CHIC CHANDELIERS

A surefire way to make people say, "Wow!" when they enter your home is to hang a jaw-dropping chandelier. Not sure how to choose? Here are some chandelier shopping tips from those in the know.

CHANDELIERS AREN'T JUST FOR DINING ROOMS ANYMORE. While the ceiling above the dining room table is the most likely place to hang a chandelier, a chandelier can add an unexpected design element to other rooms, too. "We've put little chandeliers in laundry rooms, mudrooms and even walk-in closets," says Matthew Boyes, the co-owner of Cielo Home (528 N.W. 12th Ave., 503-445-0111) in Portland, which carries chandeliers ranging from the traditional to the highly unusual. "If you're someone who always decorates in a particular style, a chandelier can be a great way to step out of your decorating box and add personality to a room. Juxtapose the style of the chandelier with your furnishings. Add something in a vibrant color or something that makes you smile."

A CHANDELIER IS ABOUT MORE THAN LIGHT. Resist the utilitarian urge that says your lighting must be appropriate for all tasks you might undertake in a particular space. "Don't limit yourself to how much light a chandelier will provide," says Boyes. "Above-the-table light is *not* task light. The light should make you happy. It's the furnishings like the chandelier that will make the space your own. Whatever your personal aesthetic, you can use a chandelier as a focal point that's just as important as your artwork."

A CHANDELIER IS A CONVERSATION WITH HISTORY. When you buy a chandelier, you're buying something that has roots that go back to the medieval era. You can't say that about an ordinary table lamp! The advantage to that history is that it's almost always possible to find a style that will work in your home. "A good reason to choose a vintage or an antique chandelier is to connect with the era of your house," says Bo Sullivan, a chandelier expert and historian at Rejuvenation (1100 S.E. Grand Ave, 503-238-1900) in Portland. "Even in a more modern setting, if you have some older pieces, it can tie the room together. Put a 1920s chandelier over a 1920s dining table and your furniture will have a conversation."

—*Margaret Foley*

Six-light chandelier from reclaimed wine barrel staves, $2,749, Cielo Home (528 N.W. 12th Ave., 503-445-0111) in Portland. 1920s chandelier with amber glass drops, $550, rejuvenation.com. Red Murano glass chandelier, $3,200, dwr.com.

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