

THE VINSON VIEW

Quality maniac and master shopper Nick Vinson on the who, what, when, where and why



SAME AGAIN, PLEASE: PICKY NICKY'S NEVER BETTERED, REISSUE WISH LIST

Martin Szekeley's 'Bing One' crystal side table, 2005, from Galerie Kreo, 120 kilos of perfection. I need a pair.

Tomas Maier's fine, flesh-coloured cashmere V-neck with exposed seams from spring/summer 2009. I have literally worn it out.

Venini's 'Ciga' decanter and glasses, originally created by Massimo Vignelli in 1979; corrugated glass never looked so fine.

Alpaca blankets from Agnona, from Massimo Alba's era as creative director (2000-2002), with a subtle shading, in yellow or grey.

Aleksi Perälä's 'Ote' stacking tumblers for Iittala from 2007, so useful for the everyday.

The 'K3' series electric kettle from Russell Hobbs, designed by William Russell and introduced in 1982 as an update to the 'K2'.

01 If it ain't broke, don't fix it

For Picky Nicky, a new look is

Most of the time, I search out novelty and innovation, new brands, designers, products, services or revolutionary retail concepts. I want to be the first to eat in the newest restaurants, stay in the latest hotels and discover the sweeping changes a new artistic director will make at a historic fashion house. Like any good opinion leader or early adopter, my radar is always tuning in to the next great thing. Wallpaper* prides itself on telling you, the reader, something you won't read everywhere else; there is real value in genuine news and talented protagonists have great stories for us to tell.

Yet, sometimes, more of the very same is exactly what I crave. And that's just what I get at Fourth Floor, where I've been having my hair cut for more than two decades. It occupies the third and fourth floors of an industrial building in Bloomsbury, decked out with Florence Knoll sofas, Vitsoe shelving and custom-made mirrors by Tom Dixon, one of many design heavy hitters among the clientele. In terms of a cut, 'same again' is what I ask for and what I get – I don't have to think about it and we dispensed with the final mirror check years ago. Instead, I settle down for an hour's chit-chat with salon owner Richard Stepney, a Wallpaper* subscriber for the past 20 years, and get up and go when it's done. There are never any new

treatments or services and they have not launched an app or online booking portal – they just do a really good job of cutting hair. I attach so much value to this service that I'll always have two appointments in the diary, one five weeks ahead and one ten, so I never miss out.

It's the same with my favourite hotels; I have them booked up a year in advance for busy design fair weeks. When I eat in my preferred restaurants, I don't have to bother with the menu, I know what I want. And when I often buy multiples of the same clothes, Mr Porter's order history is very handy. Some things just don't need improving and can't actually be bettered – think a 'Barcelona' chair, a Richard Schultz sun lounger, a Josef Hoffmann drinking set for Lobmeyr or the Pierre Balmain-designed uniforms that have been in continuous service at Singapore Airlines since 1968.

Thankfully, none of these are likely to be discontinued and replaced by something more up to date, but it can happen and it is frustrating. American Express once got rid of its signature Green Card in the UK market for a few years. It was introduced in 1969 and I had been using one since 1988. Luckily, Amex saw sense and phased out the tacky replacement. Innovate, yes, but don't mess with perfection. Sometimes Picky Nicky wants more of the same.



02

Past master no.1

There is a gap on my workspace for this 1978 silver and ebony desk accessory set, designed by Henning Koppel for Georg Jensen. Nothing else will do.



03

Past master no.2

My mantelpiece is missing a pair of Boucheron birds, carved in rock crystal in xxx by Erwin Klein and finished in diamonds, rubies, quartz, onyx and coral.