

# SURFACE



DESIGNER OF THE DAY

## Designer of the Day: Laura Torregrossa

Laura Torregrossa's passion for marble furniture was fueled by her Sicilian family's creative legacy—her grandfather was a marble maker, her mother an architect, and her father a bespoke furniture craftsman. In 2020, she founded the furniture company Marbera to transform precious natural stones into one-of-a-kind furnishings that bring out the beauty of buried gems. Now based in Paris, she and her partner Cyril Zbirou handpick stones from quarries around the world before transforming them into coffee tables, stools, lamps, and vases that infuse the ancient character, boundless versatility, and emotional resonance of marble into wherever they reside.

BY RYAN WADDOUPS  
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*Here, we ask designers to take a selfie and give us an inside look at their life.*

**Describe what you make:** I'm the founder of [Marbera](#), a marble furniture brand born of a passion for combining modern aesthetics with the timeless elegance of marble. I wanted to create a product line that not only reflected contemporary design trends, but also celebrated the exceptional beauty of stones such as onyx and rare marbles.

**The most important thing you've designed to date:** One of the most exciting projects we're currently working on involves designing an entire collection of furniture for an exclusive client in the Middle East. A magnificent 20-foot-long dining table crafted from a very rare onyx. This table is part of a larger ensemble, which includes sofas and armchairs, all designed with an unprecedented interlocking concept. The challenge lies not only in the grandeur of the pieces but also in pushing the boundaries of innovation in furniture design. We'll tell you more soon!

**Describe the problem your work solves:** At Marbera, we address a key challenge in the furniture industry by offering a distinctive alternative between art and conventional furniture available in the market. Our creations provide more than just functional pieces; they are enduring works of art that can be cherished for a lifetime. We recognize the importance of adopting a "consume less, consume better" approach, and our artisanal methods and use of natural raw materials align with this philosophy. By combining timeless designs that never go out of style, we aim to contribute to a mindset of investing in pieces that stand the test of time, promoting a sustainable and thoughtful approach to furniture consumption.

**Describe the project you are working on now:** I'm currently in the process of launching a new collection, this time incorporating a blend of wood and stone, as well as fabric and marble. I have a penchant for mixing textures and materials, which adds warmth to the stone. We will soon introduce furniture with built-in storage, mirrors, stylishly colored armchairs, and others featuring more refined, understated colors and textures. It's an exploration of the diversity of materials and designs, offering our customers a varied range that caters to different tastes and needs. We are eagerly anticipating the unveiling of this collection and sharing these unique creations with the world very soon!

**A new or forthcoming project we should know about:** We're thrilled about an upcoming and extraordinary collaboration with a major luxury French prêt-à-porter brand. We've meticulously designed small onyx pieces that will serve as exquisite details, seamlessly integrated into their collection of leather and fabric bags. The combination of our onyx craftsmanship with their high-end accessories promises to be a sumptuous and refined expression of luxury. The anticipated launch is scheduled for 2024/2025, and we can't wait to present this harmonious fusion of onyx, leather, and fabric to the world! Stay tuned for a truly exceptional collaboration in the world of design and fashion.

**What you absolutely must have in your studio:** A well-lit space, with as much natural light as possible, as this creates an environment conducive to inspiration. A range of high-quality materials, including marble, wood and fabric samples, to facilitate experimentation and design choices. Technology is an essential element, with powerful computer equipment and design software to bring my ideas virtually to life before realizing them. Last but not least, music in the background!

**What you do when you're not working:** When I'm not immersed in my work, you'll often find me on the terraces of Parisian cafés (a bit cliché, I know). Alternatively, I cherish spending time with my daughter and husband—they are my perfect balance. Whether it's exploring the city together, engaging in family activities, or simply sharing moments of relaxation, being with them allows me to recharge and find inspiration in the simple joys of life.

**Sources of creative envy:** My creative influences are drawn from a diverse array of sources. I find inspiration in my surroundings, the ever-evolving world of fashion, the meticulous design principles of Japanese design, the bold and innovative architecture of the '70s, and the enriching experiences gained through travel. It's truly a mix of various elements that converge to fuel my creative spirit.

**Concrete or marble?** My heart leans towards the timeless elegance of marble. The natural beauty and versatility of marble allow me to create pieces that exude sophistication and refinement. The interplay of light and texture in marble adds a level of luxury that resonates with my design philosophy.

**High-rise or townhouse?** I'm drawn to the charm and character of city apartments. There's something intimate and welcoming about them that matches my design sensibility. The architectural details and sense of personal space connected to community resonate with my appreciation of thoughtful design.

**Remember or forget?** I believe in cherishing and learning from every experience, whether positive or challenging. While some memories are worth remembering for the lessons they impart, I also understand the importance of letting go and moving forward.

**Aliens or ghosts?** I find the idea of aliens more intriguing. The vastness of the universe and the potential for other forms of intelligent life beyond our planet spark a sense of wonder and curiosity in me.

**Dark or light?** I find myself drawn to the interplay of dark tones. There's a richness and depth in darker shades that can evoke a sense of elegance and sophistication. However, the key lies in the balance, as incorporating light elements is essential to create contrast and harmony within the overall design.