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The 10 Most Alluring Love Seats

Interior designers Barclay Butera and Laura Kirar prove that often the best seat in the house has room enough for two

Text by Sophie Donelson • Photography by William A. Boyd Jr. • Produced by Alison Hall

There's so much to live about a love seat. This sofa of diminutive stature is big on style and easy on the eyes. An elegant solution for a small space, love seats offer the plush comfort of a club chair in a profile generous enough for two—what could be more inviting?

The love seat has a pedigree that goes back to the 18th century, when upper-class Europeans were exchanging their austere wood seating for the more gracious embrace of upholstery. In those days, the two-seater was practically a *luxe à la mode*—implying romantic intimacy—while a sofa for three was coyly dubbed the *ridiculer*. Love seats, and some settees, are still built to accommodate two people, but are more

commonly used solo. Several models, in fact, are fashioned with cushioned arms that double as a headrest, a perfect detail for a party of one. Because of their petite scale, love seats are suited to almost any space. Better yet, clever upholstery can transform one into a room's star attraction—just ask our experts Barclay Butera and Laura Kirar. Butera, a Los Angeles-based decorator and shop owner, recommends dressmaker details like button and waterfall skirts, while Kirar, a New York designer of home furnishings and interiors, opts for vibrant fabrics. The duo tested ten of ELLE DECOR's favorites, then debated which small sofas pack the biggest visual punch. >

Designers Laura Kirar and Barclay Butera, a modern love seat. **Wool, Spring & Dove II Home. See Research**

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1 LOVESEAT BY WOOD SPRENS & DOWN FROM HOMER
"This one would break up the right angles of a square room," declares Kirar. Butera concurs, observing that the cut-slosher shape would pair nicely with a round ottoman. "I love the flare of the arms; it has such an unwarrior silhouette," she notes. "It looks like a piece of art." Height: 32" • width: 60" • depth: 22" • seat height: 19" • material: hardwood frame with poly-foam fill • delivery: 4-10 weeks • price: \$5,000 • [e.c.o.](#)



2 CAMEBACK LOVESEAT BY RESTORAT KIM HARDWARE
Butera notes the shaggy curvilinear lines and generous proportions: "This is truly a lounge sofa," he pronounces. Kirar agrees completely. "This is really deep," she says, "but it has a subtlety to it." She recommends keeping with the playful feel by going with a bright color. Height: 32" • material: hardwood frame with upholstered foam fill and iron upholstery • other fabrics and sizes available; delivery: 1-2 weeks • price: \$3,000



3 HEDY TUFTED SETTEE BY MILANO FIOR PROPERTY
"This sofa is all about the details," Butera explains. "It's a big fan of the tufted back and the updated vintage look." Kirar, too, is taken with its graceful contours, which remind her of old Hollywood films. "It's an smoothy made," she says. "It's extremely comfortable, and loaded with dressmaker touches." Height: 31.5" • width: 58.5" • depth: 20" • seat height: 19" • material: hardwood frame with poly-foam fill • delivery: 4-6 weeks • price: \$2,610 • [e.c.o.](#)



4 VISCONTI SOFA BY CASAMILANO FIOR PROPERTY
"I see this one in a barbershop's waiting room," Kirar remarks. "It has a masculine look and is very deep seat, yet it fits me perfectly." Butera concurs to the sumptuous pillow as a well-thought-out addition, and adds, "This has perhaps the most generous seat. And because the walls are low-lying, it's downright snuggly." Height: 30" • width: 60" • depth: 28" • seat height: 18" • material: upholstered frame with extra-stitch corner tufting and seat accented with polyurethane foam fill • delivery: 1-2 weeks • price: \$3,000 • [e.c.o.](#)



5 VERONICA SLIPCOVER SETTEE BY CLEA LOTTI'S SOFS FOR BRUNNSCHWIG & FILS
Kirar envisions this straight-back settee as a *Michen bangtail*. "It's almost dining height, so you could use two to flank a table," she suggests. Butera would double up, too, using a settee as an endtable. "It's got a wonderful high back," he notes, "so elegant." Height: 30" • width: 50" • depth: 20" • seat height: 19" • material: hardwood frame with down and feather-wrapped polyurethane fill • delivery: 4-10 weeks • price: \$2,400 • [e.c.o.](#)



6 WOODHOUSE LOVESEAT BY JONATHAN ADLER
"A groovy sofa with fun cushions that keep it looking fresh," says Butera of the scalloped back and arms. "The retro element resonates with Kirar, too, who is impressed that the piece has 'a lot of looks for just a lot of money.'" Height: 31" • width: 64" • depth: 20" • seat height: 19" • material: hardwood frame with down-foam cushions and seat available with down-foam fill (also available in foam fill and upholstered upholstery) • other fabrics available; delivery: 10-12 weeks • price: \$3,400 • [e.c.o.](#)



7 SUNAPEE LOVESEAT BY KRAVET
"The shape is extremely versatile—you could go in so many directions depending on the fabric—plus, I'm crazy about cushions! Kirar sees potential for a bold statement. "The David Hicks on it," she explains. "I would contrast its traditional look with an ultra-modern fabric." Height: 30" • width: 62" • depth: 28" • seat height: 20" • material: hardwood frame with New York finish leather cushions and seat upholstered with spring-strengthened foam fill • other fabrics available and larger options; delivery: 4 weeks • price: \$3,000 • [e.c.o.](#)



8 ARGO 160 SOFA BY FRANCESCO ROTA FOR PAOLA LENTI FROM KARKKILA
"It looks like it's about to take off," jokes Kirar of the design. "It's really comfortable, though, and I like the sculptural shape of its arms." Butera thinks it would work best in an urban loft. "This is for fashion-forward people," he states. "It has a high style, Japanese aesthetic." Height: 31" • width: 60" • depth: 30" • seat height: 19" • material: upholstered frame with tufted back and seat • other fabrics and sizes available with down-foam fill • delivery: 10-14 weeks • price: \$3,450 • [e.c.o.](#)



9 ANGIE 07 SOFA BY MITCHELL GOLD & BOB WILLIAMS
"This is such a statement piece, a classic evening stogie or try a colorful leather for a more modern look," advises Kirar. Butera admires subtle touches like stitching on the seat, which he explains, "creates eye movement." Even Butera, he adds, "It's a lovely color." Height: 34" • width: 50" • depth: 30" • seat height: 19" • material: hardwood frame with leather upholstery • other fabrics and sizes available with button-and-down fill (also available in foam fill) • delivery: 4 weeks • price: \$3,400 • [e.c.o.](#)



10 VANCE SETTEE BY GREYSTONE HOME COLLECTION
"This is definitely a statement piece," pronounces Butera. "I would place it in a bedroom or use two to flank a fireplace." Kirar is taken with its streamlined yet generous profile. "It's got boucler upholstery all over it," she enthuses. "It covers it in a luxe mohair velvet." Height: 34" • width: 50" • depth: 31" • seat height: 19" • material: hardwood frame with leather upholstery • other fabrics and sizes available with down-foam fill • delivery: 4 weeks • price: \$3,500 • [e.c.o.](#)