dealers and collectors talk about furniture period, they refer to the time during which it was made. The term style refers to the design and distinct features of a piece.

The fact that an item has a specific style does not mean that it was made during the time period when the respective style was at its peak. Keeping this in mind, you can look into the popular furniture styles throughout the different epochs.

The earliest pieces of furniture that you can find on the market today come from the Gothic period, which ranges from the second half of the 16th century to the second half of the 17th century. The Gothic style pieces are crude and have sharp geometrical shapes. Ornamentation is rare, with the most notable decorative motifs being the floral ones.

In 17th century Europe the most notable furniture styles was Louis XIV. It was incredibly gaudy and elaborate. As a result, not many pieces were produced and the ones that have survived to this day are usually kept in museums. The early 17th century marks the formation of the first American furniture style, known as Early Colonial. It borrowed heavily from the English Stewart style pieces. It was also influenced by the Italian Renaissance. As a result panel construction, rounder shapes and spindles came into fashion.

The Rococo style ruled Europe, at least until the second half of the 18th century. The furniture pieces from this period boast sophisticated elegance. The top surfaces have elaborate shapes with gentle curves. The thin legs are beautifully curved as well. The decorative motifs are elaborate and most often take the form of flowers, leaves and vines. During this period furniture pieces were designed to accomplish maximum comfort.

The 18th century saw the development of many distinct furniture styles. In America the William and Mary style became increasingly popular. It had a notable Dutch and English influence as well as Louis XIV influence. The burlled veneers and the teardrop pulled legs are most characteristic for this furniture style. The Queen Anne Style became one of the most popular in the 18th century. It brought a revolution in the design of furniture in England and America. The pieces became more elegant and even graceful. The large forms were abandoned to give way to the thinner and gentler designs. The Queen Anne style marked the introduction of the cabriole leg and the more abundant use of walnut, maple and cherry wood for furniture making.

Chippendale is one of the most notable 18th century styles. It was influenced by the Gothic, Georgian and the popular at the time Chinese style. As a result, the forms became more simplistic, but remained elegant and exquisite. The Sheraton style is also known for its fine elegance and balanced proportions. The ornamentation became much less elaborate and symmetric. The Federal or Neo-Classical style borrowed heavily from Classicism and its straighter more natural forms. The ribbons, leaves and the Federal Eagle became the most notable decorative elements.

The most notable 19th century furniture styles include Empire, Victorian and Biedermeier. The Empire style was influenced by antiquity and the Egyptian, Greek and Roman styles in particular. The flat uniform surfaces and ornamentations with mythological creatures are typical for Empire furniture. Victorian furniture was heavily influenced by various past styles. The curved forms came back into fashion and so did the carvings, scrolls and floral motifs. The curving lines and the floral and fruit ornamentations are typical for the Biedermeier style as well.

The beginning of the 20th century was marked by Art Nouveau. The designs of the antique furniture pieces from this period are influenced by organic forms. The linear free flowing forms are typical for this period. The decorative motifs are natural yet abstract, reflecting the unique ideas of the designer.

8. Guide for Buying Antique Replica Furniture

If you are fascinated by the unique elegance and opulence of antique furniture, it is certainly extremely rewarding to furnish your home with gorgeous antique items. If your budget does not allow for originals, if you find it hard to discover matching pieces or if you cannot spend time searching for rare antiques, you can readily opt for antique replica furniture.

There are different advantages to choosing this option. You will spend much less on reproduction pieces than on originals. You will be able to select matching furniture from a wide range of items. In addition, the new pieces will be in excellent condition. Furthermore, it will be easier for you to preserve and maintain replicas. At the same time, you will enjoy the exact same look of the reproduction pieces as you would with an original. Still, shopping for antique replica furniture is not simple. There are some essential factors that you should take into account in order to make the best choice.

It is important to be familiar with the different antique furniture styles. You do not have to get into great details, but you should know the difference between Queen Anne and Empire style, for instance. This will help you to choose the right pieces for your home. More importantly, you will be able to select matching items from one and the same style that will make the décor uniform. Hence, do some reading and look at notable furniture items from the different periods. Generally, you should approach the search for replicas in the same way you would look for original antique pieces. This will allow you to create a unique, cozy and impressive décor.

You should be able to find stores specializing in the sale of reproduction antique furniture pieces. Do not hesitate to check out their selection of items and determine which ones you like best, but you should not hurry to make a purchase. The prices are usually lower in online stores, so you can just shop around on the internet to compare prices before buying. You should also look for discounts and sales available. Estate sales, auctions and flea markets are also possible places to find what you want. You may even find originals as well as great replicas at a bargain.

High quality is the main thing to look for when shopping for antique replica furniture. After all, you are planning to use the items for a long time, so you would want to make sure that they are strong and durable. It is a good idea for you to familiarize yourself with the largest makers of antique replica furniture. They usually offer high quality products at affordable prices. Still, it is also a good idea to check out the works of smaller furniture makers that have a reputation for offering excellent quality items.

When choosing an antique replica furniture piece, make sure you know what type of wood it is made from. You have to be certain that the item you purchase is made from strong, solid wood. Keep in mind that the items made from aged wooden panels resemble the originals more closely, but they are usually more difficult to maintain.

Most people think that the antique replica furniture pieces have to be handmade. This is not necessary. There are some gorgeous items made with the use of modern machinery. They are good replicas of antique models, even though some specific parts, such as the joints, and some common imperfections, like the grainier surface, might not be present. Hence, you might want to check machine made pieces of furniture, especially if you have concerns about the cost. Still, the handmade models have their specific appeal that is incomparable.

When shopping for antique replica furniture, you have to ensure the safe transportation of the items you buy to your home. In most cases the retailer will arrange this for you, but if you are getting items from an auction, estate sale or a flea market, you will have to organize the transportation yourself.

9. Brief Overview of Antique Reproduction Furniture

A lot of people prefer to have a home décor in an antique style. In some cases, an antique item or two might make all the difference. In other cases, an entire room can be furnished with antique furniture pieces. The problem with these items is that they are usually very expensive. That is why many people choose to opt for antique replica furniture. It is definitely a good idea to get familiar with this option. In this way, you will make an informed decision on whether or not to buy such pieces.

In art reproduction means an exact copy of an already existing piece. This is certainly applicable to painting and sculptures. However, when it comes to decorative arts and furniture in particular, the situation is a little different. It is possible for an exact replica of an old piece to be made. For instance, a chair can have the exact same legs, seat, back and armrests as well as the upholstery with the same weave pattern and shades. However, often the replica is not exact due to various reasons, such as the technique used for making and the types of materials from which the item is made.

In some cases, the design of the antique reproduction furniture piece is inspired by and closely replicates an original style, but it is not a copy of an old piece. It is not uncommon for designers to mix and match different elements and ornamentations, to improve colors or to add a pinch of creativity to their models. This practice is not uncommon, but it should not be mistaken with the making of original pieces of furniture, which can have an antique style.

Due to the fact that different techniques can be used for the designing and making of replications, there are different types of antique replication furniture.

The best and most expensive antique reproduction furniture pieces are made from antique wood and other antique materials using original techniques and types of tools. For instance, a fine table replica can be made from eighty year old wood with the use of standard saw for the cutting of the panels instead of an electric one. The legs of the table can be made with an antique woodturning machine. Such a model will certainly have a high value, especially if it is custom made.

It is quite possible for craftsmen to use aged materials and new machinery and techniques for the making of antique reproduction furniture. This will automatically lower the cost of the item. In some cases, only the original style and design are replicated. New materials, tools and techniques can be used for the making of the pieces. This makes them cheaper, but if the wood and other materials are of high quality, then you can expect the items to have a higher intrinsic value, even though their value as art objects will be significantly lower.

Generally, the value of antique reproduction pieces is lower than the one of originals. However, there are exceptions to this rule that you should be aware of. As said earlier, if the reproduction item is unique, made from aged materials and of high quality, then it can actually be more valuable than an original antique piece, which does not have these attributes.

The value of a piece of antique furniture is determined by its age, provenance, rarity, quality and condition. This makes it possible for a replica to acquire an antique value at one point in time. For instance, a reproduction of a 17th century piece made in the early 1900's can actually be considered an antique. Its value will be even higher, if the item is custom made, as this makes it extremely rare. If this old reproduction furniture piece is of excellent quality and in good condition, then it will be even more valuable and more expensive on the market than the original.

It is true that antique replica furniture pieces do not have the same significance to collectors and dealers. However, just like in the example above, they can have or acquire high non-intrinsic value. More importantly, these pieces can add the required antique style to your décor and elegance to your home, without you spending a fortune.

10. Important Characteristics of Antique Oriental Furniture

The Orient has always been and still is extremely exotic for Westerners. We marvel at the art pieces from the Far East not only because of their unique designs, beauty and elegance; the forms used in this part of the world as well as the decorative arts techniques vary dramatically from what we are familiar with. Hence, you should expect to come across a lot of surprises when looking for antique Oriental furniture.

The culture in the Far East differs dramatically from the culture in the Western world. This creates dramatic differences in the lifestyle as well as in home décor and the furniture used. The antique Oriental furniture pieces are extremely simplistic, especially compared to the elaborately designed items from countries such as France and Germany.

The decorative motifs are basic and can even be described as crude. In many cases, they are missing completely. The Oriental furniture pieces are designed to bring functionality and uniformity to the décor. Their purpose is to bring harmony from the natural world into the house.

Despite their simple designs and geometric forms, the antique Oriental furniture pieces can boast originality, beautiful colors and stylish ornamentations. In addition, various lacquering techniques come from the Far East. These methods gave elegance and a refined look to the pieces.

The most notable antique Oriental furniture pieces come from China and Japan. The different styles which emerged in these countries remained in use for centuries due to the traditional practices of Asian artists, designers and craftsmen. Unlike the dramatic changes of styles that took place in Europe and America, the traditions in Oriental furniture making were preserved, even though practical improvements to the designs were introduced throughout the different periods.

The Chinese homes were modestly furnished. In many cases, one piece of furniture served a dual purpose. For instance, the Ta beds and Luohanchuang beds were used both as beds and benches and sofas for sitting.

Plain geometric designs were typical for the chairs and stools. The traditional Chinese Dengzi stools are low and have a plain square form. The Zuodun stools have unique barrel shapes and more artistic designs. They resemble exotic drums. Most antique Chinese chairs have square seats. The back is made by three vertical wood panels with the central one being wider and the two side ones being extremely thin. The three pieces attached to a horizontal top panel. The legs are straight and relatively short. They have little or no ornamentation.

Antique Chinese tables have rectangular or square tops and legs. Tables of different sizes and heights served different purposes. The larger ones were used for dining. The ones with drawers served as desks and the small and tall ones were used as stands for plants and decorative objects.

Most antique cabinets coming from China have rectangular shapes and rectilinear lines. Drawers are not typical. You can usually find only shelves behind the two doors of a cabinet. Most models lack any kind of decoration and ornamentation.

The dramatic colors are typical for antique Chinese furniture. Red and black are the most common shades, even though green and brown are popular as well. The wood was highly polished and has a gorgeous shine. Various lacquer techniques were used to give furniture pieces durability and beauty.

The geometric forms and rectilinear shapes are typical for Japanese antique furniture as well. Different types of woods, such as cedar and Japanese elm were used for the making of tables and cabinets. The chairs were not common in traditional Japanese décor. Just like in China, the wood was polished to get the most perfect gloss. The soft and natural red colors are the most common for Japanese furniture. The shades vary from dramatic fire red to paler orange.

The ornamentations are not typical for traditional Japanese furniture, even though some items from the 19th century, influenced by Western styles, have beautiful gilded metal appliqués with simple floral patterns.

The traditional Japanese cabinets, known as tansu or dansu, are the most popular pieces of antique Oriental furniture from this region. They have various distinctive designs, typical for the different periods of the country's history. The most impressive kind is Kaidan-Dansu – a cabinet with a staircase shape. It actually served both its furniture and architectural purpose.

11. The Differences in Antique Italian Furniture

It is not a mistake to say that Italy is one of the cradles of civilization. The magnificence of the Roman Empire is still preserved in many of its towns and cities. Italy was the center of Renaissance art, the masterpieces of which are preserved to this day. Thanks to various factors the culture and arts in this region continued to flourish. These are just some of the main factors that explain the large interest in antique Italian furniture. It is perfectly natural for anyone to want to take a piece of history and admire it in their own home.

The periods in Italian furniture making and the changes in style followed closely the pattern typical for the rest of Western Europe. Before the 15th century revival of classicism, the furniture was plain and lacked the complex ornamentations typical of later periods. However, the Italian craftsmen were known for producing excellent pieces in terms of quality.

With the beginning of Italian Renaissance in the 15th century, furniture making underwent a revolution. Interest in the classical period of antiquity and, more precisely in Greek and Roman art, started influencing Italian art. The artists became more interested in the different natural forms and their intrinsic beauty. Furniture designs were inspired by Roman thrones and royal chairs, tables and cabinets. As a result, the pieces made by craftsmen became larger, cozier and much more majestic. The ornamentations were influenced by the traditional decorative motifs found in Roman sculpture and architecture. The sharp and complex ornaments of Gothic art, gave way to natural and more artistic ones, such as animals, shells, vases and scrolls.

In the beginning of the 16th century, Italian furniture designs became more influenced by the grotesque and fantasy forms. The pieces became more elegant, while the ornamentations were inspired by Gothic, Arabic and Oriental art. These new trends were streamed by Mannerism, an artistic style inspired by the works of Michelangelo. The ornamentations in exaggerated natural and human forms became the norm. The use of expressive color combinations was also characteristic.

In the 17th century Italian furniture designs were influenced by **Baroque*** and Rococo, even though the latter style did not become hugely popular it had in other parts of Europe. The furniture pieces regained their massiveness, but this time they became much more comfortable.

The comfort of the user had a major influence on design. Curved and irregular forms were the norm. Ornamentation remained influenced by Mannerism, but the decorative motifs became more and more complex. The shell, floral and animal ornament forms remained popular, but other natural elements, like the sun, were used as well. The principle of asymmetry was widely applied to the design of the decorations of the pieces of furniture.

** A convenient way to become familiar with the various styles is to do a Google Image Search. For example, Open Google Search, Select Images and enter "Baroque Style Furniture". Including the word furniture and enclosing your search query in quotation marks will produce much more specific results*

Italian furniture makers were influenced by the Neoclassicism and Empire styles in the 18th century. The Neoclassical pieces of furniture were once again inspired by the decorative art of ancient Greece and Rome. The designs became less complex. The curved forms were replaced by plainer geometrical ones. The bright colors, typical for Mannerism and Baroque, were replaced by more natural and somewhat paler ones. The ornamentations became flatter. The Roman decorative motifs, such as vases, urns, busts, wreaths and ribbons, regained their popularity.

Empire is usually described as the second phase of Neoclassicism. The furniture designs became more geometric and plainer, but this was not the case with the ornamentations. They became larger and were influenced by Egyptian as well as by Roman and Greek art.

The 19th century in Italy saw the revival of many styles from Gothic and Renaissance to Rococo, which influenced the designs of furniture. Inspiration was drawn from ancient art as well as from Oriental art. As a result, the inlaying with ivory became increasingly popular. Ebony was also widely used along with traditional walnut, from which Italian furniture was made.

At present, collectors can find various antique Italian furniture items. The items from the 18th and 19th century are the most abundant on the market, but it is also possible for you to find well preserved 17th century pieces. Look for pieces from Venice, Florence and the Milan and Veneto regions, which were (and still are) the centers of Italian furniture making.

12. Notable Styles of Antique French Furniture

France can boast a long and interesting art history. The decorative arts and furniture making, in particular, were influenced by the widely spread styles in the rest of Europe, but they were always given distinctive characteristics by the French artists, designers and craftsmen. Due to the political rule in France, most of the antique French furniture styles reflect the preferences and views of its rulers.

In the middle ages, the French furniture was large and crude, just like everywhere else in Europe. The designs were heavily influenced by the Gothic style from the 13th to the 15th century.

The designs became more elegant, but preserved their straight geometrical forms. The decorative motifs became more ornamental and asymmetrical. The floral and animalistic decorative patterns became popular.

The 15th and 16th century Renaissance demanded the transformation of the plain furniture pieces into works of art. The furniture pieces became larger and started having greater practical value. The carvings remained the main form of ornamentation. However, the decorative motifs changed dramatically. They were influenced by ancient Roman and Greek art as well as by mythology. The mythological nymphs and satires were surrounded by leaf and vine garlands. Given the great influence by Italian artists, the colors became more pastel. The forms were more exaggerated and somewhat more complex. The craftsmen started making more careful selection of woods. Their preferred materials were oak, walnut and ebony.

The Louis XIV style influenced French furniture designs during most of the 17th century. The Sun King demanded opulence from all decorative art pieces that characterized his rule. The pieces of furniture became extremely gaudy. The ornamentation was rich and complex, with the main decorative motif being the sun, in various forms. A lot of innovations, such as the commode and the bureau plat, emerged during this period.

The Regence style reached its peak in the first two decades of the 18th century. The symmetry in design remained, but the forms gained fluidity. The veneer of precious wood with geometric designs became extremely popular during this period. The gilt bronze decoration typical for Louis XIV style became more abundantly used. The classic and exotic floral decorative motifs became more stylized.

Louis XV style ruled during the rest of the 18th century. The era was extremely productive and creativity became the norm. The curved lines and the asymmetric forms, typical for Rococo, are the most notable characteristics of antique French furniture from this period. The furniture items became more elegant and somewhat feminine. The decorative motifs - flowers, leaves, animal and human faces were extremely gentle. Gold became the most popular paint color. New lacquer techniques were introduced during this period.

The Directoire style influenced the furniture design in the beginning of the 19th century. This style is known for its simplicity, dictated by the French Revolution. The forms became geometric and the lines became rectilinear. The ornamentations were more simplistic, but they preserved their typical floral, foliage and wreath patterns.

The Directoire style is considered to be a transition to Empire, introduced during the rule of Napoleon I. The furniture from the Empire period is characterized by its geometric forms and sharper lines. It was heavily influenced by ancient Roman, Greek and Egyptian decorative art. The symmetry was reintroduced. The surfaces became flat and uniform. The gilded bronze appliqués were heavily used. The decorative ornaments were incorporated into the legs and arms of furniture pieces. The decorative motifs took the forms of exotic animals, mythological creatures, sculptures, antique pillars and swans. The use of mahogany for furniture making was abundant during this period.

The beginning of the 19th century was marked by the Restoration and Louis Philippe styles, but apart from bringing back the use of lighter wood and the more curvilinear forms, they did not change French furniture design dramatically. Napoleon III furniture is characterized by darker finishes, natural colors and elegance.

Art Nouveau brought revolution into French furniture designs at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. The natural forms became extremely influential. The fantasy of the designer became the main source of ideas for the design of the pieces. The furniture became more artistic. Art Deco appeared in the 1920's as an opposition to Art Nouveau. The antique French furniture of this style is characterized by straight forms and geometrical shapes.

13. Finding the Right Antique Furniture Dealer

You want a beautiful piece of antique furniture? The easiest way to find what you are looking for is to find an antique furniture dealer that can sell it to you. You should keep in mind that buying such an item is not like going to a regular furniture store and picking the model you like best. There are different places to shop from. The different dealers offer different services. In addition, buying antique furniture requires some research and thorough inspection.

Antique dealers are people or companies that deal with the buying and selling of antiques. They usually do not keep them as their main purpose is to trade for profit. If you own an antique furniture piece that you want to sell and go to a dealer, they will offer you approximately 50% less than what they can sell it for. Hence, you can always expect to pay more than the actual value of the object. This is perfectly normal, but in some cases the dealer can be unethical and can attempt to rob you of your money. That is why you should be careful when looking for an antique dealer.

There are different approaches to finding antique dealers. You can readily ask around or use the yellow pages or the internet to find a dealer in your local area of residence. There are different companies which have shops nationwide. There are also smaller companies and individual dealers that offer the same services. In some cities there are entire antique centers and markets where the choice of antique pieces of furniture is abundant.

When looking for a local dealer, you have to take into account a number of things. Firstly, you have to decide what type of dealer you want to shop from. Some sell antique furniture from all periods, styles and parts of the world. Others have narrower specialization. You should find out more about the different styles and periods before you go shopping. You also need to decide on whether you will want to focus on collecting pieces from the same style or period for yourself, or whether you just want to buy with the idea of making a profit from sale. In this way, you will know what to look for and who to deal with and when.

Another factor to take into account is the type of services the antique furniture dealer offers. There are dealers that focus only on selling items they already own.

Most of them also have connections with other dealers and can actually find the piece that you are looking for after a short search. This is beneficial for them as well as for you, so you should not miss taking advantage of such a service.

Some antique furniture dealers offer a wider range of services to clients. They can give you information about estate sales and auctions and arrange your participation as a buyer. You will have to pay more for such services, but if you are a passionate and/ or busy collector, you should definitely consider this option.

The next thing to consider when choosing an antique furniture dealer is their reputation. This is an extremely important aspect. If you deal with reputable companies or people it will be some guarantee that you will not be scammed. You should definitely ask around to find out more about the reputation of different local dealers. You can do a more comprehensive research and talk to some of their past or present clients. Generally, you should make sure that you gather enough information to determine whether a dealer is worth working with or not.

It is perfectly possible for you to find antique dealers online and buy pieces from them as well. All the same tips for finding the best ones are applicable. In addition, you have to perform a more thorough research on the dealer since you will not meet them or their representative. If you shop from the online store of an established and reputable dealer, you will have some guarantee for the item you are buying. The popular auction sites offer relatively good protection as well. However, it is not impossible for you to come across scammers, so it is always a good idea to be more cautious when shopping for antiques online.

14. Antique Furniture Shops Overview

You have decided that you want to own and probably trade with antique furniture. The best places to head for are the antique furniture shops. There you should be able to find great pieces that can add opulence and beauty to your home and that can perhaps be resold for a great profit.

The first question that needs to be answered is where you can find antique furniture shops. There are ones present in almost every town. If you live in a small place, you might want to go to the nearest large city. There you will find a wide range of antique furniture shops, with some of them even specializing in selling items from different styles, periods or countries. It is a good idea to check out the yellow pages first to get the exact addresses of the shops.

It is quite possible to shop for antique furniture online as well. There are various dealers that have websites on the internet. The auction sites are definitely great places to shop from. There you can find plenty of great antique furniture pieces at a bargain.

Before you decide to use the services of an antique furniture shop, you have to learn more about the seller. It is essential for them to have excellent reputation among collectors and dealers. It is worth spending some time asking around.

Also do some research on past sales and clients. After all, you have to have some kind of guarantee that you will not fall into the trap of scammers.

Once you find the right antique furniture shops, you have to decide on what to buy. It is always a good idea to set a budget, especially if you plan to resell the piece or pieces you purchase. Generally, you have to decide whether you want to form a collection of antique furniture or just buy different pieces. This will give you an idea of what to look for when shopping. More importantly, you have to be able to recognize the period and style of pieces. In this way, it will be easier for you to evaluate the item more precisely and to decide whether it is worth the money which the seller asks for it.

Recognizing and evaluating pieces is actually the primary task of every antique furniture shopper. Once you have an idea about the style of the piece of furniture, you have to ask the seller about its history. They should be able to give you details about the item's provenance and some details regarding past ownership.

It is essential for you to make sure that you are not offered a fake piece or a reproduction. This is actually the hardest part. It is important for you to carry out a complete inspection on the item. You should be familiar with the different methods for furniture marking used in different regions throughout the different ages. You should pay special attention to veneering.

The joints and screws will also give you hints to whether the piece is a fake or not. Before machines were used for mass production, it was quite possible for the different joints in one piece not to be completely uniform. The screws in the past were cruder and usually bigger. In addition, you have to be able to recognize the marks made on the grain from modern electric saws to spot fakes.

When making your inspection, you should look for any damage as well. It is a good idea to lift the piece gently, if possible, to make sure that any parts will not fall off. You might want to check the stability of the item as well.

It is definitely a good idea to ask for a discount when buying antique furniture. Most shops are ready to offer one, so you should not miss this opportunity. If you use some basic bargaining tricks, you can reduce the price by up to 30%.

When buying items from antique furniture shops, you should always ask for receipt. Apart from the price and title of the item, the receipt should state its wood type, style, age and any distinct marks it might have. Any damages or restoration done on the piece should be mentioned as well. Get information on the shop's return policy, just to be on the safe side.

15. How to Have Your Own Antique Furniture Valued

Buying and selling antiques can be extremely lucrative. In some cases, you can get more than two or three times the original price for an antique furniture piece. The problem most owners have is that they cannot evaluate their item properly.

This is a serious issue since it might affect your profits negatively. That is why you should not hesitate to have your antique furniture professionally appraised and valued. There are a number of steps you need to take in order to get your antique furniture fairly evaluated.

The first thing you have to learn is what determines the value of antique pieces. There are four main factors. The provenance and history of each piece are extremely important. If your piece of antique furniture was made by a prominent carpenter or workshop and/or has a fascinating story, it will certainly be more valuable. This is equally true for the rarity of an item. The rarer it is the more valuable it is. The condition of the piece of furniture will also determine its value. Perhaps the main factor of all is the quality of the item. The design and the craftsmanship used in the making are extremely important.

It is important to thoroughly clean your antique furniture before getting it evaluated. It is important for you to use a cleaning guide, especially if you have not dealt with such a task before. You should use standard methods for cleaning that do not involve the removal or altering of the finish. Refinishing the piece might actually lower its value. Remove any stains with a standard cleaner or lemon juice. You might want to use amalgamator for the water stains. If there are many scratches, pigmented oil stain will help to remove them. Use some wax to give the item some more gloss, but never spray with a silicon based wax.

After you have the antique piece of furniture in perfect condition, you should take pictures of it. It is best to do it in a sunlit part of the house, so that all details can be easily seen. Take pictures of the entire piece from all four sides. You might want to photograph its top, if applicable. Then you have to take pictures of the most notable features of the piece. These include the legs, handles, armrests, pulls and ornamentations. It is important to photograph these details to get more accurate evaluation.

Once you have the pictures, you have to find a reliable appraiser to evaluate your antique piece of furniture. It is a great idea to ask around for a reputable and ethical professional. Antique dealers and collectors might give you a hint. You can also look for any organized events that you can get your item appraised at. These include lectures, seminars and antique furniture shows. Generally, most certified appraisers will not charge you for their services, but some may do so.

One alternative to have your antique furniture item valued for free is to send its pictures to an auction house. Even the biggest names in the industry pay attention to all pieces offered to them. The auction house expert will evaluate your item and give you the information you need. Remember that you are not obliged to have your piece auctioned at this auction house.

Every antique furniture expert will give you a value range. This means that they will not set an actual monetary price. They will give you an estimate of the amount of money you can receive from a deal and of the highest amount of money you can receive from a buyer. Keep in mind that the market price of your antique furniture item will be determined by other factors apart from its value.

Overall, it is essential to have your antique furniture piece or pieces evaluated. You do not have to rely on an expert completely. You can use the pictures you have taken to research your item. There are various books on antique furniture that you can use for reference. You should also look into price catalogues, antique shops and online auctions to see the prices of pieces similar to yours.

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I hope you enjoyed this short visit into the fascinating world of Antiquing. You are invited to check though our **website** on "[Antiquing for Beginners](#)" for even more valuable information, guidance and money saving tips.

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P.S. There is also a short 5 part "[Beginner's Antiquing eCourse](#)" that you can direct your friends and associates to – which will help them share what you have learned.

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