

## DESIGN &amp; DECORATING

## Come Full Semicircle

Weary of L-shapes and inspired by Covid 19, designers turn to the 'C Sofa,' a sectional where socializing and social distancing can coexist

By CHRISTINA POLETTO

The couple first spotted the sinuous sofa in the lobby of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in the 1970s. There on a family trip from New York, they couldn't get the curved 17.5-foot sectional—a \$25,000 piece tufted in segments like a caterpillar and named “Non Stop” by Swiss furniture brand de Sede—out of their minds.

Soon after their Israel trip, they stumbled upon the exact same couch in the “Sales & Bargains” column of New York magazine for less than a third of the retail price. “Someone had ordered it and

‘A curved sectional looks beautiful from all angles and can easily float in a room as opposed to sit against a wall.’

never picked it up,” explained the couple's daughter-in-law Robin Correnti, to whom they eventually bequeathed the brown leather sectional 10 years ago. It lives in the family room of the Fort Myers, Fla., home she shares with her husband and two adult sons.

In 2015, when Ms. Correnti refreshed the décor, local designer Dwayne Bergmann revamped every interior element but one. “Our whole house had to be designed around the couch,” she said. “It has so much room, everybody can be on this couch at once.”

Designers are once again falling for semicircular modulars and their modernist flair. Ushering in this boom in bendy sectionals: the considerable social-retooling caused by Covid-19.

Los Angeles designer Anne Sage, who recently placed a circular sectional in her co-owned creative space, appreciates that the sweeping seating encourages interaction—sitters are compelled to make eye contact—but is large enough for social distancing.

“Our old sofa was a dusty pink velvet tufted number that was cool in 2015 but was feeling dated in 2019,” said Ms. Sage, “and now in 2020 and beyond you simply need to allow for more space between people.” A moment for compact love seats this is not.

“I feel a curved sectional is akin to the 1960s conversation pit,” said Los Angeles designer Jamie Bush, who designed a C sofa for a client who wanted both a home office and a family lounge area in which to relax, read and watch TV. “You can sit across from one an-



**C-WORTHY**  
In a Houston home, Jamie Bush designed a semicircular sofa, whose shape he calls ‘visually disarming.’

ROGER DAVIES

ROUNDUP AT THE PLUSH CORRAL / THREE SECTIONAL SOFAS THAT BEND TO YOUR WILL



Grace Serpentine U-Shaped Sectional, from \$5,598, anthropologie.com



Eternal Dreamer Sofa, \$58,780, Ochre Showroom, 212-414-4332



Menlo Park Sofa, from \$13,670, americanleather.com

other and talk in one singular furniture piece.” Mr. Bush also points out the seat's inherent playfulness. “It's visually disarming, so immediately you feel more relaxed and at ease,” he said.

For a client's vacation lodge in Big Sky, Mont., designer Kendall Wilkinson chose a curved, eight-seat sectional for the family of five, including three children under 10. It is covered with stain-resistant fabric—a jute-colored beige with an accent stripe. In the home's open-plan recreation space, it faces a stone fireplace and wide-screen TV and “creates a home theater feel to the room,” said Ms. Wilkinson, who is based in San Francisco.

Placed in front of a window with a vista, the semicircular sofa affords all sitters a view but maintains conviviality by pivoting them slightly inward. San Francisco designer Heather Hilliard, who

equates conversing next to someone on a straight sofa with “sitting on a bench at a bus stop,” opted for a teal curved sectional from Ochre for a family room that looks onto the Bay Area's Presidio National Park.

Miami designer Rita Chraibi similarly introduced a circular sectional into a Miami Beach living space so guests could comfortably gather and communally take in panoramic views of the city and bay. So occupants can stretch their legs, Ms. Chraibi added poufs and ottomans.

Interior designer and art adviser Elena Frampton, based in New York, likes to pepper in rounded seating to break up the visually irritating “sea of legs” created by a room full of chairs, couches and tables. “A curved sofa often has a fullness, is low to the floor and is differentiated from the leggy seating in the mix,” said Ms.

Frampton, who has used C sofas in recent local projects.

Given their sculptural quality, serpentine sectionals, which generally start at 10 feet wide, can stand gracefully alone. “A curved sectional looks beautiful from all angles and can easily float in a room as opposed to sit against a wall,” said Ms. Hilliard. “It feels flexible and fluid.”

These meandering pieces, a shape American designer Vladimir Kagan championed beginning in the 1950s, suggest romance in a way that beguiles buyers. “I think their curves can add a softly sophisticated look to a room,” said Australian designer Greg Natale, who has installed many circular sofas.

“Stylistically, I love a curved couch in a contemporary and minimal space to serve as a counterpoint to sleek spaces, which are often linear, angular and poten-

tially sharp,” said Ms. Frampton. In classical spaces with moldings and period details, Ms. Frampton suggested upholstering a curved sofa in a patterned textile for an unpredictable design twist.

You can find an array of curved sectionals online, from svelte, relatively compact three seaters like Anthropologie's Grace Serpentine U-Shaped Sectional, to oversize vintage pieces like the midcentury Milo Baughman for Thayer Coggin half-circle sectional sofa.

For his Philadelphia-area event space, Maximalist Studios, designer and author Eddie Ross found a legendary 1960s Baughman 12-seater sofa on eBay, for which he paid about \$3,000 to buy, ship and reupholster. Mr. Ross appreciates the piece for its comely profile and magnetic appeal.

“It reminds me of the couch in the ‘I Dream of Jeannie’ bottle,” he said. “People just want to be in it.”

## Beat the Plastic Wrap

Five handsome—and eco-wise—ways to store food

**YOU'VE SPENT** a lot of time in the kitchen the last seven months, cooking more and storing more—from leftover lasagna to the hunk of extra mozzarella it didn't call for. Most likely you reflexively used what's known in the waste-management world as plastic film—Glad wraps, Hefty Baggies, shopping and produce bags from the grocery store—very little of which gets salvaged. “Our national recycling system is not designed to handle this material,” said Nina Bellucci Buttlar, CEO of More Recycling, a research and technology firm based in Sonoma, Calif. The good news: Food-storage alternatives have moved way beyond brown craft paper and cotton string.

“Historically, anything sustainable has been associated with being hippie and on the wrong side of grubby,” said decorator Hannah Searle of the Sussex Home Stylist, in Small Dole, U.K. “It's great to see companies bringing the good work to the masses affordably and still looking great.” Here, some of our favorites:

### Cotton to Cotton

You know the flimsy plastic bags that turn your produce to slime in the hydrator of your fridge? Ditch them for cotton mesh reusable bags like those from Food52 (3). The

mesh breathes and lets you decipher its contents. Plus you'll look like a Parisian shopping in Provence. Another cotton fix: elastic-edged bowl covers from Dot & Army (2)—cute shower caps for your dishes that can seal off salads and leftovers.

### Scope Out Silicone

You can heat and freeze silicone—unlike plastic—and it's less apt to crack and become useless. Slide a vivid silicone Food Hugger (1) over a half apple or onion and place it in the fridge. The BPA-free mold grips the produce so tightly the onion's acrid smell won't infect that slice of cake beside it. Translucent silicone Stasher Bags (4) store grub in a space-saving upright envelope. Both of these one-piece, dishwasher-safe items let you sidestep that container plight: lost tops and errant bottoms.

### Leave It to the Bees

Reusable Beeswax Food Wraps (5) arrive as sheets of jewel-toned cotton printed in a honeycomb pattern. The beeswax-coated fabric, made sticky and pliable by the warmth of your hand, clings to itself—for swaddling food—and to the tops of bowls. The wraps wipe clean and are lovably compost-ready when they wear out.—Erica Gerald Mason

1. Food Huggers, \$13 for set of five, foodhuggers.com



2. Reusable Bowl Covers in Bold, \$38 for set of three, dotandarmy.com



3. Five Two Organic Cotton Reusable Produce Bags, \$29 for set of eight, food52.com



4. Stasher Standup Trio, \$64 for set of three, stasherbag.com



5. Beeswax Food Wraps, about \$12 for set of three, ecohabit.shop



JESSIE KANELIS WEINER