

**En Vogue**

**Publication:** The National

**Country:** UAE

**Date:** September 5<sup>th</sup> 2014

**PR Value:** \$ 31, 500

**Circulation:** 65, 000

**TheNational**



check

out the latest Ikea catalogue, which is out now and features a host of fun new products, including additions to the ever-popular Ikea PS 2004 collection, such as this colourful storage table. Browse the catalogue online at [www.ikea.com/ae](http://www.ikea.com/ae)



The new En Vogue showroom in Jumeirah 1 sells luxury furnishing options by the US brand Kravet, including the Silk Tiger Velvet Louis XVI Dining Chair, on the left of the picture above, which retails at Dh77,970. Photos by Sarah Doo / The National

# The height of luxury

Selina Denman samples the five-star shopping experience at Dubai's newest homeware store, En Vogue

Valet parking isn't a service that you generally expect of a homeware store. Yet outside the newly opened En Vogue showroom on Jumeirah Beach Road, there's a man just waiting to whisk your car off to a secure spot so that you don't have to concern yourself with such trivialities and can instead focus on the task at hand - whether that's finding your dream sofa, picking up the perfect gift, buying a bunch of decorative flowers or investing in an original antique.

The valet service may be something of an indulgence, but it's a sign of things to come. And it's all part of creating "luxury five-star shopping experience", explains En Vogue's general manager, Rob Canning. "We didn't want this to be a normal furniture store, a franchise with one brand name, which is a copy of every other store around the world," he says. "We tried to create a store that offers one-offs, things you can't find everywhere, things that are unique to Dubai, things that your standard furniture brands don't offer."

En Vogue officially opened last Thursday and represents the first foray into furniture by the Gulf General Investment Company. It's an enormous space - more than 2,000 square metres set over two floors in

**We tried to create a store that offers one-offs, things you can't find everywhere, things that are unique to Dubai**

Rob Canning general manager, En Vogue

what was formerly a Choithrams supermarket.

The location, in Jumeirah 1, a stone's throw away from the Mercato mall, is ideal, says Canning. "Jumeirah 1 was the original place to shop in Dubai and is now very much associated with luxury retail. Things are changing, I think a lot of brands are moving out of the malls. And not being in a mall means we get plenty of natural light and have the freedom to make the space everything we want it to be - and offer services like valet parking."

The space is brimming with intriguing items that invite closer inspection: a sinuous, solid-bronze panther sculpture that was picked up in a market in France; picture frames hand-branded in Italian leather; a chandelier made from delicate-looking amethyst discs set against imposing bronze spikes; an ornate Chinese cabinet dating back to 1770; and beautifully crafted coffee-table books by the French luxury brand Assouline, which, says Canning, "make wonderful gifts" (assuming that you can bear to part with them yourself).

The store's anchor brand is Kravet, a United States company that was founded in 1918, when Samuel Kravet, a tailor from Russia, arrived in the US and started providing his services to New York's elite. In 1924, joined by his four sons, Kravet started selling fabrics and trimmings to interior designers. Today, with the fifth generation of the family at the helm, Kravet has more than 42 showrooms around the world. The brand has continued to focus on interior-design professionals, which means that this is the first time that its products will be available in a purely retail environment.

"Kravet Inc was chosen because of the level of furniture - the quality and the choices available and the designers they work with, which include Kelly Wearstler and Oscar de la Renta," says Canning.

Under the Kravet umbrella are the high-end fabric house Lee Jofa, which has been in business since 1823; G P & J Baker, a United King-



Bob, by Jérôme Ravon, is one of four of his pieces on offer in the store.

dom-based company that boasts the largest privately held archive of decorative textiles in the world; and Brunschwig & Fils, a French fabric house that has been in operation since 1900. "The whole idea of Brunschwig & Fils is they've been collecting fabrics and patterns and designs since the early 1900s -

and most are still in the collection today," says Canning.

The entire ground floor of the sizeable showroom is dominated by Kravet products, all of which can be fully customised, down to the size of the nail heads. There's a space dedicated to fabrics on the first floor, so customers can pick and choose their preferred upholstery in comfort.

But the store has not limited itself to Kravet brands. "We have luxury accessories, furniture and gifts, but also antiques, pieces of art, sculptures and special, one-off pieces that are unique and hand-picked by us, from markets and fairs. We will be working with a well-known vintage fashion dealer to bring one-off fashion and jewellery pieces by the likes of Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent, and we will continue filling the store with more and more items and brands, and maybe even more shop-in-shop options."

There's currently a section dedicated to Rigaud room sprays, candles and home fragrances. There are paintings by the famed artist Jérôme Ravon and stunning light fixtures and lamps by the likes of Les Hentiers. There's a Maison de Fleurs shop-in-shop (the brand's first-ever retail presence), which sells both fresh and imitation flow-

ers, including vibrantly coloured orchids and the brand's speciality specially treated Ecuadorian roses with a shelf life of up to five years. They come in a range of colours but the tall-stemmed black roses which come encased in sculptural glass cylinders, are definitely worth looking out for.

One of the showroom's stand-out pieces - in a collection that is defined by standout pieces - is the limited-edition, gold foil Clockwork by Biegert & Funk, which tells the time in words, as opposed to numbers. A jumble of letters covers the clock face, and becomes illuminated to spell out the time. There are English, Chinese and Russian versions, but there's something about Arabic script that really lends itself to the artistry of the piece.

Everything in the store currently falls very firmly into the high-end, high-quality category, with price tags to match - although, according to Canning, the plan is to make the product range more accessible to everyone. At present, a regular two-seater sofa might set you back a tidy Dh30,000, but there's also a Dh120,000 model finished in a tactile, velvet-mix fabric. The Assouline books can cost anything from Dh300 to Dh3,000, but there are limited-edition versions that go for much more. At the very highest end of the scale sits the Silk Tiger Velvet Louis XVI Dining Chair, covered in a signature woven fabric by Brunschwig & Fils, which is retailing at a whopping Dh77,970. Only 60 centimetres wide and sold by the metre, the Silk Tiger Velvet fabric takes weeks to create and is the most expensive woven fabric produced by the company.

If all of this choice proves a little overwhelming, do not despair. En Vogue's full-service offering also includes a team of architects, artists and interior designers, who can do anything from designing large-scale commercial and residential projects to helping you decide where to place all your exciting new purchases.



The 2,000-square-metre space was formerly a Choithrams supermarket.



In addition to designs by Kravet, there are antiques, accessories and giftware.

✉ [sdeman@thenational.ae](mailto:sdeman@thenational.ae)

Valet parking isn't a service that you generally expect of a homeware store. Yet outside the newly opened En Vogue showroom on Jumeirah Beach Road, there's a man just waiting to whisk your car off to a secure spot so that you don't have to concern yourself with such trivialities and can instead focus on the task at hand – whether that's finding your dream sofa, picking up the perfect gift, buying a bunch of decorative flowers or investing in an original antique.

The valet service may be something of an indulgence, but it's a sign of things to come. And it's all part of creating a "luxury five-star shopping experience", explains En Vogue's general manager, Rob Canning. "We didn't want this to be a normal furniture store, a franchise with one brand name, which is a copy of every other store around the world," he says. "We tried to create a store that offers one-offs, things you can't find everywhere, things that are unique to Dubai, things that your standard furniture brands don't offer."

En Vogue officially opened last Thursday and represents the first foray into furniture by the Gulf General Investment Company. It's an enormous space – more than 2,000 square metres set over two floors in



**We tried to create a store that offers one-offs, things you can't find everywhere, things that are unique to Dubai**

*Rob Canning general manager, En Vogue*

what was formerly a Choithrams supermarket.

The location, in Jumeirah 1, a stone's throw away from the Mercato mall, is ideal, says Canning. "Jumeirah 1 was the original place to shop in Dubai and is now very much associated with luxury retail. Things are changing; I think a lot of brands are moving out of the malls. And not being in a mall means we get plenty of natural light and have the freedom to make the space everything we want it to be – and offer services like valet parking."

The space is brimming with intriguing items that invite closer inspection: a sinuous, solid-bronze panther sculpture that was picked up in a market in France; picture frames hand-braided in Italian leather; a chandelier made from delicate-looking amethyst discs set against imposing bronze spikes; an ornate Chinese cabinet dating back to 1770; and beautifully crafted coffee-table books by the French luxury brand Assouline, which, says Canning, "make wonderful gifts" (assuming that you can bear to part with them yourself).

The store's anchor brand is Kravet, a United States company that was founded in 1918, when Samuel Kravet, a tailor from Russia, arrived in the US and started providing his services to New York's elite. In 1924, joined by his four sons, Kravet started selling fabrics and trimmings to interior designers. Today, with the fifth generation of the family at the helm, Kravet has more than 42 showrooms around the world. The brand has continued to focus on interior-design professionals, which means that this is the first time that its products will be available in a purely retail environment.

"Kravet Inc was chosen because of the level of furniture – the quality and the choices available and the designers they work with, which include Kelly Wearstler and Oscar de la Renta," says Canning.

Under the Kravet umbrella are the high-end fabric house Lee Jofa, which has been in business since 1823; G P & J Baker, a United King-

dom-based company that boasts the largest privately held archive of decorative textiles in the world; and Brunschwig & Fils, a French fabric house that has been in operation since 1900. "The whole idea of Brunschwig & Fils is they've been collecting fabrics and patterns and designs since the early 1900s –

and most are still in the collection today," says Canning.

The entire ground floor of the sizeable showroom is dominated by Kravet products, all of which can be fully customised, down to the size of the nail heads. There's a space dedicated to fabrics on the first floor, so customers can pick and choose their preferred upholstery in comfort.

But the store has not limited itself to Kravet brands. "We have luxury accessories, furniture and gifts, but also antiques, pieces of art, sculptures and special, one-off pieces that are unique and hand-picked by us, from markets and fairs. We will be working with a well-known vintage fashion dealer to bring one-off fashion and jewellery pieces by the likes of Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent, and we will continue filling the store with more and more items and brands, and maybe even more shop-in-shop options."

There's currently a section dedicated to Rigaud room sprays, candles and home fragrances. There are paintings by the famed artist Jérôme Revon and stunning light fixtures and lamps by the likes of Les Heritiers. There's a Maison de Fleurs shop-in-shop (the brand's first-ever retail presence), which sells both fresh and imitation flow-

ers, including vibrantly coloured orchids and the brand's speciality specially treated Ecuadorean roses with a shelf life of up to five years. They come in a range of colours but the tall-stemmed black roses which come ensconced in sculptural glass cylinders, are definitely worth looking out for.

One of the showroom's standout pieces – in a collection that is defined by standout pieces – is the limited-edition, gold foil Qlocktwo by Biegert & Funk, which tells the time in words, as opposed to numbers. A jumble of letters covers the clock face, and becomes illuminated to spell out the time. There are English, Chinese and Russian versions, but there's something about Arabic script that really lends itself to the artistry of the piece.

Everything in the store currently falls very firmly into the high-end high-quality category, with price tags to match – although, according to Canning, the plan is to make the product range more accessible to everyone. At present, a regular two-seater sofa might set you back a tidy Dh30,000, but there's also a Dh120,000 model finished in a tactile, velvet-mix fabric. The Assouline books can cost anything from Dh300 to Dh3,000, but there are limited-edition versions that go for much more. At the very highest end of the scale sits the Silk Tiger Velvet Louis XVI Dining Chair, covered in a signature woven fabric by Brunschwig & Fils, which is retailing at a whopping Dh77,970. Only 60 centimetres wide and sold by the metre, the Silk Tiger Velvet fabric takes weeks to create and is the most expensive woven fabric produced by the company.

If all of this choice proves a little overwhelming, do not despair. Er Vogue's full-service offering also includes a team of architects, artists and interior designers, who can do anything from designing large-scale commercial and residential projects to helping you decide where to place all your exciting new purchases.

✉ [sdenman@thenational.ae](mailto:sdenman@thenational.ae)



**The 2,000-square-metre space was formerly a Choithrams supermarket.**



**In addition to designs by Kravet, there are antiques, accessories and giftware.**



**Bob, by Jérôme Revon, is one of four of his pieces on offer in the store.**