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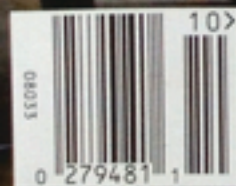
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Beth Martin and Aurélien Gallet with cocktail tables by Damien Langlois-Meurinne for Pouenat Ferronnier, left, and CB2. See Resources.



## THE TOP 10 COCKTAIL TABLES

*Designers Aurélien Gallet and Beth Martin toast these modern-day essentials that take a dramatic leading role in virtually every living room*

Given the pride of place the cocktail table holds in today's living rooms, it's hard to believe the piece is only a 20th-century invention. In earlier eras, tea services and drinks were set on taller, more formal tables. But the cocktail craze of the 1920s and '30s popularized a new, lower table placed near the sofa. By midcentury, fashion writer Eugenia Sheppard called it "the heart, soul, and center of a home."

"The cocktail table is something shared with others," says designer Aurélien Gallet, referring to its

spot in the middle of a seating area. But he doesn't believe in loading it with books and objects: "The cocktail table should be bare, ready to use."

For decorator Beth Martin, some tables benefit from a bit of styling—textured accessories can warm up a high-shine piece, for example—but a sculptural table makes a statement on its own. And when the living room needs a face-lift, the cocktail table is a great place to start, she says. "Sometimes just changing one element can be all you need." ▸

### THE EXPERTS

#### AURÉLIEN GALLET

The French-born New York designer brings a moody, edgy vibe to his projects, which include a Barbados home and a Manhattan restaurant. His tables are available at Maison Gerard [ourelengallet.com](http://ourelengallet.com)

#### BETH MARTIN

With her nuanced eye for color, the San Francisco decorator creates sophisticated, livable spaces. She is currently updating a 1907 house by Bernard Maybeck. [elizabethmartindesign.com](http://elizabethmartindesign.com)

TEXT BY LAURA REGENSDORF / PHOTOGRAPHY BY BJÖRN WALLANDER / PRODUCED BY QUY NGUYEN

# TRUTH IN DECORATING



## 1 / MILK HOUSE TABLE BY GEORGE NAKASHIMA WOODWORKER

Designed in 1943, this table nods to Nakashima's Japanese-American roots. "This is a modern approach to Asian design," says Beth Martin, noting the traditional joinery and streamlined form. She'd keep the top bare to show off the flame-like grain of the two panels, which are connected by a butterfly joint. Aurélien Gallet pictures it surrounded by leather furnishings. "It's spare yet strong," he says. Black walnut, shown, and black cherry are offered. 42" w. x 36" d. x 16" h.; \$6,000; nakashimawoodworker.com



## 2 / ELEMENT COCKTAIL TABLE BY CB2

Made of durable stone composite, this table has a blank-canvas effect, says Gallet: "It would react differently with whatever is around it—plus, gray goes well with everything." Because of its compact size, a pair could sit in front of a long sofa, suggests Martin, and it's economical enough to use even in a playroom. "At this price, it's brilliant," she says. 32" w. x 32" d. x 15" h.; \$399; cb2.com



## 3 / DEAN COCKTAIL TABLE BY GABRIEL SCOTT

With a super-clear glass top and a blackened-steel base accented with brass, this is "of the moment," says Martin, adding that the table's starburst design is an updated take on midcentury style. Gallet agrees: "I like the bold geometry. It's Gio Ponti-esque." The legs can be powder-coated in white, and a round version is also available. 47" w. x 29" d. x 17" h.; \$1,650; gabriel-scott.com



## 4 / TO TURN YOU ON BY DAMIEN LANGLOIS-MEURINNE FOR POUENAT FERRONNIER FROM INTÉRIEURS

This constellation of circles is appealingly playful, says Gallet. "The asymmetrical shape lets you be creative with the seating arrangement," he adds. Martin visualizes the gold-leaf table in a glam space. Silver-leaf and lacquer finishes are also offered. 50" w. x 48" d. x 15" h.; \$9,590; interieurs.com



## 5 / PK61 BY POUL KJÆRHOLM FOR FRITZ HANSEN

"Incredibly beautiful," Martin says of this 1955 Danish classic, which features textured marble and stainless steel. "It has a quietness that showcases the raw materials," she adds. Given its low height, Gallet envisions the table in a sleek, loungey setting with dark floors, "so the stone seems to float." A larger size and other tops are available. 32" w. x 32" d. x 13" h.; \$3,897; fritzhanzen.com

*The opinions featured are those of ELLEDECOR's guest experts and do not necessarily represent those of the editors. All measurements and prices are approximate. For details see Resources.*