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All On the Wall

BOLD PRINTS AND MURALS TURN ROOMS INTO “A MOMENT.”



This dramatic ensuite — a project by Meade Design Group — showcases how a wallpaper mural can double as a room feature. The “Brighton Pavillion” mural by Schumacher offers stationary interest to counter the ever-changing natural views.

JEFFREY BOSDET/SPRUCE MAGAZINE

While spring brings with it enlivening colours and patterns, the resurgence of murals and bold wallpapers has been easing into the design industry for a while.

Those eager to stay on trend don't balk at the sight of oversized floral patterns, geometric feature walls and custom-made scenes. For the timid among us, jumping into floor-to-ceiling print territory may be an intimidating commitment. To understand what your space is ready for, *Spruce* spoke with renowned print enthusiast and interior designer Iván Meade, who cites a straightforward formula for knowing what to select.

“When it comes to wallpaper, it's all about personal taste, but the basic rule is: the bigger

the scale in the pattern, the more visual fatigue you get,” says Meade, principal designer and founder of Meade Design Group and the Iván Meade Fabric Collection. “The smaller the scale, the smaller the chance of fatigue.”

Small-scale patterns become a texture in the wall, Meade says, making micro florals or repetitive trellises a good choice for those who feel nervous about larger murals. Smaller patterns also work better to offset art. It offers you a “lifetime” of flexibility while still infusing a space with personality.

“Some people just want to be big and bold and trendy and they will change their wallpaper every five years if they need to,” he adds. “That's a very European approach, and it's all about living in the now. In North

America, people want to do it once and be done with it.”

If you're in the bold-ish middle, Meade recommends going big in a tiny area — like a powder room, pantry, mudroom or laundry that people don't spend as much time in. The other option is to go with a custom mural designed for your space — like actress Gwyneth Paltrow's famed dining room. Custom murals can utilize soothing colour palettes and create a continuous flow throughout the house, with visual weight nearer the floor.

“Wallpaper is kind of like pillows — it's an expense, but it's not a crazy expense like installing a stone wall or wood cladding,” Meade says. “If you want to be bold, you can turn your room into a moment.”