

## Paris Charms and Delights

A Personal Approach to Paris Design Week

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Paris Deco-Off © Lionel Roy 2020

Paris charms and delights - even in the midst of a transit strike. Though, it did shape my approach in attending this year's Paris Design Week as I wanted to avert the possibility of any transportation disruptions. I chose venues that I could easily get to by foot, a short taxi ride, or sponsored shuttles, I skipped the trade fair Maison Objet and instead focused my attention on Paris Deco-Off. The Paris Deco-Off event takes place mostly in Saint-Germain-des-Près, and on rue du Mail, and it is instantly recognizable with its signature exterior decor of over-sized lampshades strung high above the streets along with other decor such as ski-lifts and sofas. In addition to the presentations of new collections, there are soirées to attend such as the coveted American Party which was held this year at the Théâtre National de Chaillot. Paris Design Week is a reunion of sorts as it presents an opportunity to reconnect, establish, and to develop ones contacts, and friendships.

## Presentations and Pop-Ups

Upon my arrival in Paris, I headed straight to the Automobile Club de France to attend the presentation of the collection *Rêveries Oriental* from the esteemed fabric house of Pierre Frey. Three of my favorites from this vast collection were: *Ararat Rose* - a beautiful, timeless and authentic ikat which has its warp printed before it is woven, creating a subtly hazy pattern as the result; *Le Jardin du Palais* - a fabric evocative of Persian art from the Safavid Dynasty this design depicts a fantastical array of animals peacefully coexisting in a sumptuous Persian landscape; and *Voyage en Toscane* - a panoramic wallpaper illustrating Mediterranean scenes. From there I headed to Lalique's pop-up which featured magnificent floral arrangements in elegant interiors accented with Lalique objet art, furniture, and lighting. I was fascinated by Botanica, one of their new collections inspired by the romantic beauty of flowers, such as their vase *Fleur de Cerisier* - featuring gold and enamel embellishments. Lalique has its own interior design studio and can also customize lighting as with its fixture *Champs-Élysées* with its stylized foliage pattern. An elegant walk through the Tuileries gardens and over the Passerelle Leopold Sedar Senghor led me to the left bank and to an evening presentation at the Nobilis showroom on Rue Bonaparte. Eric Valero, the creative director, and Norman Halard the president of Nobilis presented the collection. It was a fun presentation and I was particularly attracted to the wallpapers *Curiosite I and II* - a contemporary approach to a cabinet de curiosité featuring crystals on display. I was also drawn to the satin fabric, *Prelude* in a pale pink flocked in black dots hints to 1950's and Christian Dior, and *Guinguette* draws its inspiration from traditional Parisian cafe seating.

## Place Vendôme

At the Ritz over a pot of tea I met with Armand Rene, founder of the new brand Maison Armand dedicated to artisanal table and bed linens of natural fabrics - hand woven at the same European mills that some of the best couturiers use. Following, our meeting I decided to pop in Charvet, the revered shirtmaker, as its window displays of colorful ties, crisp shirts, colorful pattern silk gentleman's dressing gown were just too alluring not to go in. Initially, I was a bit hesitate to go in as I did not know how I would be welcomed. To my delight, the staff were most gracious, and gave me a tour with explanation of their offerings. There thousands of fabrics to choose from, and a plethora of collar styles, and cuff options. It does make one dream - as there's nothing like crisp custom made shirt - yet I think their lounge wear is the ultimate luxury.

## Rue Cambon

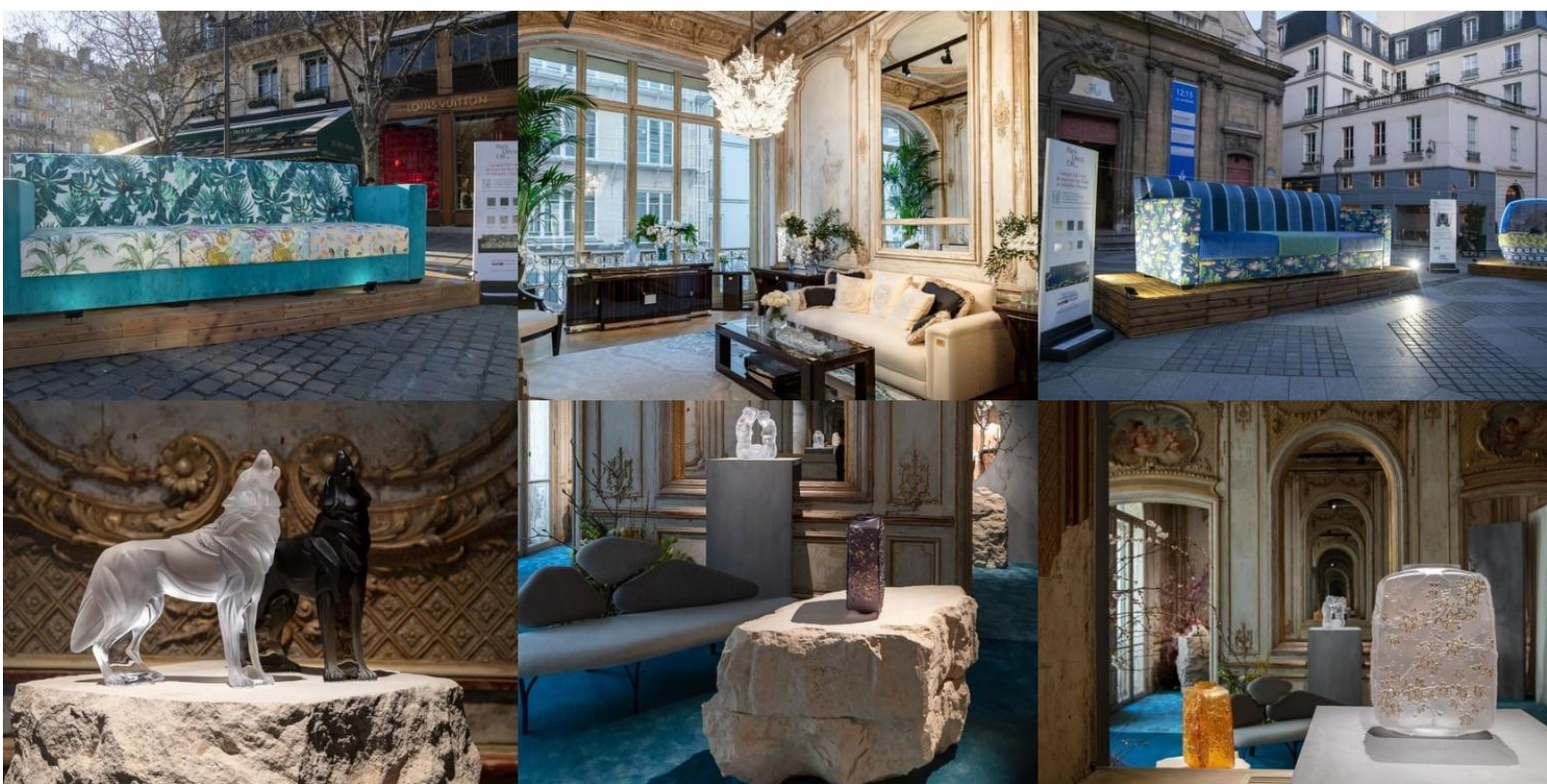
I stayed again at the Castille, my abode on my previous trip in September. The decor there suits my taste. Their beautifully appointed restaurant L'Assaggio decorated with a mix of French-style upholstered chairs in velvet fabric, and leather work together beautifully in creating a warm, and inviting space with much of the dining area looking out toward their stunning courtyard. Their copious breakfasts included the Galette du Rois - a cake offered in France for the month of January to mark the occasion of the Epiphany with a fève hidden inside it. The fève is a small porcelain prize, and whoever finds it is crowned king or queen for the day. The Castille offers subtle Italian touches such as mineral water from Acqua Panna and biscottis from Moriondo Virginio Premiati. My room was decorated in neutral color palette accented by black lacquer furniture with contrasting leather, attractive framed black and white photos, the desk was topped with an elegant bouquet of fresh white and the palest pink roses. I am enamored by their window boxes filled with a pretty shade of pink cyclamen flowers.



## Joie de Vivre

Forgoing some of my usual haunts during Paris Design Week permitted me the luxury of time to enjoy a memorable lunch with my friend Mary Beth Brown at Chez George. It was best cod that I ever had in my life - the sauce was exquisite, and it is no wonder that this restaurant was a favorite of Julia Child. After lunch, I headed over to the Left Bank, and by chance I saw the loviest rainbow over looking the Seine above the Louvre. I was able to attend a concert at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées where I saw Belcea Quartet perform Beethoven, caught a few museum visits: Musée de L'Orangerie, Musée Maillol, and the Musée National Eugène Delacroix. Before leaving Paris, Susie Paplow of De Le Cuona presented their new collection *Maverick II* to me. Their fabrics are known for their weight, hand, and stone washing. They only use the finest French and Belgium linens.

Overall at this year's Paris Deco-Off I observed a return to individuality in the collections that embrace pattern - whether it was inspired by an archival textile or a new. Paris is always beautiful - where artfulness and creativity abounds.



1. Paris Deco-Off © Lionel Roy 2020

2. Lalique

3. Paris Deco-Off © Lionel Roy 2020

4. Lalique

5. Lalique

6. Lalique