

GAME OF THROWS

A new collaboration between interior designer Tara Bernerd and luxury linen brand Frette has resulted in a collection of covetable homewares that plays by its own rules

Frette by Tara Bernerd
Disrupting Architecture
cushions £480 each and
throws £1,800 each

DESIGNING SEVEN HOTELS alongside a new homewares collection would probably feel overwhelming to most, but for interior designer Tara Bernerd (*opposite*), it's an honour. "This is a passion," she beams. "It is a privilege to share what I would do in my home." Bernerd has been running her globally successful interiors architecture and design practice, Tara Bernerd & Partners, for 23 years; this latest addition to her creative portfolio takes the shape of a range of cashmere and wool throws and cushions – in a line entitled Disrupting Architecture – in collaboration with Italian luxury linen brand Frette.

The collaboration came about when Frette's CEO, Filippo Arnaboldi, a friend of Bernerd's, approached her to suggest they should partner up. "He said, 'We have to work with you,'" she smiles. "And I said, 'Well, fantastic!' He asked me what I wanted to do first, and I told him I wanted to have a go at creating my own blanket range; my own throws and cushions."

Frette, founded in 1860, has dressed the beds and bathrooms of royals, Bishops of Rome and premium hotels all over the globe. So, unsurprisingly, it's widely regarded as one of the world's most luxurious bedding brands. "This is a great partnership," says Bernerd, of the association. "We are careful and selective with what we take on and [this project] just felt right. When you have everyone aligned and you have a good synergy, it gives work wings and we can fly. I think we found our wings together."

Bernerd goes on: "To me, they [Frette] are the pinnacle of luxury and craftsmanship with what they do. Luxury isn't a word we should throw around. There is a very big difference between what I would call the highest-level premium product and luxury. I think when you're looking at exquisite, finely made things, there are very few who are at the pinnacle of their game."

The Disrupting Architecture collection marries Bernerd's daring approach to colour and design with Frette's effortless elegance. The patterns combine modern and Art Deco-inspired shapes and silhouettes, taken from Bernerd's globetrotting. Given her spectacular international list of high-profile hospitality projects, it is no surprise that the pieces reference buildings all over the world. Bernerd has been responsible for designs at the Belmond Hotel in Mexico, the Rosewood in Munich and The Hari Hong Kong, to name just a few. "I'm quite bold in what I do," she says. "I like something that's strong, and [for this

collection] I thought about all my travel and experiences. I really like to absorb, I really like to see – and there are things to see everywhere we go."

So what is the story behind the Disrupting Architecture name? "I didn't want all the architecture to be from one place," she explains. "Milan entered the story, New York entered the story, there's a little nod to Paris... but there are different homes and places – it's not a city-by-city. We started laying out buildings and places that have inspired me, and then we started to take some of those motifs and disrupt them."

Bernerd reveals she is drawn to colours such as olive green and burgundy, but others in the collection speak to her on a more personal level. "I remember when I was very young seeing Yves Saint Laurent in the '70s do a peacock-blue silk chiffon with this sort of caramel tan," she reminisces. And of the bright citrus hues, she says, "It was an emotional moment thinking about my dear friend and mentor Sir Richard Rogers, who passed away. I remembered him always in his lime greens and fabulous oranges, and thought, 'I have to do those two.'"

Bernerd has remained close to this project throughout – from working on the motifs and choosing the palette to hand-selecting the wool and cashmere with Frette's artisans in Italy. "Every colour, thread and stitch, I'm there with them," she says of the process, her excitement plain to see. "My privilege is to serve everyone here," she says of her team. "I feel very grateful to the people I have around me – they're amazing. And behind the scenes [at Frette], wow! I just adore everybody I'm working with!"

With its stylish geometric motifs and eclectic palette, the Disrupting Architecture collection offers style and versatility, especially as the pieces have been made to mix and match, with reversible designs and coordinating patterns. "This will really faze everybody, but I don't like my throw to match my cushions," Bernerd reveals. "So if I was buying the blue Modernism wool throw, I may buy two of the cushions – but then I'd buy a third from Déco and put it at the front."

That's one of many beautiful things about this collection – there are no rules. "I like a throw in every bedroom over the end of the bed. And then I like a big basket, and I roll them like sausages – I have loads and loads," smiles Bernerd. "They're to be disrupted, they're to be played with. They're a celebration of colour, but they are also quite sophisticated. I don't design for trends. I hope the pieces are available in a year, two years, 10 years. The hope is to bring something with elegance and ease."