



THINK CONTEMPORARY

Anthony Buggy and Joanne Kelly, of interior architecture and design consultancy Think Contemporary, noticed a trend for retro and vintage furniture a few months ago and wondered how they could do it differently. Spotting an old chest of drawers in Oxfam, they decided to give it their signature quirky stamp. "We stripped it down, painted it an acrylic black, sourced the vinyl image, and then painted and replaced the handles," Anthony says. The idea led to their upcycled collection, which now includes a colourful dresser and a series of vivid side-tables, as well as some quirky accessories. "We're always looking for something with very simple lines, that is not too fussy," he continues.

So what do they recommend when looking for a new piece? "Find something that's in good condition, know what you want from the beginning and what to expect of the final outcome. We get ideas from the pieces we work with so we know where we're going initially, but it's good to be adaptable." Anthony recommends choosing colours that suit your own style and interiors, and "not going too mad" on larger pieces. In a time when business is slowing, Think Contemporary's upcycling collection has proved to be hugely successful. "We weren't prepared to sit back and let things pass us by," Anthony says. "It's all down to attitude." Which is exactly what upcycling is all about.

Think Contemporary's collection is available from the brocante market, every third Sunday of the month, www.thebrocantomarket.com, and online at www.thinkcontemporary.ie.

WHO CAN HELP *Pat Cooke aka The Furniture Doctor, specialises in French polishing and restoration, 085 146 1277. Noel Ryan Upholstery Noel transforms tired furniture with his skilful upholstery services, 087 961 6755. Selina Gittins Furniture repainting and restoration, Eclectic Interiors, 087 682 7348; www.eclecticinteriors.net. Gina McGarvey One-day painted furniture workshops, 086 278 7300; www.gmginteriors.com. Emily Naper Three-day course in gilding, including cleaning, repair, preparation, application and antiquing, 049 854 1356; www.loughcrew.com. Lucina Lennon One-day revamp workshops at Galerie Lisette, Co Wicklow, 086 650 0757; www.galerielisette.com. Courses include paint effects for beginners and intermediates, turn your junk into treasure, and basic curtain making. Old Chairs Weekend workshops in furniture restoration and upholstery courses, Co Clare, 087 249 1978; www.oldchairs.ie.*

WHERE TO GO

ONLINE www.jumbletown.ie; www.donedeal.ie; www.ebay.com; www.freetradeireland.ie; www.frn.org.uk/donate.asp

(Northern Ireland)

CHARITY SHOPS The Oxfam stores on Francis Street, Dublin 8, and the Dublin Road, Belfast, have a large furniture section and can be a source of excellent bargains, www.oxfamireland.org/oxfamhome

AUCTION HOUSES For information on auctions around the country, visit www.irishauctiondirectory.com

FLEA MARKETS For flea markets around Ireland, visit www.bootflea.com

DUBLIN FLEA MARKET The Co-op, 12 Newmarket, Dublin 8; www.dublinflea.ie. The last Sunday of every month.

BROCANTE MARKET The Co-op, 12 Newmarket, Dublin 8; www.thebrocantomarket.com. The third Sunday of every month.

VICTORIAN KITCHEN COMPANY Get the look for bigger pieces from Victorian Kitchen Company, who specialise in reclaimed flooring, cast iron radiators, salvaged lighting and roll-top baths, 01 672 7000; www.victoriansalvagecompany.ie.

For architectural salvage pieces, **THE STOREYARD**, Portlaoise, has a selection of chimney pieces, door porticos and surrounds, 057 868 0088; www.thestoreyard.ie.