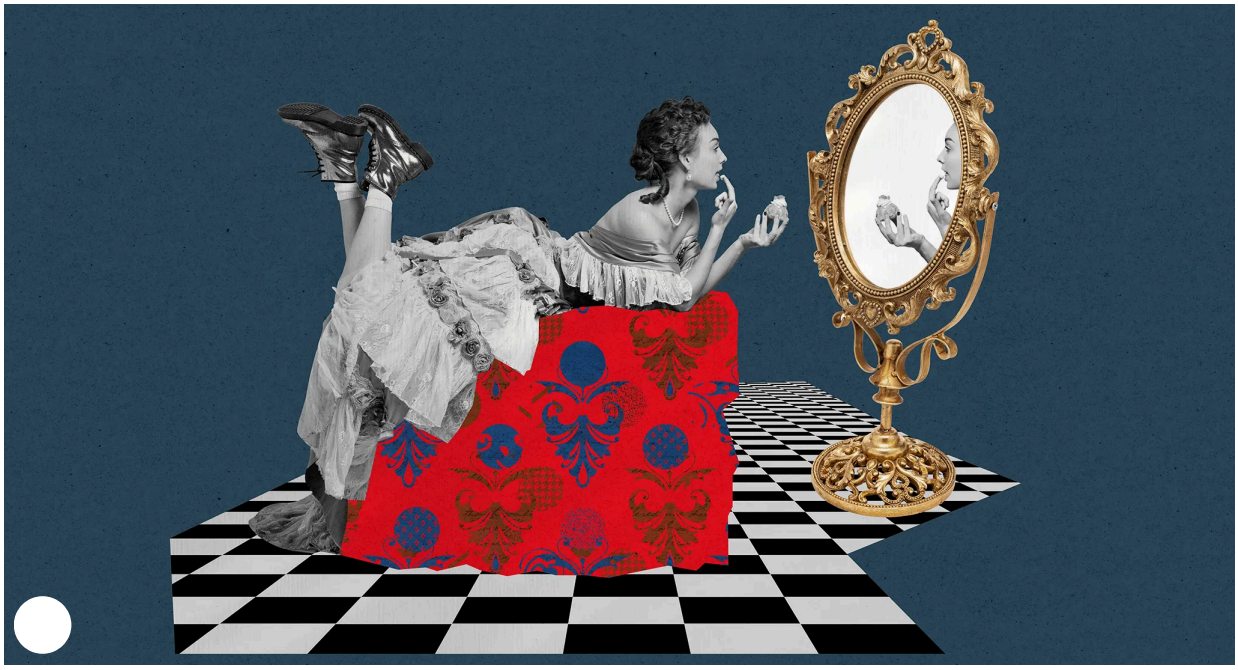
Rococo Revival Is This Year's Answer to English Farmhouse Fatigue

GINGHAM CURTAINS < CHERUB CEILING MURALS

BY SYDNEY MEISTER • PUBLISHED APR 3, 2025



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For the past few years, English farmhouse has been the reigning queen of interior trends. We swapped subway tile for zellige, stainless steel for copper and embraced the fantasy of rural domesticity—gingham curtains, hand-thrown ceramics and bread baked barefoot in a sun-drenched kitchen. It was cozy. It was comforting. And, in a post-2020 world, it made sense. When everything outside felt chaotic, we reached for designs that whispered: *You're safe here.*

But in 2025, something shifted. According to Pinterest's latest report, searches for "Rococo party" are up 140 percent, "Rococo outfit" has surged by 5,465 percent and there's been a dramatic spike in interest around ornate weddings, pastel interiors and hyper-feminine maximalism. Beige is out. Gilded *everything* is in.

So, what gives? Why are we suddenly trading in our sourdough starter kits for rooms that look like Lambeth cakes?

To understand that, we have to zoom out—because like most aesthetic trends, Rococo Revival isn't just about taste. It's about *timing*. And if history tells us anything, it's that design doesn't swing this dramatically without a reason...

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First, What is Rococo Design?

Imagine Versailles if it took a Xanax and discovered pastels. It’s about gilded mirrors, curved furniture and intricate floral motifs carved into every possible surface. Think: pastel-hued walls with gold-leaf accents, shell-like shapes—called *rocaille*—and cherubs lounging in ceiling murals. It’s romantic, but almost in a satirical way. (More on design specifics below.)

Why is Rococo Making a Comeback?

To understand the resurgence, we have to look back to early 18th-century France. Rococo didn't appear out of nowhere. It rose in the wake of Baroque absolutism—that is, the era when Louis XIV ruled France with total, unquestioned power. Everything from politics to palace decor was designed to reflect his control. Most specifically, the artwork of that time—known as Baroque—which was bold, dramatic and symmetrical. It was less about comfort and more about declaring: I am the state.

> Beige-on-beige can only hold off existential dread for so long.

But when Louis XIV died, the mood shifted. Power moved from the palace to the Parisian salon. The aesthetics softened. Suddenly, it wasn't about God or glory—it was about pleasure. Lightness. Escape. The aristocracy—young, wealthy and increasingly detached from political reality—embraced a new style built around indulgence. Think: pastel murals of mythological love scenes, gilded furniture with shell-like curves and rooms designed for flirtation rather than formality. Rococo was romantic, playful, slightly absurd—a fantasy designed to distract from the mounting unrest outside.

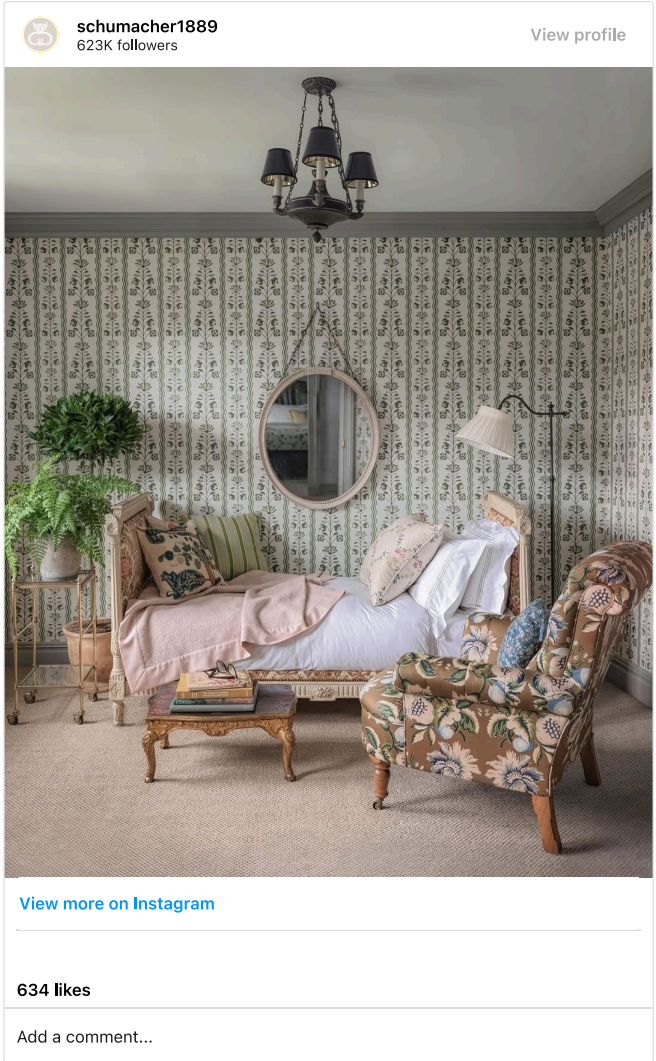
Sound familiar?

We, too, are living through a moment of cultural fatigue. After years of political division, climate anxiety, economic stress and collective burnout, the once-soothing charm of English farmhouse—our most recent version of design escapism—has started to feel insufficient. Where gingham curtains and handmade ceramics once made us feel safe, they now feel like an aesthetic shrug. Beige-on-beige can only hold off existential dread for so long.

So the pendulum swings again. But here's the difference: Today's Rococo revival isn't about aristocracy—it's about agency. It's soft where Baroque was severe, and now, it's replacing farmhouse's quiet control with unapologetic ornamentation. And just like in 18th-century France, this aesthetic shift isn't random. It's a reaction. In a world that feels increasingly out of control, the rise of indulgent, hyper-feminine interiors isn't about showing off. It's about reclaiming beauty. Romanticizing daily life. Choosing softness in a hard world.

So below, find five ways to build a Rococo fantasy you can actually live in. (Or escape into, at least for now.)

HOW TO BRING THE ROCOCO LOOK HOME

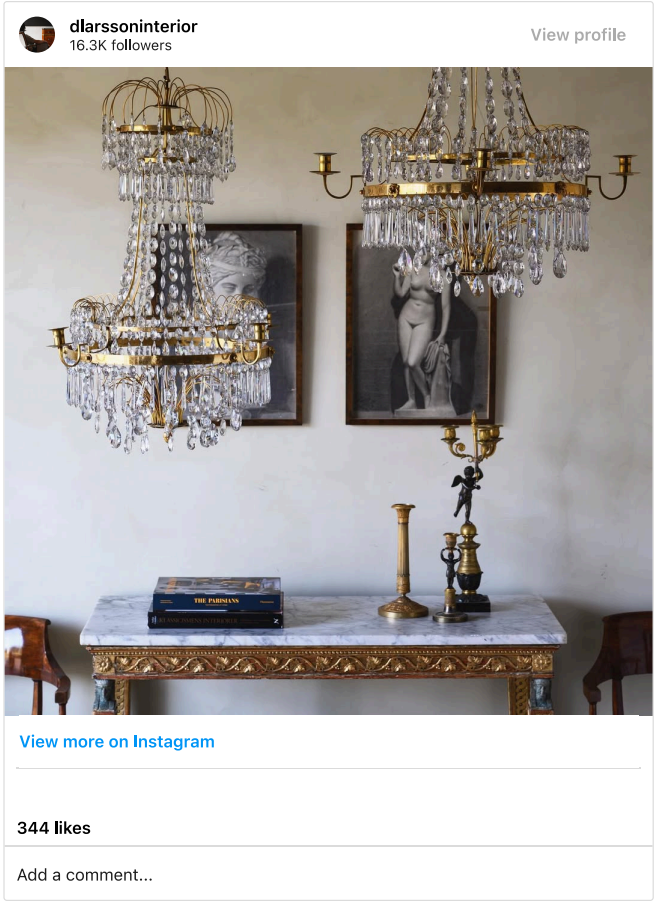


1. Florals on Florals

Forget the single bouquet on a marble island. In true Rococo fashion, I'm seeing layered florals—draped, painted, upholstered—everywhere. Think chintz wallpaper paired with embroidered silk cushions, or hand-painted botanical murals that feel less farmhouse-pretty and more French aristocrat gone wild. It's maximalist, it's moody, and it's decidedly not subtle.

2. Louis XV Furniture

Curved legs. Cane backs. Hand-carved wood. Louis XV–style chairs and settees are having a moment, not as antiques buried in your grandmother's sitting room, but as sculptural showpieces in modern homes. They're being reupholstered in powder blue velvets, blush linens and brocade that leans decorative but still feels fresh. These pieces are delicate but confident—like if a ballerina had a backbone made of brass.



3. Gustavian Chandeliers

While technically a Swedish offshoot of the Rococo style, Gustavian chandeliers are showing up all over Instagram—thanks to their soft, ethereal aesthetic. They tend to be more pared-back than their Versailles cousins, but still bring that sense of floating drama. Picture distressed wood arms draped with crystals and candle-style bulbs. They're perfect for casting a flattering, candlelit glow in powder rooms and dining nooks alike.

4. Muraled Wallpaper and Tapestries

While the original Rococo elite commissioned hand-painted scenes directly onto plaster, today's revival is a little more renter-friendly. Enter: muraled wallpaper and oversized tapestries. These sweeping scenes—whether it's a dreamy pastoral landscape, chinoiserie motifs, or classical garden settings—turn blank walls into immersive storybooks. They evoke the same escapism as an 18th-century salon, minus the scaffolding. Bonus points if it looks like it was stolen from a French country estate (or at least curated to feel that way on Instagram).

5. Gilded Baroque Accents

Mirrors framed in gold leaf. Sconces dripping in detail. Even small, gilded touches—on cabinet pulls, picture frames or crown molding—can shift a room's mood from practical to poetic. The key here is contrast: pairing ornate frames with contemporary art, or layering gold over soft pastel walls to strike the perfect tension between opulence and restraint.

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