

Cruise&Ferry Interiors

THE HOME OF GLOBAL PASSENGER SHIP INTERIOR DESIGN

2024



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Interior designer Liz Schneider shares highlights of her journey in the cruise business

MASTER SHIPBUILDER

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DESIGNED TO LAST

Shipowners are prioritising products that combine aesthetic appeal with sustainability

Designed to last

Cruise executives, designers and product manufacturers share how careful product selection and reimagining the entire design process can help shipowners create longer-lasting, more cost-effective and more environmentally friendly passenger ship interiors. Rebecca Gibson reports

Passenger ship owners are very familiar with the challenges of interior design. They want aesthetically appealing and comfortable spaces that flow well and elevate the onboard experience for guests, but also need to minimise costs and ongoing maintenance requirements, while ensuring the interiors remain fresh and relevant for as many years as possible. In addition, they are facing increasing consumer and regulatory pressure to use more environmentally sustainable materials and minimise waste.

To overcome these challenges, shipowners are prioritising products that

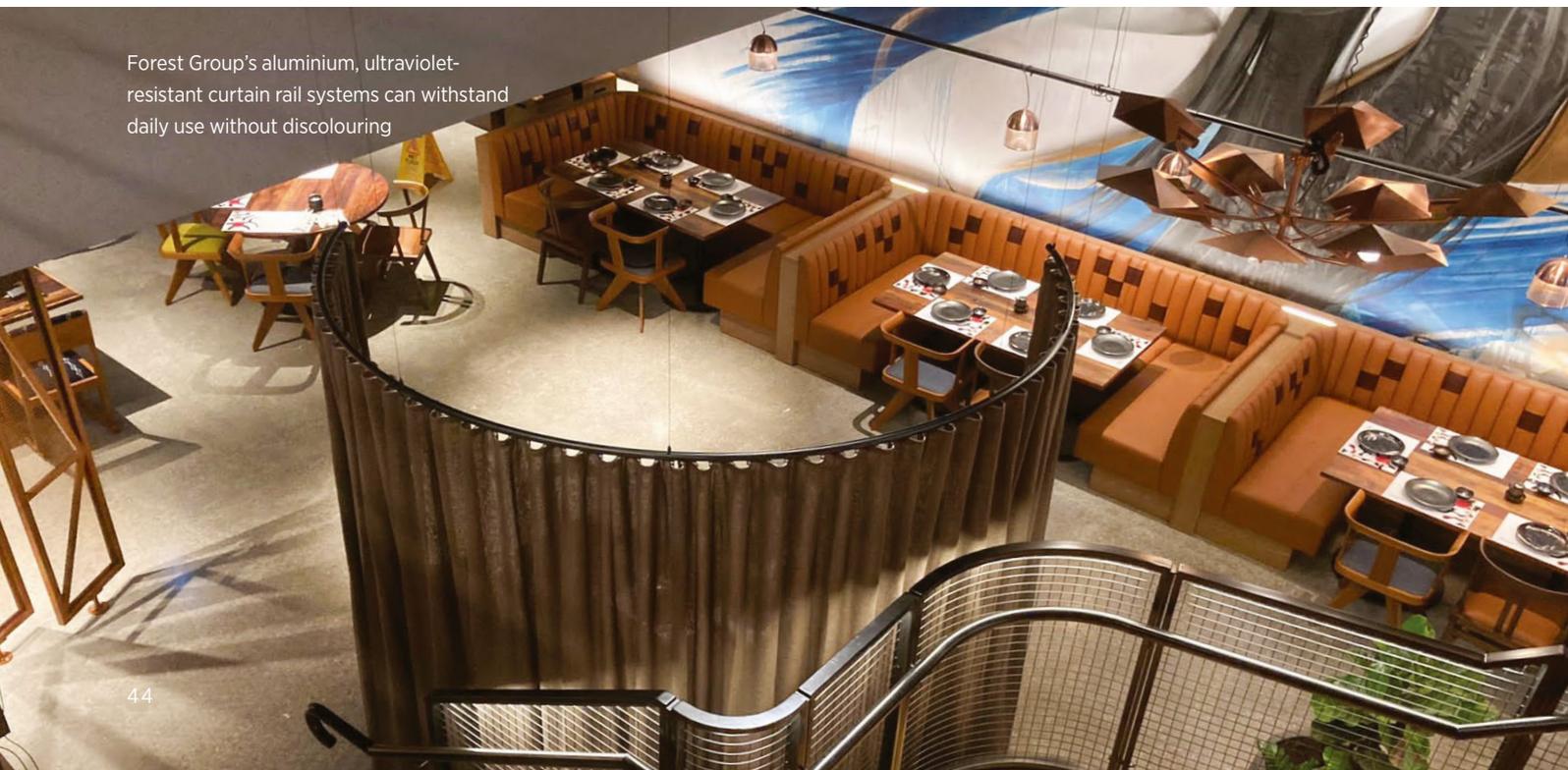
are designed to last. However, finding them is not always easy.

“To choose the right product, we must find a balance between cost, ease of maintenance, aesthetic appeal, sustainability features, durability and cleanability, all while ensuring each material complies with regulations set by organisations such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO),” says Jessica Payne, interior design manager at Windstar Cruises. “We weigh up the benefits of each product’s features, choosing those with long lifetimes for cost savings, consistent brand standards and minimal waste.”

Gabriele Maria Cafaro, CEO of Italy-based outfitting firm Marine Interiors, advises shipowners to choose well-made products that are durable, timeless and easy to maintain, repair and refurbish. “It is clear that good quality materials, combined with proper maintenance and care by onboard teams, ensure extended durability,” he says.

Morbern Europe, for example, supplies coated fabrics that can last a decade or longer without any obvious signs of wear and tear if crew follow general maintenance rules. “Recent research in bio-based and post-consumer raw materials have allowed

Forest Group’s aluminium, ultraviolet-resistant curtain rail systems can withstand daily use without discolouring





Morbern Europe's coated fabrics comprise 90 per cent sustainable product content, while Carnegie's new antimicrobial Xorel Cruise wall covering (right) is inherently mould and mildew resistant

us to reach 90 per cent sustainable product content," says Carine Equeter, the company's vice president. "Long-life products such as ours can go beyond their basic DNA to offer more environmentally friendly options."

Carnegie also provides a 10-year warranty for its new Xorel Cruise wall covering, which can be easily maintained with hospital-grade cleaners and bleach solutions. "The yarn is solution dyed so it will never fade, and the fabric is mildew and mould resistant, inherently antimicrobial and antifungal," says Heather Bush, the company's chief creative officer. "Xorel Cruise is also free of PVC and poly- and perfluoroalkyl substances."

Sileather's silicone fabrics also offer "unrivalled durability", according to Robert Walton, founder of The Lindhurst Group, which supplies the products to shipowners and other clients. "These sustainable fabrics can withstand the toughest conditions at sea, and they are allergen friendly and have low volatile organic compound emissions," he says. "With these products, Sileather

is steering maritime design towards a greener future, where longevity and ecological care chart the course."

Other companies have developed products that will never lose their inherent functionalities. This is true for Trevira CS textiles, which have flame-retardant properties that remain unchanged throughout the fabric's entire functioning lifecycle as they are firmly anchored in the polymer chain of the fibre.

"Trevira CS fabrics can be used for many years and they're easy to clean, so they stay attractive," says Petra Krücken, trademark services

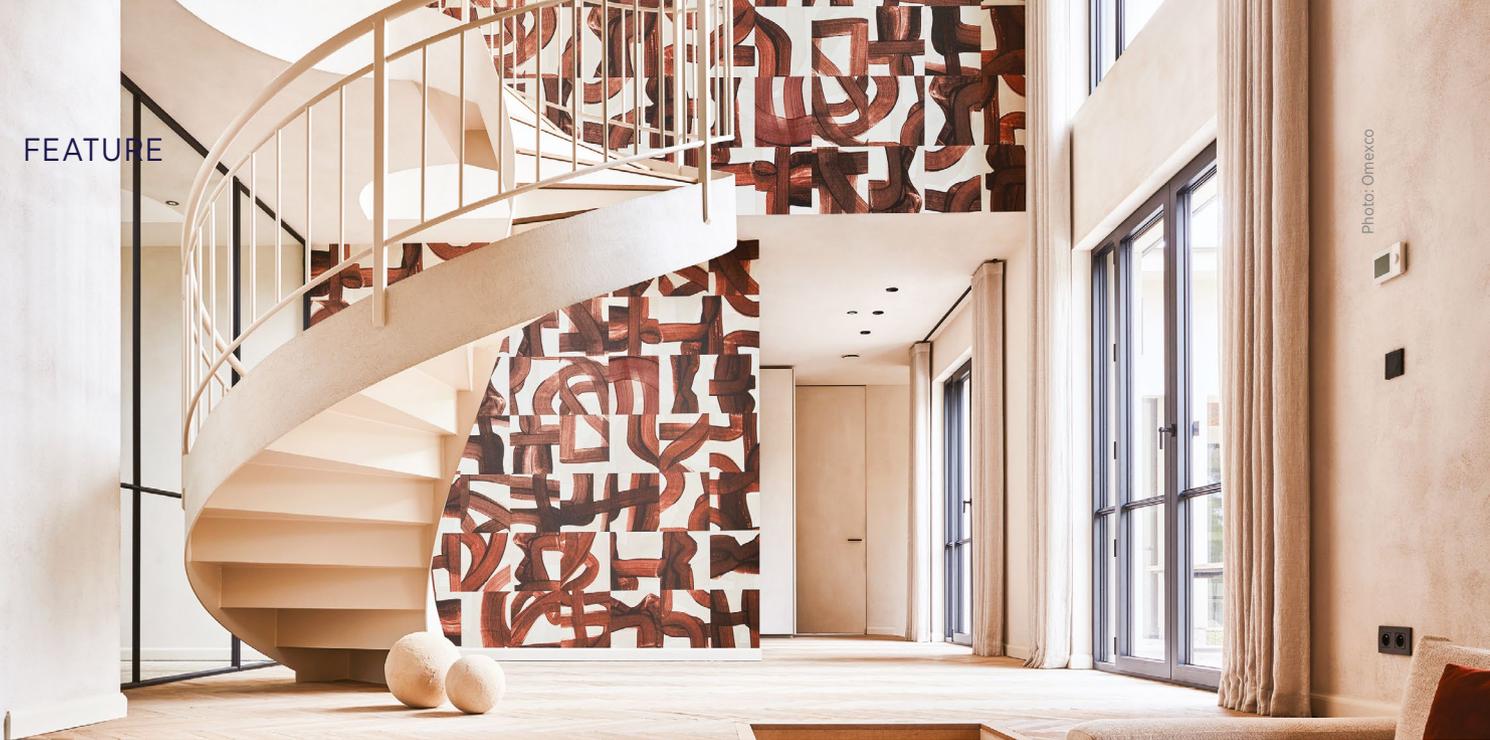
and business development manager at Trevira CS. "Long-lasting products like these are essential building blocks for a sustainable future."

Meanwhile, Ulster Carpets uses patented weaving technology to enhance the natural durability of its bespoke wool carpets. "Wool is a rapidly renewable material that is naturally durable, dimensionally stable and stain repellent, and we blend it with a small amount of nylon to create quality carpets with proven longevity," says Rachel Guy, the brand's marine contract sales director. "The Axminster weaving process also



"Designing to last isn't just about making products durable, it's also about the vendor playing a role in the circular ecosystem"

My Nguyen
Holland America Line and Seabourn



Studio DADO worked with Omexco to create a PVC-free, IMO-certified, high-performance wall covering that can be easily cleaned

offers in-built durability, enhanced performance, greater colour consistency and increased design possibilities.”

Forest Group also uses stringent production methods to manufacture products that can easily endure constant use onboard passenger ships.

“Our curtain rail systems are crafted from premium, highly stable aluminium to ensure superior quality for both indoor and outdoor use,” says Dion Bosch, international business developer for hospitality and marine at Forest Group. “An essential part of the production process involves applying a bonding layer to facilitate the application of high-quality, elastic powder coating so the rails can be bent seamlessly. The rails are also ultraviolet-resistant and carrier testing involves subjecting them to 100C temperatures for two years without any colour alteration, allowing Forest to offer a 10-year warranty.”

Collaborating for change

Despite a growing number of companies designing products to meet shipowner’s specific requirements, there are still very few available in the market, says My Nguyen, director of interior design for cruise brands Holland America Line and Seabourn.

“In these instances, we collaborate with vendors to create custom products that meet our criteria,” she says, explaining that Holland America has worked with

Italian firm Manifattura Testori to create durable wall coverings made of recycled flame-retardant polyester fibres for guest corridors on its ships.

“When we replace the wall coverings, Testori will take the material back to keep it out of landfill. We want to establish these kinds of partnerships with vendors of carpets, textiles, furniture and more. To us, designing to last isn’t just about making products durable, it’s also about the vendor playing a role in the circular ecosystem and being willing to think outside of the box with us.”

Independent design firms, such as Miami-based Studio DADO, are partnering with product manufacturers to drive innovation in the passenger ship interior design sector too.

“We specify materials that are durable, sustainable and easy to maintain, and also deliver on design and visual appeal,” says Yohandel Ruiz, founding partner of Studio DADO. “We were frustrated with

what was in the market, so we partnered with wall covering manufacturer Omexco to design and deliver a high-performance product that achieved all of this. Together we’ve created a PVC-free, IMO-certified, high-performance wall covering that can be easily cleaned with bleach.”

Make it modular

Changing design preferences and the frequent daily use of products and onboard spaces means that ship interiors are refurbished every few years. To keep costs, refit work and waste to a minimum, shipowners should aim to use products that can be easily updated.

“If the shipowner wants to change the style often, then it’s important to have items in a space that are easy to change and replace, such as textiles, artwork or loose cushions,” says Helena Sawelin, partner and business director at interior design firm Tillberg Design of Sweden.

To make this easier and minimise waste, shipowners can choose modular



“We need to develop design practices in which we consume fewer resources when creating products”

Siu Lie Tan
Exsulting

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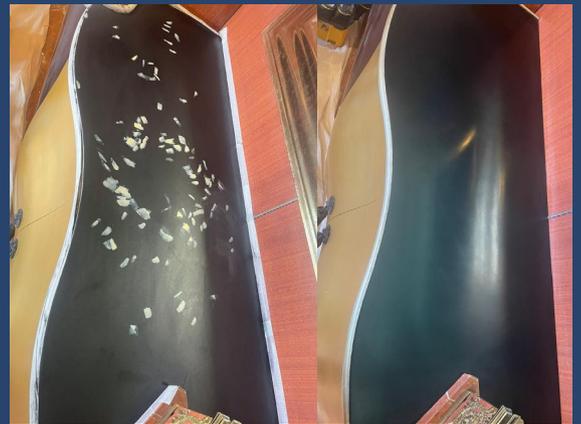
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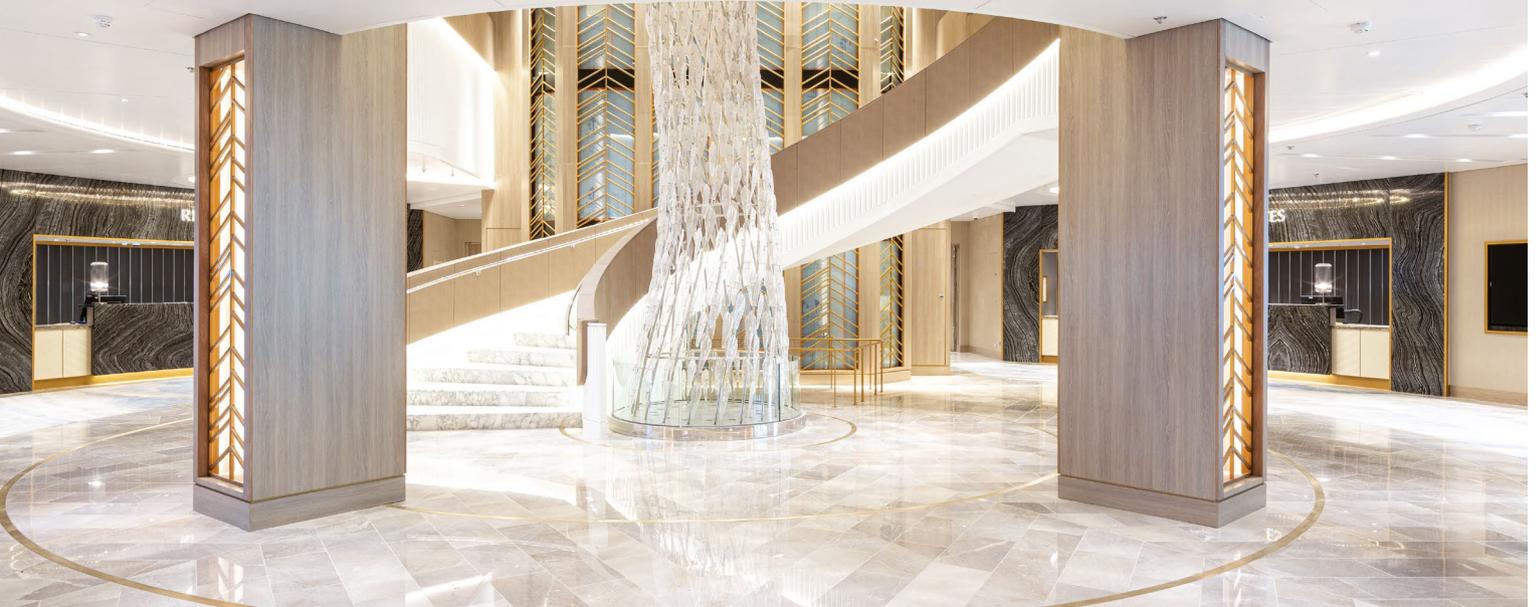
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FEATURE



Designed by Studio DADO and fitted out by Marine Interiors, the atrium on Oceania Cruises' Oceania Vista features natural stone materials, which are strong and durable

products with elements that can be modified in future to extend their lifespan, says Siu Lie Tan, partner of sustainability consultancy Exsulting.

“A chair could have a base structure made of a durable material and smaller parts that can be detached and repaired or replaced if the shipowner wants to update the furniture’s aesthetic appearance during a refurbishment,” she says. “Being able to prolong the life of useful parts rather than changing the whole product decreases the chair’s environmental footprint and possibly minimises costs too.”

Felicia Zwebner, CEO of furniture firm FZ Collection, believes there are “boundless opportunities” for the industry to change how it designs and manufactures products that will last for “generations to come”.

“Beyond the confines of fleeting trends and disposable culture, lies the epicentre of timeless artistry,” she says. “We boldly champion longevity and have an unwavering commitment to delivering products with enduring quality and excellence. Our experts consider each product from both an aesthetic and a technical perspective, creating items with structural integrity in mind so they can be easily maintained.”

A new approach to design

While products that are designed to last play a crucial role in moving towards sustainable ship interiors, the industry must rethink the entire design process to achieve full circularity, says Tan.

“We need to develop design practices in which we consume fewer resources when creating products,” she explains.

To achieve this, Tan recommends designers follow the 9R Framework – refuse, rethink, reduce, reuse, repair, refurbish, remanufacture, repurpose, recycle and recovery. This helps designers ensure all raw materials are used and reused at their highest value throughout the ship’s life to prevent them from becoming wasted resources.

“It all starts with questioning if we really need the products, or if we can improve their functionality, style and environmental impact in a different way,” says Tan. “For instance, by following the ‘refuse’ strategy, designers can make smarter use of existing elements such as lighting, colour or movable furniture to update a space, rather than using additional resources. Doing this omits the need for new items to be produced and transported to the



Founded by designer Felicia Zwebner, FZ Collection is a custom furniture and lighting line for the sea and land-based hospitality sectors as well as sophisticated corporate and commercial spaces. Each piece crafted by FZ Collection is the result of innovative and creative design meticulously produced using state of the art machinery and old-world European craftsmanship.

www.fzcollection.net





Excel Dryer's ThinAir Hand Dryer is slim, compact, easy to maintain and provides a sustainable alternative to paper towels

ship, which generates extra emissions and creates more waste.”

Crucially, the industry must also improve systems for effectively recovering raw materials to prevent them from becoming waste when products reach the end of their lifespans.

“The current challenge is that while so many products are on an amazing track of recyclability, they haven't come full circle yet,” says Payne. “Some products are fully recyclable, or are made of fully recycled materials, but we don't know where they come from, how they get there or where they go at the end of their lifecycle. Logistics often make it difficult to recycle items too.”

To overcome this obstacle, the industry must design with the on-site assembly, regular maintenance and future refurbishment requirements of

products in mind, says Cafaro. “Every single component can then be fully used throughout its lifecycle because we will be able to identify and replace it without wasting the entire assembly.”

Tan adds: “We must also build an ecosystem of partners who will be responsible for performing these future actions, so shipowners know who to contact and when.”

In some cases, technologies allow shipowners to entirely remove some materials from ships. For example, Excel Dryer's ThinAir Hand Dryer provides a sustainable alternative to paper towels.

“The dryer features electrostatic HEPA filtration and exemplifies the shift towards durable, long-lasting interior products,” says William Gagnon, executive vice president and chief operating officer at Excel Dryer. “Its slim, accessible design

means it fits perfectly in compact cruise ship restrooms, and it is both durable and low maintenance. By using items built to endure, we're championing a future where long-lasting, environmentally conscious products are key.”

Signs of change

Faced by a growing number of financial mechanisms to disincentivise the use of certain raw materials and mandatory regulations to keep products out of landfill, industry stakeholders are increasingly committed to designing long-lasting ship interiors and products.

“The interest in higher quality and long-lasting design, and the modular approach to refurbishing furniture, have grown in the past year,” says Sawelin.

To capitalise on this momentum and accelerate the progress towards full circularity, all industry stakeholders must collaborate on solutions, says Tan. “Experts across the supply chain must work together to compare various options to identify the most economically viable design solutions that also deliver the biggest positive environmental impact.”

Despite the anticipated challenges, it is clear that the move to circular design is “no longer something that can be put off”, says Cafaro. “We cannot continue to waste precious resources to produce materials that do not last, only to keep discarding and replacing them in an endless vicious cycle. Instead, everyone operating in this fascinating cruise world must strive to drive change together as we have both the qualifications and capacity to do so.” **CFI**



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