



An enduring favourite: the V&amp;A Museum, founded in 1852



Contemporary: the well-lit new shop features industrial steel, marble and wood



Inspired by an ancient bowl: new V&amp;A floor tiles being made

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IT'S ALL change at the Victoria & Albert Museum with a new director, former Labour MP Tristram Hunt, a new extension by architect Amanda Levete set to open at the end of July, and a redesigned museum shop which will open tomorrow, at the start of London Craft Week.

The new shop will, in a way, return the museum in South Kensington to its roots. Established in 1852 and initially called the Museum of Manufactures, it was intended to inspire both the British public and the country's young designers. It was one of the first public museums to have late-night openings – made possible by the innovation of gas lighting – so that workers could view improving art and craft at the end of their day.

The museum continues to place a strong emphasis on the work of both local and international craftsmen and women, who its buyers have cleverly commissioned exclusively for the V&A shop.

### OLD AND NEW

Architects Friend and Company won the commission to redesign the 5,000sq ft shop, and they have dipped into the museum for design inspiration. Take, for example, the 2,000 clay tiles underfoot. Originally inspired by a Chinese bowl in one of the V&A galleries, the tiles were made using a specially adapted 3D printer at Grymsdyke Farm, a design research facility in the Chilterns.

Also check out the new lantern overhead which puts paid to dusty and dimly lit museum shops of the past, and the extensive use of industrial steel and Douglas fir throughout.

### POCKET STUDIO

The shop's Pocket Studio will provide a space for exhibitions celebrating makers and materials from around the world. "Championing new design talent is something we continue to be passionate about," says Sarah Sevier, head of retail.

There will be a different focus every four months, starting this month with ceramics, while providing books, paper and pens and design materials will encourage budding artists and designers who visit to create something of their own on-site. We love Vicky Lindo's sgraffito plates in this first ceramics space, as well as a chicken jug designed by Kent-based potters Quail.

### CUSTOM PRINTS

The custom prints area will be popular with new home owners. The V&A now offers a selection of 400 of its most popular images, including this Chinese wallpaper pattern, right.

## Museum of contemporary curiosities

Kate Gordon gets an exclusive preview of the V&A's new shop



Prints are among the museum website's bestsellers but a visit to the shop is a new way to see the four sizes, before getting the prints delivered directly to your door. Prices start from just £15 and go up to £165.

### JEWELLERY PAVILION

The Jewellery Pavilion was designed to be a standalone boutique within the shop. Keep an eye out here for ranges designed by Auren and Angela Caputi as well as Argentinian jewellery designer Fernanda Sibilia. The V&A's jewellery lines have long been an insider secret for magazine and film fashion stylists, with pieces ranging in price from just £8 up to £1,295.

May is ceramics month: Vicky Lindo's Blue Garden platter with cat and kittens, £420; chicken jug by Quail, £20.

Below: Chinese wallpaper panel, unframed, 39cm x 43cm, £15; print framed is £80

