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Kat Burki and Eric Cohler stand alongside a Tangier stand center table by Baker Studio. See Resources.

Ten Superstylish Center Tables

Truth in Decorating: These entry eye-catchers and their multipurpose assets enchant designers Eric Cohler and Kat Burki

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One of the best ways to make a stylish first impression is with a center hall table. Placed prominently in the middle of a foyer, they became popular during the Victorian era when they helped transform grandiose armor-filled entrance halls into gracious receiving rooms.

"Center tables say, 'You're welcome to be in my space,'" explains interior designer Eric Cohler, who is partial to round shapes that facilitate movement around them. They are also an opportunity to showcase personal flair, he says, by adding decorative accessories such as lamps, framed photos, objets, and flowers or potted plants. Their practicality is another plus, notes decorator Kat Burki: "A center table is a convenient place to put keys or a hat and can double as a small dining table." Here, Burki and Cohler assess ELLE DECOR's top ten picks. ▶



HAIR AND MAKEUP BY MARGRET AVERY

center tables



1 TANGIER CENTER TABLE BY BAKER STUDIO
 "I adore its Middle Eastern look," Eric Cohler declares. He's also drawn to the coral-lacquer underside: "I almost want to crawl in there and read a book." To highlight its unusual hexagonal shape, he sees it beneath a lantern in an elegant front hall. "A pair or a trio would be nice in a long gallery," he says, since the off-white exterior and arched legs give the table an open feeling.
 Height: 30"; diameter: 48"; material: hardwood composite in ivory- and coral-lacquer finish; delivery: 6-8 weeks; price: \$1,980



2 STEEL SANDWICH TABLE BY JASON COLLECTION FROM INTÉRIEURS
 "The steel construction would go well with a modernist house or charge things up in a classic environment," Kat Burki says of this industrial-chic piece. She suggests minimal decoration to keep its surface uncluttered and tucking two small stools underneath to draw attention to its adjustable base.
 Height: 24"-32"; diameter: 36" (available in smaller size); material: steel-and-oak top in waxed finish with cast-iron base; delivery: immediate; price: \$3,600



3 ROUND DINING TABLE WITH CUTOUT BASE BY WEST ELM
 "This is practical, stylish, and affordable," Cohler pronounces. He's a fan of the wood-grain surface and "voluptuous" cutouts. To echo its circular shape, accessorize with a globe or hurricane lamp. And clear off the top for small parties since "it's the perfect size to use as a dining table for four," he says.
 Height: 29.5"; diameter: 42"; material: rubber wood in chocolate finish (available in larger size and in matte-white finish); delivery: 2 weeks; price: \$399



4 CAMPAGNE DINING TABLE BY HICKORY CHAIR CO.
 A textured top and faux-limestone base give this model a "casual country feel excellent for a vacation house," according to Burki. To anchor it in a hallway, place it under a chandelier and bedeck it with a topiary or large books.
 Height: 31"; diameter: 48"; material: solid-ash-plank top in scrubbed-ash finish with faux-limestone pedestal base (other finishes available for top); delivery: 4-6 weeks; price: \$4,569



5 ON POINT CENTER TABLE BY BARBARA BARRY REALIZED BY HENREDON
 Its generous size makes you "want to pull up a chair and spread out a newspaper," Cohler says. He also likes the polished finish and "the unexpected oomph of its playful legs." For a centerpiece, he fancies a lamp with a crisp white shade or a colorful orchid to contrast with the table's dark hue.
 Height: 30"; diameter: 50"; material: walnut veneer in dark-walnut finish; delivery: 3-4 weeks; price: \$5,790



6 GREEK KEY TABLE BY FORMATIONS FROM HOLLY HUNT
 "Like something you'd find antiquing," Burki points out, referring to the patinated-mirror top. Its iron base recalls an outdoor piece, "which I love," she says. Burki also admires how the swirls soften the legs' Greek-key motif. She recommends placing it in the entrance of an urban apartment with plants underneath to conjure plein-air style.
 Height: 29"; diameter: 40"; material: antiqued-mirror-inset top with aged-iron base (custom sizes and finishes available); delivery: 10-12 weeks; price: \$4,280



7 BLACK FOYER TABLE BY VAGABOND VINTAGE
 "The rustic finish calls to mind something you'd find at a salvage depot," Cohler observes. "This would be wonderful for a family room because it's strong and can take a beating," he says of its sturdy wood design. To offset the "no-nonsense" shape, he advocates "displaying a large glass cylinder filled with something unexpected, such as baseballs."
 Height: 32.5"; diameter: 36"; material: hand-carved mango wood in antiqued-black finish; delivery: immediate; price: \$1,795



8 SPIDER TABLE BY DOWNTOWN FROM PROFILES
 "Nice, unusual lines," Burki says of the base's striking contours. "And I love the parchment finish, but red or apple-green would make the legs stand out even more." To avoid competing with the arresting design, "keep it sleek with an Oriental charger or an Hermès tray for keys," she advises.
 Height: 29"; diameter: 42"; material: hand-carved alder wood in tweed-lacquer finish (custom sizes and finishes available); delivery: 14-16 weeks; price: \$8,583



9 CHANDLER ROUND TABLE BY MITCHELL GOLD + BOB WILLIAMS
 "Not for the faint of heart," Cohler remarks. "It's got a strong silhouette, especially with the beautiful finial-like baluster," he says. Cohler also appreciates that the pedestal base easily accommodates chairs when doubling as a dining table. To soften its "serious shape," he would top it with "something whimsical, like a whirligig."
 Height: 30"; diameter: 40"; material: cherry veneer in Cognac finish; delivery: immediate; price: \$1,095



10 OTIS TABLE BY LORENZ KAZ FROM SUITE NEW YORK
 "Reminiscent of a '60s school table," Burki notes. "The laminate top is extremely durable, and it has clean lines, so no matter what style you have going on it would look great," she adds. Burki pictures its large birch-trimmed surface piled with books.
 Height: 28"; diameter: 39.4"; material: white laminate top and birch-plywood trim with sheet-metal base in white powder-coated finish (also available in larger size, black laminate top, and black powder-coated base); delivery: 10-12 weeks; price: \$2,032

The opinions featured are those of ELLE DECOR's guest experts and do not necessarily represent those of the editors. All measurements, delivery times, and prices are approximate. For details see Resources.