

Classic Update: The Bar Stool

Today's bar stools give you a front-row seat for laughs and libations while rising to style heights worthy of a polished home

Written by Sally Finder Weepie



Shrouded with mystery akin to a Roaring Twenties speakeasy, the bar stool's creation story faded into uncertainty. Sure, it shares DNA with the short-statured stools of ancient China and the famed Thebes stool found in King Tut's tomb. But when, exactly, did the stool get so leggy? Well, a lot of evidence points right back to that speakeasy, the Jazz Age, and the influx of flappers to drinking establishments, where, for the first time, "liberated" women sought out a barside perch and a sip of bathtub gin.



Julian Chichester “Emma” bar stool, photographed at **Le Coucou**, New York City.

After those wild early years, the bar stool took on an air of chic respectability and settled down into family homes of the 1950s and '60s. More recently, these seats have stretched their style repertoire, offering looks and luxe upholstery options to jibe with today's sophisticated rooms.



“Annette” by Bungalow 5

“I love the cane back to this stool—it adds texture and dimension. This French-inspired stool would be the perfect complement to a country cottage kitchen.”

—Jonathan Savage, Nashville



“Cocoon” by Bill Sofield for McGuire

“This bar stool is the discreet star of the kitchen. The geometric pattern on the seat back is fantastic and very current, but the traditional materials keep it soft and classic.”

—Allison Bloom, Mill Valley, California



“Stay” by Sé

“I like this design because it’s almost an ode to the French modernist style of Pierre Paulin but in a more fresh and contemporary, streamlined way. I love the exaggerated round back as it adds some drama.”

—Sasha Bikoff, New York City



“Harris” by Quintus

"I like this transitional stool and its sexy curves juxtaposed with sharp angles. Its classic look with a modern twist makes it easy to use in a variety of kitchens or bars."

—Adam Hunter, Los Angeles



“Page” by Century

“This shapely stool has the elegance of a contemporary dining chair while providing the comfort of a counter stool.”

—Justin Van Breda, London



“Trillion” by Donghia

“This bar stool is both versatile and visually stunning—I adore the shape and how it hugs you. If it were in my home, I’d never want to leave the bar!”

—Chad James, Nashville

Photography: John Bessler

Produced by Tori Mellott

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