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Marcel Wanders makes a splash at Design Days Dubai

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Italian furniture atelier Florence Collection gives the canopy bed a contemporary twist

SOFT TOUCH

Studies are proving what interior designers have known all along. When it comes to television in the bedroom, don't do it. Not only is it aesthetically unappealing – it can serve as a sleep detriment.

"Studies have proven that people who watch TV before bed just don't sleep as well," says U.S. interior designer Michelle Nussbaumer, who likes celestial blues in the master suite for their calming affect. "Whether you live alone or with another person, it's just not good for your psyche to watch something right before sleep."

Young New York City-based French interior designer Aurélien Gallet, who began his career as an art appraiser, advises against keeping a mobile phone by the bed, suggesting a good-old-fashioned alarm clock rather than using the alarm on a phone. "The bedroom is about sleeping. What do you need when you're sleeping? Not a BlackBerry."

So with many designers advocating that modern disruptive technologies be banned from the bedroom, they are attempting to maximise calm in an area relegated to sleep and recharge.

Prolific Italian architect and designer Mauro Lipparini, who is creating a new bedroom collection for the young Turkish brand Casa International, prefers a bedroom to be neither too feminine nor too masculine. For the Casa range, he designed a full suite of bedroom pieces, from headboards and chests of drawers to night tables.

"Bedroom furniture is entirely at the service of comfort and relaxation: soft is key; voluminous dimensions, upholstered headboards and bed frames with signature stitching, tufted, etc." the Florence, Italy-based Lipparini tells *identity*, adding that "Upholstered headboards are higher, often adjustable, so that a nest-like place of extreme comfort can be created... and [I envisage] where sideboards, chest-of-drawers, and night tables, still hold their traditional place in the bedroom."

For the master suite, Lipparini extends the approach he took with his Casa International's Italia range, a set of three original collections for the living room – *Contemporary*, *Timeless* and *Luxury Chic* – that debuted in 2015.

"Well, my approach always keeps the brand's target market and motto in mind, so the bedroom furniture quietly expresses 'discreet luxury'; and its aesthetic connection to the inaugural collection is continuous, without being repetitive," Lipparini notes. "Last year we created a complete collection of materials, so I decided to add just an extra soft touch for the bedroom area with the Italian 'rovere oenere' (ash-grey stained oak), hairline-brushed brass detailing (currently in Casa's collection), and warm grey tones in the fabric collection. I wanted to create something that felt neither too masculine, nor feminine – but not 'metrosexual' – with a wood species that feels ancestral on some level, yet still cosy and familiar."

For the bedroom, Lipparini invoked his classic brand of minimalism, crafting a padded fabric-clad platform and oversized headboard, which extends well beyond the platform's edge, to encompass the end tables or any other bedside accoutrements. He, naturally, flanks the platform with a pair of his open cube-like side tables, which marry ash-grey stained oak with a brushed brass top for a sophisticated look.

"What's important is to be in-tune and sensitive to trends, yet to read them with a very personal language," Lipparini explains. "People now want more for their money, not less, so if an accommodating, comfortable shape and size can convey a sense of security (something we all crave in these turbulent times), then my design strives to reflect that. Extreme attention to detail is part of my signature, [and] so that is not lost on this collection, [which is] still in the process of being designed!"



Pedral's bracket-like *Parenthesis* side table



The woven rattan *Bolla* by Gervasoni



Casa International debuts night collection



The *Nobis* table in gold by Offeot



Letti & Co.'s hairpin-style *LO 46* bedside table



Moon table by Mist-O for Living Divani



Flou's oversize *Maja* bed defines the space



Mario Bellini



Cassina presents the leather-clad *Cab Night* bed



Piero Lissoni's sartorial *Lipp* bed for Living Divani

NEST-LIKE SETTING

Lipparini's attitude to the master suite is similar to other prominent minimalist designs that carve out a larger domain for the bed, transforming it into an almost architectural element by blowing up the proportions of the headboard.

More flexible (and movable) than an upholstered wall behind the bed, an oversized headboard helps define the space, unifying various elements. When done in fabric, it can also soften the look of the space and offer sound absorption qualities. In fact, these ultra-wide headboards, quite often fully customisable, can be used as another tool in the designer's arsenal for creating a more personalised space.

A sort of hybrid system comes to us from designer Francesco Rota. His *Build* system of modular panels for Paola Lenti Home offers unconventional solutions for the bedroom. With its variable geometries and flexible design, *Build* is a fabric-covered system that can be suspended on the wall or composed into a freestanding unit that serves as a headboard. Its usefulness can be amped-up by the incorporation of horizontal surfaces and wooden shelves to carve out, for example, a desk on the headboard's rear-side, or as a nightstand.

Such elements help unify a room's interior and they increase the functionality of the space too. Large headboards, in addition, help create a niche-like feel in the bedroom, almost like a nest, that can rationalise all the necessary accoutrements of sleep – from nightstand and reading lights to books and a luscious hand-cream.

From Italian brand Bonaldo comes *Basket Plus*, another Lipparini creation.

This upholstered headboard is rounded on the sides to create an enveloping and welcoming alcove. A similar, although slightly more tailored, approach is found in Living Divani's *Lipp* bed, with its fabric-clad, wraparound headboard. And Letti & Co., an Italian brand, releases *Bergere* by Paola Navone (the company's designer and creative director), which evokes the spirit and cosiness of this classic French wingback armchair.

From Flou, which has about 40 beds in its night range, comes the *Maja* bed, available with an extra-wide, super-plush headboard designed by Carlo Colombo. With its hive-like construction, *Maja* lends a sumptuous quality to the bedroom. The company also proposes the unmistakable *Nathalie* bed, with its characteristic little bows by Vico Magistretti. Magistretti is the forefather of the textile-covered bed, says Flou, and his *Nathalie* design, created in 1978 by Flou, features a padded, pillow-like headboard and fabric-clad platform for a soft, snooze-inspiring finish.

To date, Cassina has sold more than 600,000 pieces of its *Cab* chair, designed by Mario Bellini in 1977, and the Italian brand is extending the reach of *Cab* into the bedroom with the *Cab Night* bed. Bellini, who just turned 80, brings the same richness of materials and attention to detail to the bedroom. *Cab Night* features structure and legs of the bed upholstered in saddle leather, saddlery craftsmanship details are visible in the joints between the various parts of the bed. Its headboard, slightly tapered and padded, is characterised by a stitching feature that divides the left side from the right, and is crafted from buttery soft leather.