

Prepared by Maureen Lambusta

1. Summary

Mottahedeh is a leader in historic reproduction ceramics and decorative pieces, and acts as the North American distributor for C. Haviland & Robert Parlon, J. Seignolles, and Jars.

The current website was launched in 2013. As of December 2016, its global rank is 3,275,531. The parameters for site ranking are:

- Site bounce rate: 30.80%
- Daily pageviews per visitor: 3.0
- Daily time on site: 6.04

**As of December 2016.*

The number of orders placed via the website are growing. Also, Mottahedeh wants to be an authority on the pieces it reproduces. In its present state, the website does not fulfill these needs. Furthermore, there are many issues—from navigation to content—that are hindering these needs and potentially hurting Mottahedeh’s reputation.

A. Scope

This document covers the current state of the Mottahedeh as well as proposed improvements. It concentrates on website content, navigation, as well as overall look and feel. Finally, it proposes best practices to allow the website to continue to effectively flourish.

It will not cover the website platform (Magento), nor does it suggest any major changes to product listings on the website. This document does not suggest replacing Keke or his team, but rather acts as a guide to better management.

This document seeks to answer these questions:

- What do we want to get out of the site?
- Who are our users?
- What do our users want?
- What experience are we trying to provide?
- How will we measure success?

B. Goals

What do we want to get out of this site?

- 1) Mottahedeh to be the authority on historic reproduction dinnerware
- 2) Improve sales, and move stock
 - a. Streamline orders and conversions
 - b. Improve average order
 - c. Move stock
- 3) Improve and standardize branding
 - a. Cleanup site’s look and feel
 - b. Simplify navigation
 - c. Reinforce branding

- 4) Engage with audience:
 - a. Drive traffic
 - b. Increase time on site
 - c. provide a “home” for all social media

C. Personas

Who are our users? What do they want?

2. Current Website Audit

These are the main issues with the Mottahedeh website:

- No call-to-action on main pages: Why should the average user want to keep reading? They need something compelling to click to a new page.
- Doesn't follow any branding consistency: It's hard to tell what Mottahedeh is all about without prior knowledge or doing some digging.
- It's hard to navigate:
 - The menu is confusing
 - Too many pages with redundant information
 - There's too much clutter
 - The search function only searches for products
- Hard to read: Fonts are small or just difficult to read. There's too much text, which is overwhelming for a screen.
 - Many pages with too much text—or that are entirely text
- Inconsistent format: No two pages look the same.
- Too many grammar and spelling mistakes: Almost every page has more than one major error.

**See the appendix for a page-by-page audit.*

These issues add up to a negative user experience that damage Mottahedeh's reputation and potential sales by making the company look unprofessional.

3. Competitive Sites

In considering how to reformat the Mottahedeh website, it's necessary to look at competitive site to get a feel of how they are modeled.

I went through the websites for the following dinnerware companies:

- Villeroy & Boch*
- Mikasa*
- Pflatzgraff*
- Royal Doulton*
- Thomas Goode*
- Spode
- Wedgewood

I also went through the Mary Mahoney* website, since they are a prominent Mottahedeh retailer.

In looking at these websites, three things became apparent:

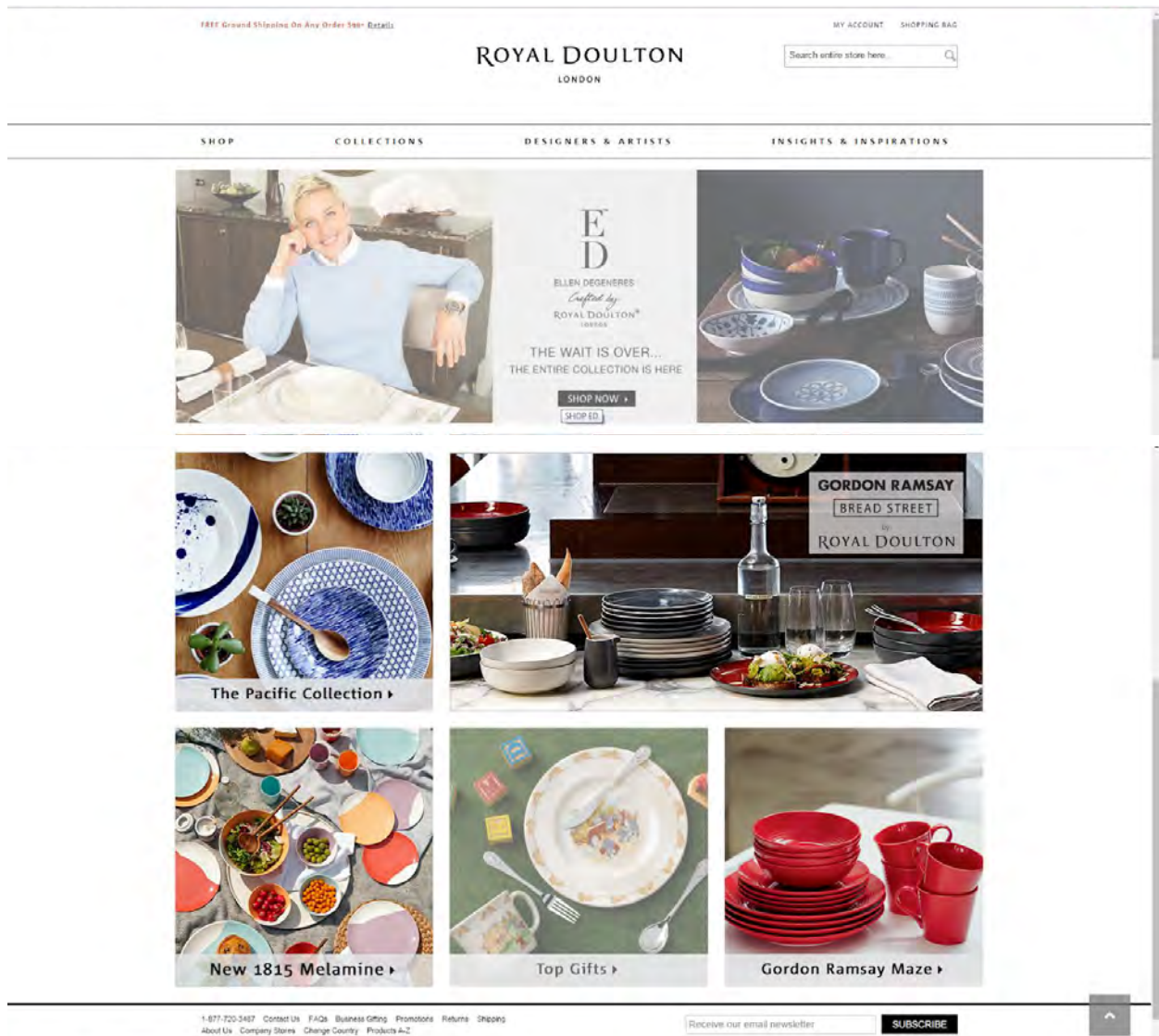
- Most sites white or light-colored backgrounds
- Text and photos are balanced and consistent
- All are easy to read and intuitive to navigate (it's very easy to find information)

**See the appendix for a more thorough audit for these sites.*


Two especially stood out—Royal Doulton and Thomas Goode. These are shining examples of what good dinnerware websites should be like.

Royal Doulton: The navigation is especially good and easy to use. The home page is small, but effectively shows off plates and designers.

<http://www.royaldoulton.com>

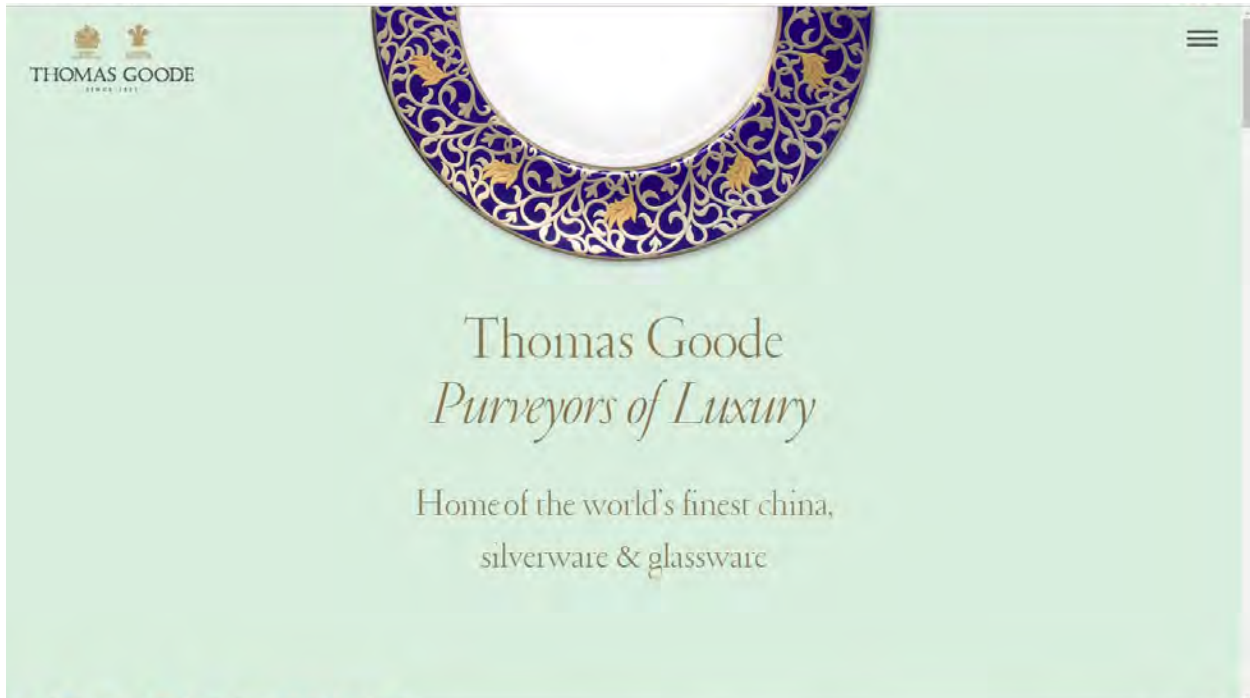


Menu:

SHOP		COLLECTIONS	DESIGNERS & ARTISTS	INSIGHTS & INSPIRATIONS
BY CATEGORY	BY DESIGNER	FEATURES	SHOP 1815	
Casual Dinnerware	Ellen DeGeneres	Gordon Ramsay Sale	 <p>Free Shipping on Any Order \$99+</p>	
Casual Serveware	Gordon Ramsay	New Arrivals		
Formal Dinnerware	Barber & Osgerby	Top Gifts		
Cookware & Bakeware	HemingwayDesign	Gifts Under \$50		
Flatware & Cutlery	Charlene Mullen	Best Sellers		
Drinkware & Bar	Nick Walker	Specials		
Home Decor	Pure Evil			
Figurines				
Children's Dinnerware				

Thomas Goode: This is a clean website with simple navigation. The focus is on the company’s history and custom services. There’s minimal text and images, and both elements are perfectly balanced. The one drawback is the menu icon in the upper left—this is web design trend that is quickly fading. Overall, this is what the Mottahedeh website should strive to look like

<http://thomasgoode.com/>



THOMAS GOODE
SINCE 1827

– Profile

Established in 1827 and long recognised as the home of the world's finest china, silverware and glassware, Thomas Goode is a global institution situated in the heart of Mayfair. Thomas Goode holds two royal warrants and is very proud of its long standing relationship with the British Royal Family which still continues today.

[ABOUT US](#)



The Thomas
Goode
Elephants



– Two Great Landmarks

The twin Elephants of Thomas Goode & Co. have stood sentinel over South Audley Street since Victorian times and most recently one was lent as the centrepiece of the 'Sculpture Victorious' exhibition at Tate Britain, in 2015.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE THOMAS GOODE HISTORY](#)

Dinner services fit for
Kings and Queens

– The Thomas Goode Museum

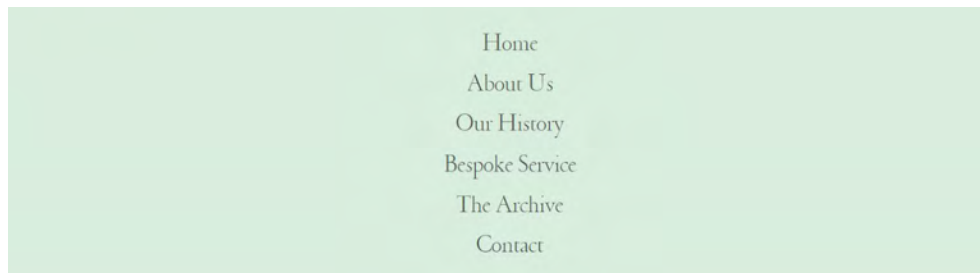
Thomas Goode & Co. was transformed into London's foremost tableware emporium by the founder's son, the enterprising William Goode who, throughout the mid-nineteenth century, travelled the world in search of the finest porcelain and bone china designs.

[VIEW THE ARCHIVE](#)





Menu:



Additional sites to consider:

Spode: Slow to load. However, it has a good footer that makes it clear there are other brands.

<http://www.spode.com/>

Wedgwood: Bold, full width hero. A little too busy, but has good menu and navigation.

<http://www.wedgwood.com/>

Mary Mahoney: The animations are annoying, home page is long, but overall cleaner look and feel than the Mottahedeh website. <http://marymahoney.com/>

4. Proposed Site

A. What experience are we trying to provide?

Easy to navigate, clean, elegant (with a bit of fun). Mottahedeh is the authority in historic reproductions, and this needs to be made very, very clear throughout the website.

B. How will this be achieved?

First, the site navigation and site map both need to be drastically simplified. It should take no more than a few clicks for the average user to find the information they're looking for.

Secondly, branding needs to be implemented to standardize the website's non-product content and the website's look and feel. Text and photos should have consistent sizes and be balanced against each other. Information needs to be error-free.

Finally, the addition of Mottahedeh's history—both to product pieces and actual, separate pages—will create additional content to help improve user experience and Mottahedeh's perception.

C. Proposed site map:

- **Home Page** (mottahedeh.com)
- **About** (mottahedeh.com/about)
 - Mottahedeh's History (mottahedeh.com/our-history)
 - Showroom (mottahedeh.com/about)
 - Our Brands (mottahedeh.com/brands)
 - About Porcelain (mottahedeh.com/learn-about-porcelain)
 - How It's Made (mottahedeh.com/how-its-made)
 - Mottahedeh (mottahedeh.com/how-its-made-mottahedeh)
 - Jars (mottahedeh.com/how-its-made-jars)
 - HP/JS (mottahedeh.com/how-its-made-hp)
 - Care (mottahedeh.com/dinnerware-care)
 - History (mottahedeh.com/porcelain-history)
 - Product History (mottahedeh.com/history)
 - Media (mottahedeh.com/media)
 - Video (mottahedeh.com/video)
 - Blog (mottahedeh.com/blog)
- **Shop by Brand** (mottahedeh.com/shop)
 - Mottahedeh Fine China (mottahedeh.com/shop-mottahedeh)
 - About (links back to above about page) (mottahedeh.com/about)
 - DINNERWARE (mottahedeh.com/shop-mottahedeh-dinnerware)
 - GIFTWARE (mottahedeh.com/shop-mottahedeh-giftware)
 - LAMPS (mottahedeh.com/shop-mottahedeh-lamps)
 - HOME FRAGRANCE (mottahedeh.com/shop-mottahedeh-home-fragrance)
 - INAUGUARL GIFTS (mottahedeh.com/shop-mottahedeh-inaugural)
 - Jars (mottahedeh.com/shop-jars)
 - About (mottahedeh.com/about-jars)
 - DINNERWARE (mottahedeh.com/shop-jars-dinnerware)
 - DECORATIVE ACCESSORIES (mottahedeh.com/shop-jars-decorative)

- SPECIAL ORDER (mottahedeh.com/shop-jars-special)
- Robert Haviland & C. Parlon (mottahedeh.com/shop-havilandparlon)
 - About (mottahedeh.com/about-havilandparlon)
 - IN STOCK (mottahedeh.com/shop-havilandparlon-stock)
 - SPECIAL ORDER (mottahedeh.com/shop-havilandparlon-special)
- J. Seignolles (mottahedeh.com/shop-jseignolles)
 - About (mottahedeh.com/about-jseignolles)
 - SPECIAL ORDER (mottahedeh.com/shop-jseignolles-special)
- Milestone (mottahedeh.com/shop-milestone)
 - About (mottahedeh.com/about-milestone)
 - DINNERWARE (mottahedeh.com/shop-milestone-dinnerware)
 - GIFTWARE (mottahedeh.com/shop-milestone-giftware)
- Rookwood (mottahedeh.com/shop-rookwood)
 - About (mottahedeh.com/about-rookwood)
 - VASES (mottahedeh.com/shop-rookwood-vases)
 - LAMPS (mottahedeh.com/shop-rookwood-lamps)
- **Customer Service** (mottahedeh.com/customer-services)
 - Contact Us (mottahedeh.com/contact)
 - FAQ (mottahedeh.com/faq)
 - Request a Brochure (mottahedeh.com/brochure)
 - Payment & Taxes (mottahedeh.com/payment-and-taxes)
 - To the Trade (mottahedeh.com/to-the-trade)
- **Retailers** (Maybe change this to “Find a Store” or something similar? Make it clear to the average customer that this is where they go to find Mottahedeh products/retailers near them.) (mottahedeh.com/retailers)
- **Privacy Policy** (mottahedeh.com/privacy-policy)

*Everything in **bold** should have its own landing page. These pages should be both the footer and top menu.

Everything in teal is the suggested link. **Bold is for existing links that can be reused.

D. Brand, Voice, and Style Guidelines

Look & Feel: Needs to be clean, clear.

- Fonts:
 - Headers: Georgia (min: 14 pt)
 - Body: Helvetica or Arial (min: 12 pt)
 - Promo: Keep consistent, but change by season. Google fonts has a good selection that are free. These fonts will be used on images only.
- Photos:
 - Product photos: 800x800 px, 72 dpi, PNG
 - Promo Photos: sized by web element, and balance with text
- Pages:
 - Either single or double column.
 - Balance photos and text.
 - Proofread all text before posting.

E. Website Mockups

Homepage Mockup:

This is a suggestion for how the homepage could look.

As you can see, it’s a clean design that favors large, bold images. Above the fold, we clearly establish what Mottahedeh is, and have a call to action (“See what makes each piece a Masterpiece”).

Below that, we play with layout a little to prominently display all brands for easy access and guide visitors to featured subpages (such as history).

Finally, we include featured or favorite products for those visitors who are quickly scrolling through

The header and footer are also cleaned up a bit, and mirror each other. This symmetry establishes and reinforces the brand in visitors’ minds.

This layout easily translates into a single column layout on mobile devices—and, because there’s a minimal amount of elements on this page, it loads faster for a better mobile experience.



Product Page Mockup

This is a suggestion on how the brand and product pages could look.

This builds on the clean and bold design of the home page. A large image above the fold establishes what brand this is. The call-to-action links to all products under that brand. Finally, we include a best sellers function for the more casual browser.

Note how images and text are balanced. Neither overwhelms the other, and we keep the focus on moving product by guiding the visitor along.

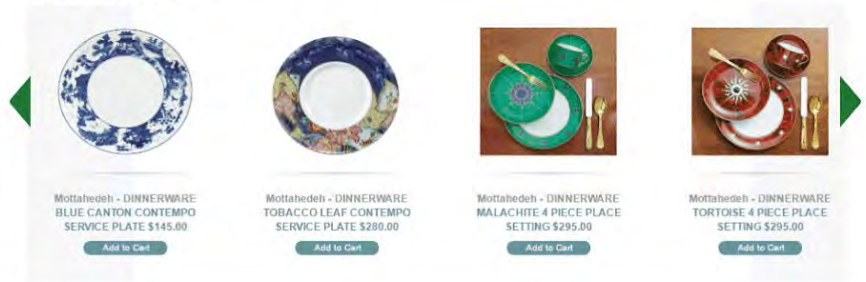


About

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Shop Now »

Our Favorites




Other Landing Pages


This is an alternate suggestion on how landing pages could look.

Again, this continues the clean and bold theme from the homepage. There is a strong identity above the fold, and a 3-column call to action under that to guide the visitor.

Once again, note how text and images are balanced against each other, and made consistent to not overwhelm the visitor.




About | Shop By Brand | Customer Service | Find a Store



About


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Our History

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[Learn More »](#)



How It's Made

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[Learn More »](#)




Our Collections

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[See All »](#)


Shop Now »

Our Favorites




Mottahedeh - DINNERWARE
BLUE CANTON CONTEMPORARY
SERVICE PLATE \$145.00

[Add to Cart](#)




Mottahedeh - DINNERWARE
TOBACCO LEAF CONTEMPORARY
SERVICE PLATE \$200.00

[Add to Cart](#)



Mottahedeh - DINNERWARE
MAI ACHE 4 PIECE PLACE
SETTING \$295.00

[Add to Cart](#)




Mottahedeh - DINNERWARE
TORTOISE 4 PIECE PLACE
SETTING \$295.00

[Add to Cart](#)

About | Shop By Brand | Customer Service | Find a Store

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Sitemap](#)



(c) [CURRENT YEAR] Mottahedeh

Information Pages

This is a suggestion on how information pages could look.

Again, this continues the clean and bold theme from the home page.

It’s especially important here that images and text are balanced. That way, the visitor isn’t overwhelmed by a wall of hard-to-read text.

It’s also important to choose what detail goes into these pages—you don’t need to include everything on the website. Leave the visitor wanting more. And, what you don’t add here can be used in the newsletter: one of the calls to action along the bottom can be a mailing list sign up so the visitor can learn more.



About | Shop By Brand | Customer Service | Find a Store



Learn About Porcelain

About

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Subhead 2

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Call To Action

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[Learn More »](#)



Call To Action

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[Learn More »](#)



Call To Action

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[See All »](#)

Shop Now »

Our Favorites



ADRIANAPOLIS - CONTEMPORARY BLUE CANTEEN CONTEMPORARY SETTING PLATE \$145.00

[Shop Now](#)



MANHATTAN - EMERALD GREEN TOBACCO LEAF CONTEMPORARY SETTING PLATE \$129.00

[Shop Now](#)



MANHATTAN - EMERALD GREEN MALACHITE & PINEAPPLE SETTING \$195.00

[Shop Now](#)



MANHATTAN - CONTEMPORARY TORTOISE & PINEAPPLE SETTING \$195.00

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About | Shop By Brand | Customer Service | Find a Store

Privacy Policy | Terms & Conditions | Shipping



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Menu Mockups

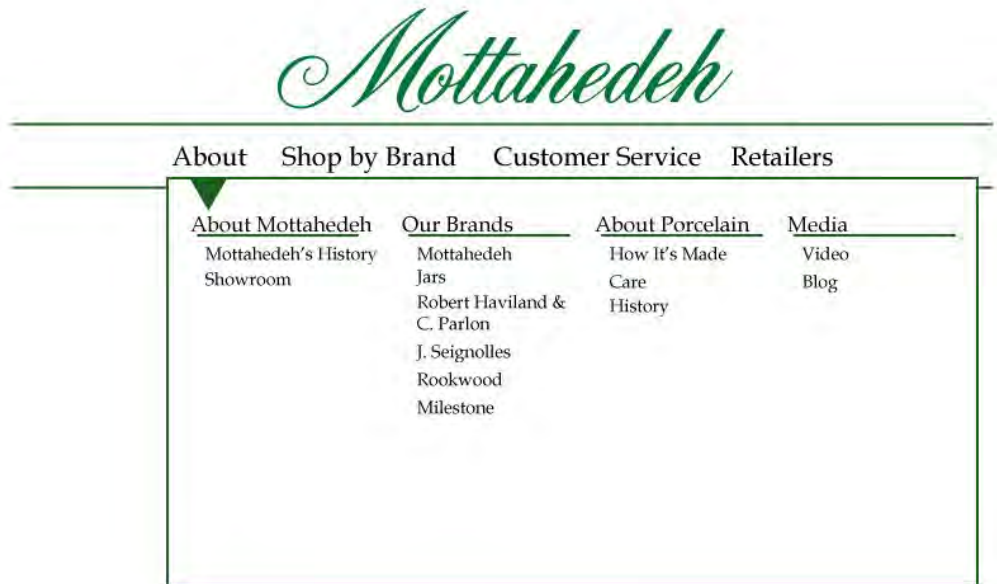


This is cleaner than the current version. The menu items are a larger font, and in proper cases for easy reading. Everything in the menu is clickable.

The grey bars represent search features and social media icons.

Submenu – About:

This menu appears when someone hovers over the menu option. Here, there are four categories that are easy to see and follow. The links under “Our Brands” link to the About page under each brand.



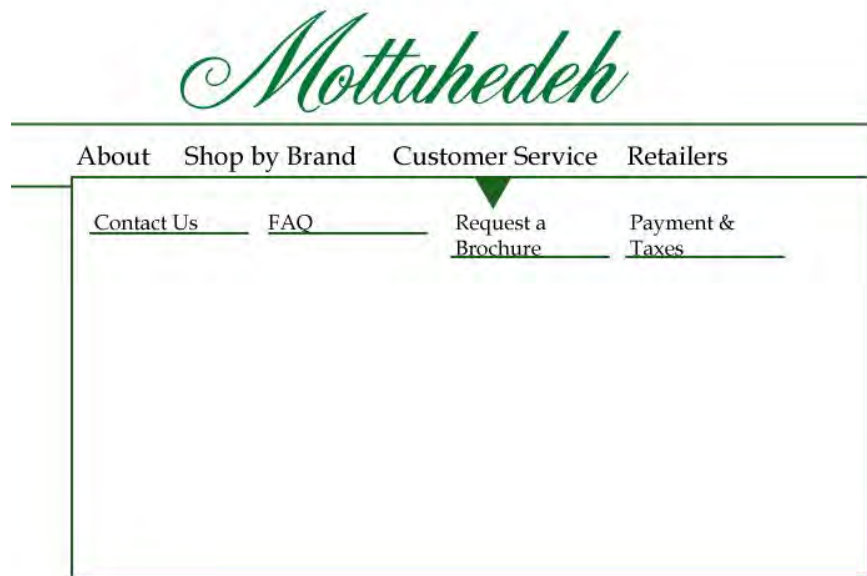
Submenu – Shop by Brand:

This menu appears when someone hovers over the menu option. Here, there each brand is easy to find, as well as the subcategories underneath. The 3x3 grid display makes it easy to see all brands and products at once.



Submenu – Customer Service:

This menu appears when someone hovers over the menu option. Although there are few options under customer service, important to keep the look and feel consistent throughout the site reinforce branding.



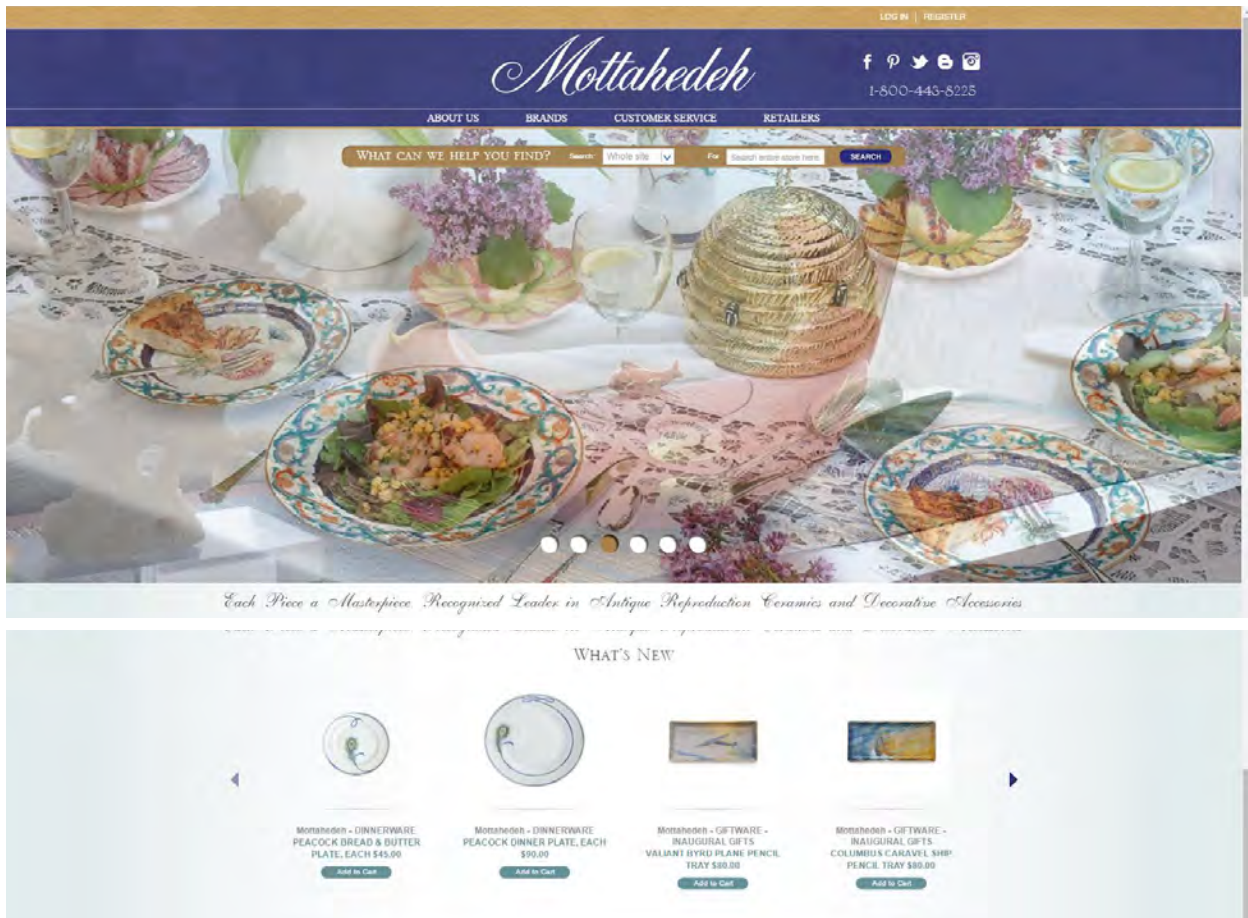
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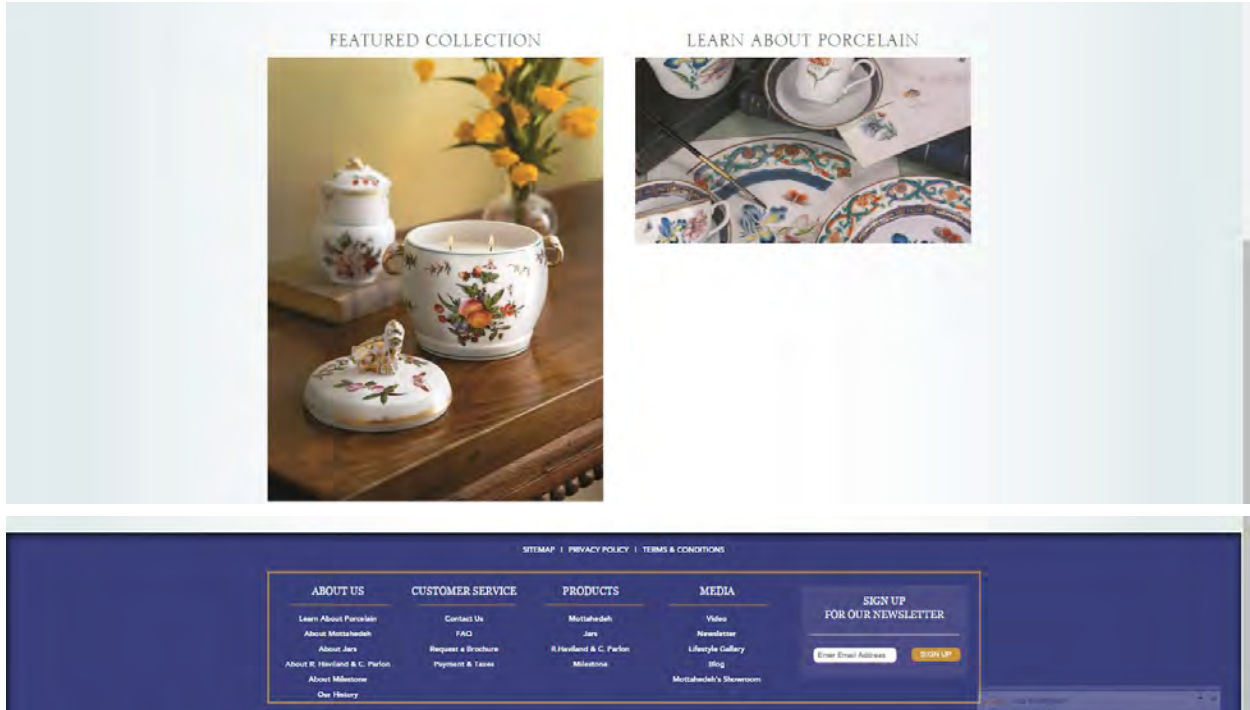
Appendix

1. Page-by-Page Audit of Current Website

Main Page:

- Very cluttered, yet nothing is going on.
- The text is hard to read.
- Page needs a call-to-action

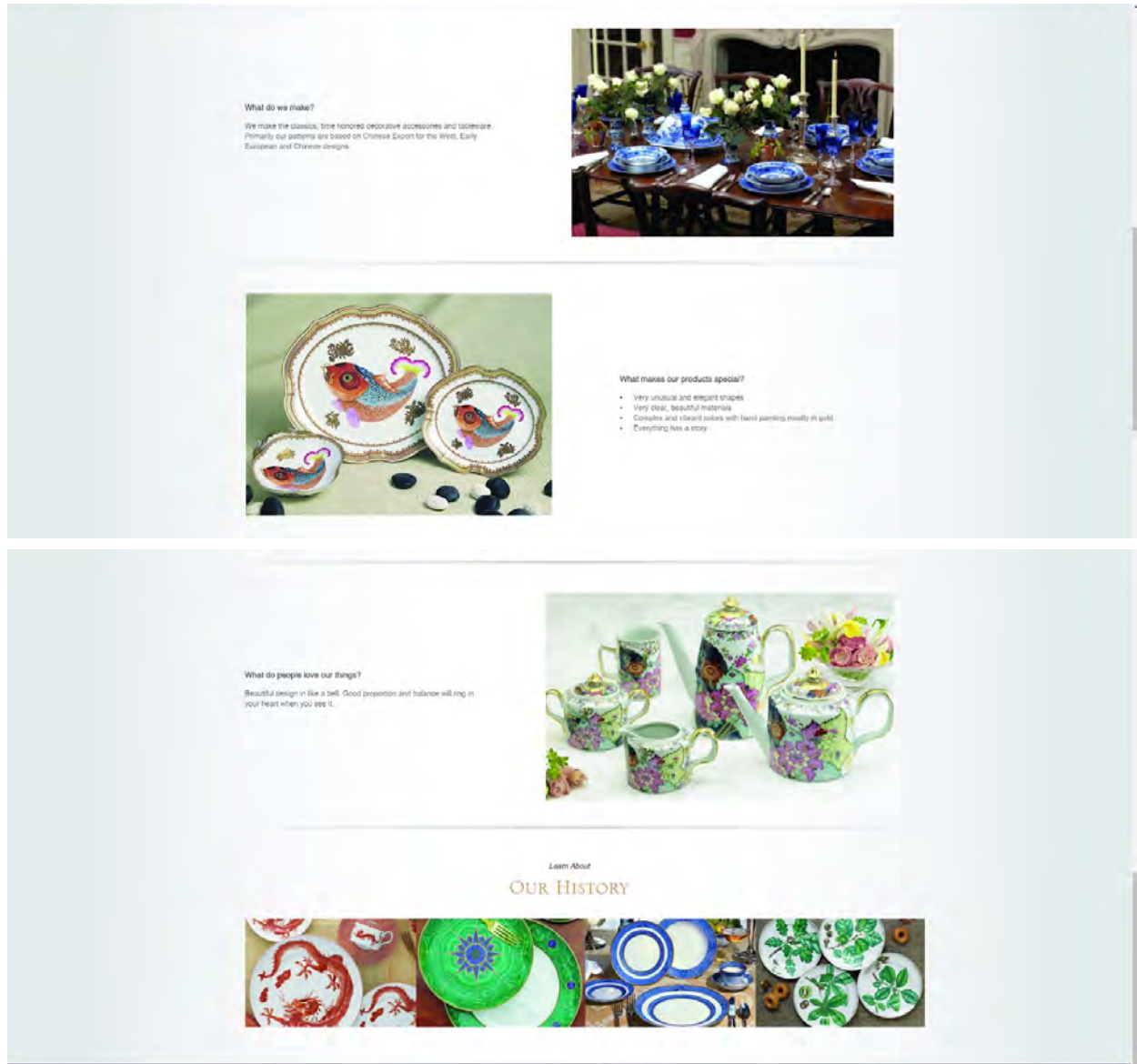




<https://www.mottahedeh.com/about-us/>


- Text too small
- Text formatting inconsistent
- Grammatical errors
- Need better balance between photos and text
- No call-to-action





<https://www.mottahedeh.com/our-history/>

- Very text-heavy
- Numerous grammar mistakes
- Formatting inconsistent
- Needs better navigation



[f](#) [p](#) [t](#) [e](#) [i](#)
 1-800-443-8225

ABOUT US
BRANDS
CUSTOMER SERVICE
RETAILERS


WHAT CAN WE HELP YOU FIND?

Home / Mottahedeh's Founding Story Fine China Ceramics Dinnerware USA

OUR HISTORY


MY PARENTS – MILDRED & RAFI

Many people collect because it's their nature to collect; it's only afterwards do they discover their motivations. I think my parents, Rafi and Mildred Mottahedeh, were such collectors. They were motivated by the hunt, which longs first for the known but rare objects, but then with experience, longs for the unknown but possible object. They were also motivated by the aesthetic pleasure to the eye and hand of having their collection surround them. Equally, they loved the sense of growing understanding in the fields in which they collected. The more they knew, the more they appreciated what they had.



A majority of their pieces reflect an interest in cross-cultural contacts because that was the story of their lives. Rafi Y. Mottahedeh was born in 1901 in the central Persian town of Kashan, famous for its calligraphers, its rugs and its silk and gold brocade, the cloth that formed the heart of my great-grandfather's business. The upheaval in Persia in the late teens and early twenties destroyed the family business. My father, who had saved \$500, read in a newspaper that in New York one could work in the day and study at night. He left Persia, crossed the newly formed Soviet Union, and took a ship from Hamburg that arrived in New York in 1925. He immediately started night school at New York University.

To pay his costs, he was ready to try all sorts of jobs, such as waiting on tables, or drilling with a jackhammer, that were available to new immigrants. Soon, he decided to use his knowledge of Persian and Arabic to advance himself. He went to the editors of the Scott Postage Stamp Catalogue and offered to read and classify Persian stamps on which subject he soon became an authority. He also went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art where his offer to read the Persian and Arabic inscriptions was welcomed by the Curator of Islamic art, Maurice Dismand. My father also started importing contemporary Persian pottery and brass, as well as some Persian antiquities ranging from Luristan bronzes to Qajar wall tiles.




Mildred, junior member of a prominent decorating firm, went to Rafi's office at 225 Fifth Avenue to buy some Persian "accessories". It was at least affection at first sight, which became the full-blown love when they discovered that they were hopeless at ballroom dancing and shared a deep interest in objects.


After their marriage in 1929, it became clear that my father was the scholarly partner who also understood business finances. My mother was the artistic partner with the eye for design and winning manner with people. She had been born in Seabright, New Jersey, in 1908. From her childhood she had been fascinated by the aesthetics of non-Western cultures.

My mother quickly threw herself into reviving Persian handicrafts for sale at Mottahedeh, and from my father's growing library on the subject, they began commissioning designs. The results were generally successful. Each of them made a buying trip to Persia in the '30's and one unexpected result of these trips was the realization that Persia was a treasure trove of European and Chinese antiques.

Persian merchants, whose shops had recently acquired electric lights, were pleased that a firm in New York wished to purchase the 18th and 19th century candelabra that they no longer needed. Persians also wanted to sell the large celadon and blue and white Chinese platters on which their fathers had served rice. Along with these items came some European porcelains and a Chinese plate with the most unexpected central design – the coat of arms of the State of New York. My parents began to touch themselves yet another area of the decorative arts – European and Chinese export porcelain. Chinese export porcelain turned out to be the huge and largely unexplored field that truly suited their tastes.




After World War II, as taxes and death duties caused many European families to put their collections of porcelain on the market, yet again great quantities of porcelain passed through their hands. But it was the Chinese export porcelain that they kept, ever winnowing out less interesting pieces and adding pieces that reflected their interests: animal figures, religious subjects, and subjects that went back and forth between East Asia and Europe.



By the late fifties, they had begun to make reproductions from their own collections. They scoured Europe, East Asia and South Asia looking for craft traditions still capable of reproducing the porcelain and other accessories from the 18th century. Not surprisingly, Mottahedeh offered the most faithful as well as the most interesting reproductions.

The sixties and early seventies saw the family firm become one of the most important sources for museum reproductions. Many curators knew the quality of Mottahedeh reproductions and sought my parents – and particularly my mother's advice – on what to reproduce from their collections. Yet my parents' business with reproductions never dampened their taste for collecting. They combined the catalogs of dealers and made more trips to East Asia, where they found not only




Rafi arranged for and lived to see the publication of the Mottahedeh Chinese export porcelain collection in China for the West by two leading specialists, John Ayers and David Howard. My father's untimely death in 1978 in no way slowed down the family business, which probably produced twice as many patterns a year as before. My mother received recognition from all sides. She was twice honored by the industry as winner of the "International Tabletop Award" and received many other awards as well. She was also the subject of many articles in magazines and newspapers such as Forbes and The New York Times.

Yet Mildred's years after Rafi's death were not as prosperous. Her impulse to collect remained strong. She read sales catalogues avidly and bought an occasional piece of antique porcelain as a model for reproduction, but the collection stopped growing. She sold most of the archaic Chinese art and some of the porcelain collection. Nevertheless, she held on to the main part of the Chinese export collection which she took great pride in showing to her many guests.

My mother approached old age with the same unflinching cheerfulness she had shown all her life. Even at the age of ninety, she managed to find the strength to make a trip to the Middle East with her grandson. Mildred died suddenly on February 17th, 2000. A remarkable variety of people sent letters of condolence including both a former First Lady of the United States and school children who studied at the schools she and Rafi established around the world.

My parents were learned collectors, manufacturers of faithful reproductions, and dealers who had gained a fingertip feel for their subject from the great variety of antiquities they bought and sold. These separate roles gave them a certain perspective on what they did. They believed that the universal need to eat was transformed by the arts of the table which could make eating enjoyable to the eyes, and other senses. They also believed that, by reviving the best of the past through collecting and reproduction, they fostered the dialog between contemporary design and the past. In this last endeavor they were totally successful, as the great respect for both their collections and their reproductions shows.



Excerpt From *Choosing Board to Dinner Table*

MORE ABOUT RAFI MOTTAHEDEH

My father, Rafi Y. Mottahedeh, was born in 1901 in Kashan, a city in the center of Iran famous since the 13th century for its silk brocades and stunning pottery. He left Iran in 1924 and reached New York in 1925 where he studied at New York University while doing every sort of work to support himself. He went to Maurice Dimand, a young Associate Curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, soon to become the Curator of Near Eastern Art, and offered his services as a translator of inscriptions and texts in Arabic and Persian. They formed a friendship through which my father received his first serious education in Islamic art. He began importing pre-modern objects as well as some contemporary pottery and textiles from Persia (which later became known as Iran to Americans). Over the years he donated many pieces of art to the Met, and in 1960s Mottahedeh reproductions of 18th century porcelain became a staple item in Met's Gift Shop and Sales Catalogue. Rafi Y. Mottahedeh was elected a life member of the Metropolitan Museum.

My father was a modest, polite, and kindly man whose scholarly disposition laid the foundation for his business success. He had a wonderful memory of objects he had seen and read constantly about the fields in which he collected. He also regularly attended lectures at the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology in New York, founded by Arthur Upham Pope in 1928 (later, The Asia Institute). Pope included some of my father's pieces in his monumental work, *A Survey of Persian Art* published in 1968 (lots 203 and 204), as well as in the Exhibition of Persian Art mounted by Pope's wife, Phyllis Ackerman, in New York in 1940.

In the 1930s and 40s my father's abundant sales to big department stores in the United States, such as Macy's, Wanamaker's, and Marshall Field's, contributed to the vogue for "Things Persian," which was the motto of his firm in its early years. Among his imports were Safavid and Qajar tile panels, some of which were incorporated by Davis Duke into her famous gardens. In this period my father also began collecting Islamic art. Although his collecting interests moved on to other areas, he continued to buy important objects such as the Kashan lustre ware bowl (lot 208) that he gave to me because of my interest in Iranian history. He had already given me many of the Islamic objects in his collection when I was a young professor at Princeton. The dozen of Islamic art historians, Richard Etinghausen, asked to include my pieces in a seminar that he taught at Princeton in the spring of 1973. Many of these were later included in an exhibition by Etinghausen at The Art Museum of Princeton University in 1974. When he visited me that year, my father was proud to see many pieces of the Islamic art he had given me in that show.

A few years later my father had the vision to publish his collection of Chinese export porcelain. His friend Nelson Rockefeller insisted on writing a foreword in which he called the collection "utterly fabulous, an artistic and cultural treasure without comparison in its field." My father had the pleasure of reading the proofs of China for the West before he died in 1978.

—Rafy Mottahedeh

PAST FORWARD AT MOTTAHEDEH

In 1991, at the age of eighty-two, Mildred determined to look for a buyer. At her advanced age, she was looking to pass on her views, knowledge, love of porcelain and associations with the various historical foundations. She was ready to make a change, but intending to continue working for as long as she was able.

The lives of Wendy Kvalheim and Mildred Mottahedeh converged at many points over the years. Mildred was like a grand great-aunt to Wendy. She and Rafi were friends with Wendy's grandparents long before she was born, and then with her parents through common bonds. It was this relationship and Wendy's passion for creating reproductions from original antiques for people to enjoy and use today that was the stimulus for Mildred to step in at the time Mildred decided to look for a buyer for her beloved company. It was agreed that Mildred would continue to work for five years. She would pass on her knowledge and collaborate in the further development of the then 68-year-old company. The transfer of company ownership to Wendy Kvalheim took place in 1992.



With a degree in Fine Arts from the Pratt Institute of Fine Arts in New York, and a Bachelor of Arts from Mount Holyoke College, it's understandable that Wendy is able to spot design directions and anticipate trends. "At Pratt I studied casting, glazing, and technical aspects of making reproductions from antique originals because I wanted to do museum work; I also wanted to be a sculptor." With an artist's understanding of color and a sculptor's knowledge of casting, Kvalheim immediately understood the depth and complexity of Mottahedeh's many designs.



Since 1992, Wendy Kvalheim continues to build on the company's finest traditions, while forging new directions to ensure the growth and solid future of Mottahedeh. World renowned as one of the finest manufacturers of high-fire porcelain, Mottahedeh has been in business for over 90 years. Their reputation for fine museum reproductions and numerous historic licensing agreements is unparalleled. Yet, in the last several years, a number of new products have been introduced that expand Mottahedeh's traditional standing. The vision is Wendy Kvalheim's, and significantly extends Mottahedeh's points of interest.

When Mrs. Mottahedeh retired in 1997, Kvalheim continued her role as Director of Design, as well as becoming the company's CEO. While Mrs. Mottahedeh's enthusiasm was for antique porcelains and museum quality collections, as an artist and sculptor, Kvalheim's interests are broader and more eclectic. Subtly she has refocused Mottahedeh's reputation from that of a company known chiefly for their historic licensing agreements and museum commissions, to a company whose forte, first and foremost, is great design.

Mottahedeh continues to license dinner and giftware lines for The Metropolitan Museum of Art, La Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Colonial Williamsburg, Monticello, Winnebago, Historic Charleston, Historic Natchez, the National Trust, Mount Vernon and Stately Homes of England. Continuing Mildred Mottahedeh's tradition of reproducing notable items from her own private collection, a reproduction of a Chi'ien Lung bowl purchased by the Kvalheim's at Christie's is time tested beautiful Mottahedeh offering.



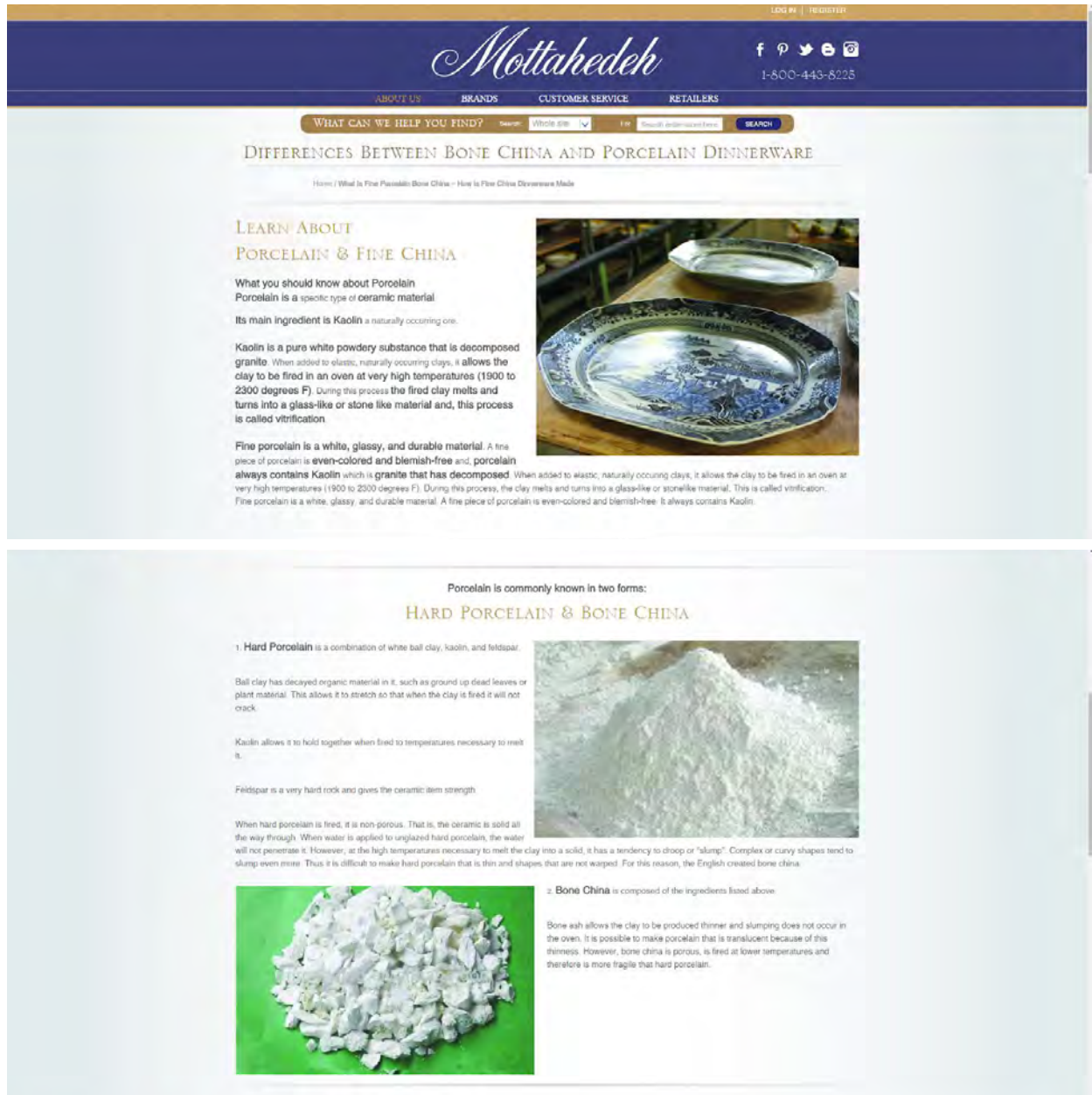
Building on the best of the past while preparing Mottahedeh for the future, Wendy Kvalheim assures upcoming generations the possibility of owning finely crafted high-fire porcelains and fine china, in beautiful patterns, of historic note and provenance.



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/learn-about-porcelain>

- Formatting inconsistent
- Numerous grammar mistakes
- Needs a better balance between text and photos

- Hard to navigate
- Hard to find on website—this should be easy to get to



Complex or difficult shape, while remaining thin or light.

When hard porcelain is fired, the material is heated so hot that it fuses into a glassy material. At the point that it turns to glass, it also turns to a partial liquid. As the object cools, it solidifies again. It is a fine balance between solid and liquid during the firing process. We want the porcelain to fuse into its future hard state and we don't want it to sag in the process. It is like baking a cake. There is an optimal cooking time and temperature for a good cake. You want it to turn solid, but you bake it just enough so that it becomes a moist springy cake and not a burned, crispy and unappealing cake.

Getting porcelain to "stand up" in the oven is difficult: if there is little too much heat for too long, you get a droopy bowl. A complex porcelain object is "engineered" to stand up to stress during firing. Understanding porcelain construction uses the same principles governing the construction of a gothic church. The stress points on a piece of porcelain are the places where there is the most pressure during the melting stage when the walls want to give way. These are the points that must be thicker to hold the other parts up, or in the alternative, these points need bracing. To arrive at a new shape or copy an old one, technicians must make a model that may slump, but will slump to an intended shape when the porcelain is finished being fired.



To summarize our understanding of excellent porcelain it must represent these:

BEHLEANCE OF COUSE AND DEFISITIVE STYLE PURITY OF BODY PLEASINGLY LIGHT AND UNUSUAL OF SHAPE

Is the painting vibrant, clear, colorful, gentle, bold, subtle, and timeless? These are the things to look for in beautiful porcelain. Whatever it is, it should be "all-the-way". The plate or object should represent a style "with conviction." For this reason, everyone may like something different, but he or she will have feel strongly about the object. The object will be appreciated today and also in 100 years.

When you look at the plate, is the red a strong clear color that looks like glass? Does it have a raised look like an enamel? When you look at the leaves on the plate, are they composed of a blue-green, grey-green, and true green, all in the same leaf, or is it one simple color of green? If the plate has a high price tag, it should meet your expectations for excellence and this should be reflected in bountiful color and delicacy of color, with all its various shades and hues.



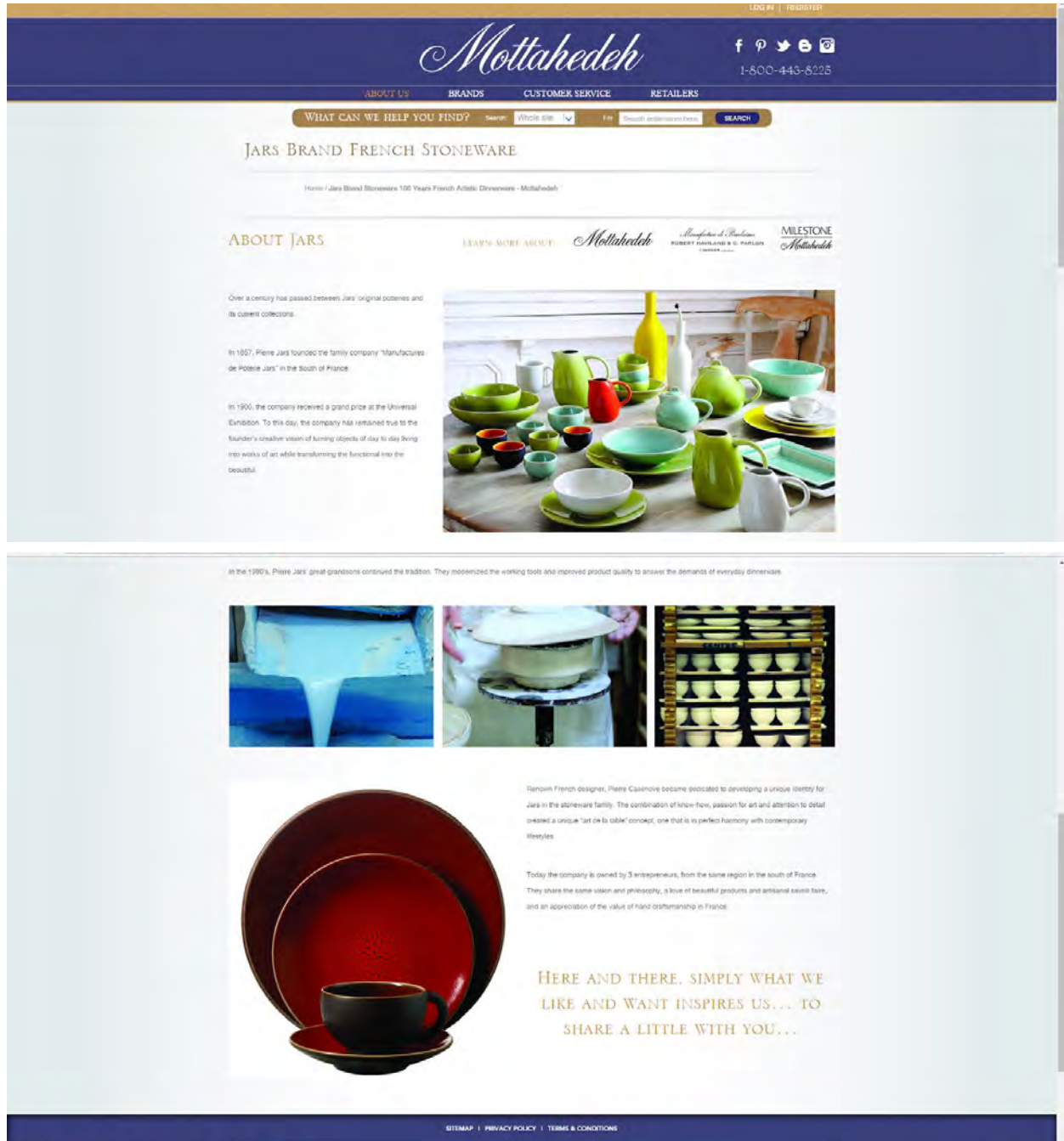
For the last 2000 years, until about 1800, porcelain decoration was painted by hand. Nowadays, 95% of porcelain is decorated with lithography (or silk-screened) decorations.

Instead of using ink, porcelain decorations are created using naturally occurring oxides otherwise considered ground up stone. This is the same material as was used with porcelains of old. The Chinese used ground stone that was rich in metals and they mixed it with water or oil. The same materials are used today, but each piece is not individually hand painted; rather, a series of decorations are printed on paper in the form of water-transfer decals. These decals are applied to fired white porcelain and then fired again. During this glaze firing, as it is called, the decoration is fused to the porcelain as the oxides and glaze melt. The decoration becomes glass. This finished piece has the same quality as a hand painted piece. After this initial decorating process, the porcelain is sometimes decorated again with hand painting. This is usually on the rim or the handles of a piece.



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/about-jars>

- Text hard to read
- Same issues with grammar and formatting as other pages
- Needs a call-to-action, and link to Jars products
- Doesn't really say much about Jars



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/about-r-haviland-and-c-parlon>

- Text hard to read
- Same issues with grammar and formatting as other pages
- Needs a call-to-action, and link to HP products
- Redundant information—there’s already a page dedicated to porcelain. This information can be streamlined.

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Mottahedeh *Art!* **MILESTONE**
Mottahedeh

THE HAVILAND DYNASTY

The story begins in the New York area, where Robert Haviland was born in 1803 to a family of tinsmiths in a town called Harrison's Purchase. He moved to France in 1839 seeking porcelain makers, and in 1853 he joined the company founded in Limoges by his younger brother David. Soon afterwards, Robert's son Charles Field Haviland, born in 1832, joined the family business (the name Field had been added through a series of family alliances). By marrying the granddaughter of François Allouin, Charles allied himself with a family that had been producing fine porcelain in Limoges since 1797. He quickly acquired the family china business and began stamping his name on the wares he produced. When Charles Field Haviland retired in 1902, his passion for fine chinaware was passed on to his descendants.

So it was inevitable no great surprise when his grandson Robert Haviland founded his own china making business in 1924, at the tender age of 27, stamping his wares with his name. Two years later, through a partnership with his brother-in-law Pierre le Tanneur, a new company was born: "Robert Haviland & le Tanneur". Shortly before World War II, Camille Parlon, the owner of Union Ceramique, brought his know-how to their business. In 1941, Robert Haviland acquired the "Charles Field Haviland" brand in homage to the memory of his grandfather; he decided to stamp this brand on chinaware produced by his company, which was renamed "Robert Haviland & C. Parlon" in 1949. The advent of the 50s and the arrival of two young business school graduates Michel Ardant (ESSEC 1950) and André Parlon (ESCP 1950), brought a breath of fresh air to the company. These two young men helped the company successfully navigate the major technological and creative transformations of that period, without losing sight of their predecessors' standards of excellence.

Together, Michel Ardant and André Parlon remained at the helm of the company for forty years, aiming to achieve high ambitions. They began to reproduce antique porcelain pieces in collaboration with museum curators. Hence the Russian pattern created in 1762 by Fabronet for Empress Catherine II of Russia was reproduced for New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Robins cup for the Paris Opera; and Porlino dishes and cups were adapted from dinnerware produced by the Vincennes porcelain manufactory in 1750 for the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Other examples are the painted Monet dinnerware set designed for the Claude Monet Museum in Giverny, and of course the Ladies and the Unicorn series inspired by the Cluny Museum apartments in Paris. In 1984, the Robert Haviland & C. Parlon porcelain company became a member of the "Comité Colbert", a select association of the most prestigious French luxury goods producers. The company subsequently began making signature pieces and chinaware for fine restaurants and luxury hotels, as well as the French and Belgian Embassies, European Union delegations, the French Prime Minister's residence, and the royal families of Morocco, Bahrain and Oman, to name just a few.

In 1992, Michel Ardant and André Parlon sold the company, which then underwent a period of uncertainty. The silverware Encois acquired the business in 2003, with a view to preserving and promoting its high quality craftsmanship. In 2011, the company was awarded the "Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant" (Living Heritage Company) label by the French State, in recognition of its excellence and unique know-how based on artisanal techniques.





Today, the Robert Haviland & C. Parfiter porcelain manufactory is laying the groundwork for the future of Limoges, seeking to combine tradition and modernity, history and innovation by drawing on the talents of tomorrow.

MANUFACTURING CHINA FOR ROBERT HAVILAND & C. PARLON

THE ART OF MAKING FINE CHINA

A subtle blend of kaolin, feldspar and quartz, the paste used to make china comes in several forms: powder (used for isostatic pressing), paste (for calibrating) or liquid (known as the "slip" and used for casting).

The majority of plates are produced using molding via isostatic press. The production method consists of firmly pressing powder mixed with a binding agent between two molds (the "slam" forming the top and the "membrane" forming the bottom). Other circular pieces, such as cups, serving bowls and serving dishes, are molded from paste using the calibration technique, turned by hand on a modeling wheel. Finally, for so-called "hollow" pieces such as vases, cream jugs and sugar bowls, the paste is poured in liquid form ("the slip") into hollow plaster molds (1), where the water absorbed by the plaster interior forms a crust. After drying and overmolding, but before the first firing at 900° C (called the "warm up"), handles, knobs and spouts are individually glued to the slip; this is the process of garnishing (2). Thus, a coffee pot may be composed of separate parts produced by five different molds. Each piece is then carefully oiled, a finishing stage to trim, clean and remove any seams or rough edges.



Once the pieces are removed from the first "warm up" firing oven (3), they are more resistant to breakage and have been rendered more porous and receptive to glazing. Glazing is a delicate operation whereby each piece is plunged into a liquid bath of carefully dosed mineral components (4). They are then placed in an oven for the second firing or "high firing" at 1400° C which vitrifies the glazed porcelain, giving it the shiny and transparent appearance of fine china.

DECORATING FINE CHINA


There are multiple decoration techniques: chromolithography (or transfers), hand painting, inlaying and sanding. All of these techniques require exceptional manual skills and craftsmanship.

Chromo (or transfer) decorations are printed on transfer paper which must be soaked in water; the decoration is then delicately lifted from the paper by the dental applicator, and painstakingly applied to the white porcelain (5). This difficult operation is further complicated by the complexity of details which must adhere perfectly to rounded shapes without any visible seams.

Hand painting (6) requires great dexterity. This technique is notably used for painting the fine borders around plates and serving dishes, or for garnishing handles and knobs on pouring jugs and soap dispensers.

Inlaying is a highly luxurious method of ornamentation requiring an entire series of operations entrusted to expert hands. It consists of engraving chromo decorations directly into the porcelain, after having first protected the rest of the piece with a coating of tar. Then the engraved motif is covered with gold or platinum powder, fired again, sanded, polished and burnished with agate for an incomparable sheen (7).

More than thirty artisanal processes in as many days are carried out by loving hands, to obtain just one piece of fine Limoges manufactory and decorated by R. Haviland & C. Parfiter.



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/about-milestone>

- Text hard to read
- Same issues with grammar and formatting as other pages
- Photo-heavy and hard to navigate

MILESTONE FINE STONEWARE DINNERWARE

Milestone is Mottahedeh's Fine Stoneware Brand that combines our distinctive historic look with a casual and more affordable style.



This product can go in the dishwasher and microwave and can be used every day.
Choose from patterns that were developed at the turn of the 20th century.
Note the complexity of color and beautiful painting.

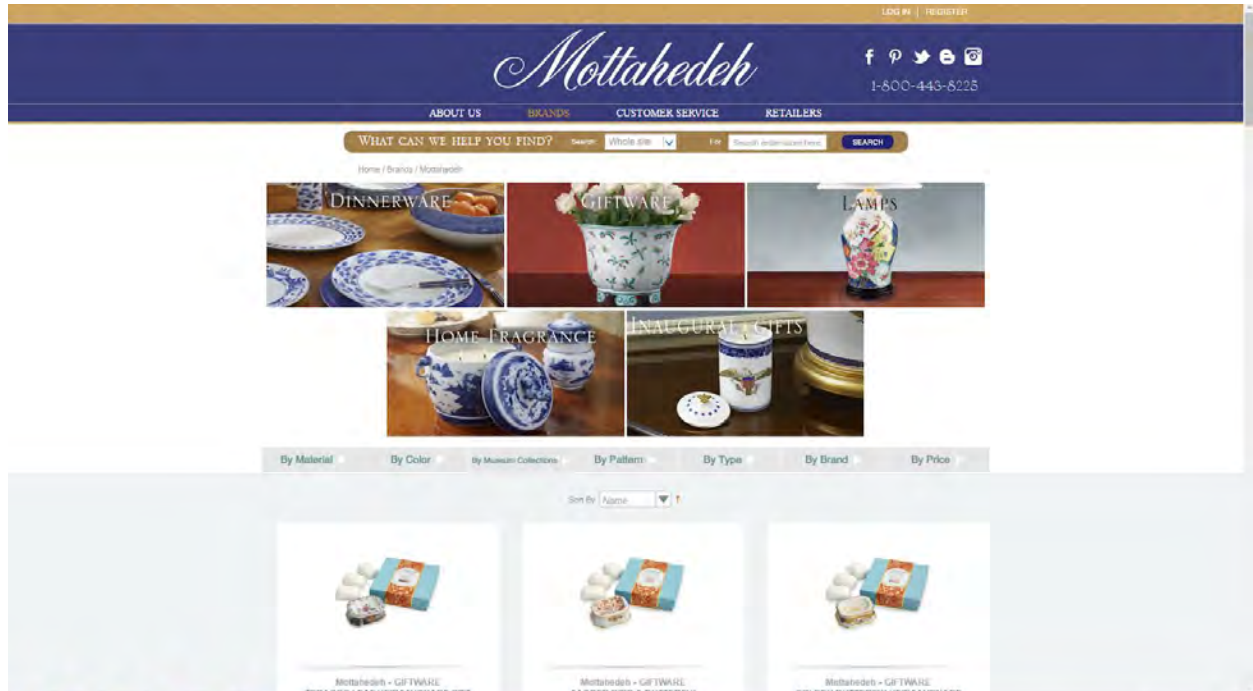


Menu:



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/brands/mottahedeh.html#/page/1>

- Look and feel needs to be consistent with other pages



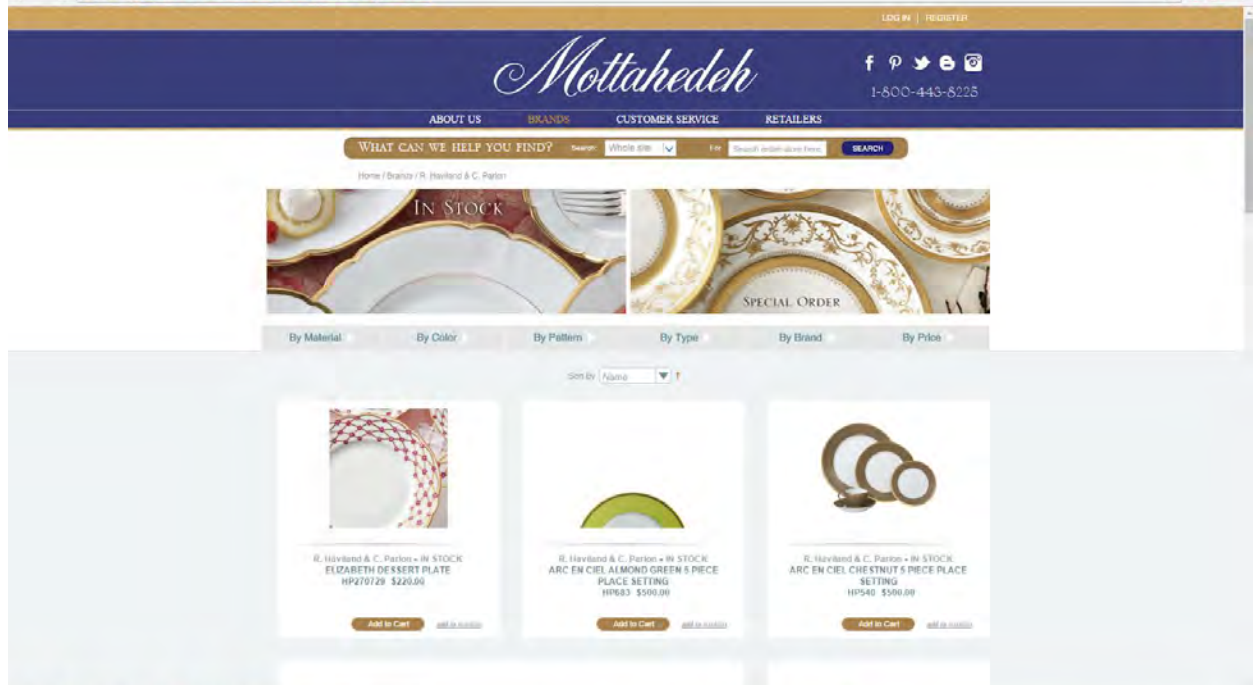
<https://www.mottahedeh.com/brands/jars.html>

- Look and feel needs to be consistent with other pages



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/brands/r-haviland-c-parlon.html>

- Look and feel needs to be consistent with other pages



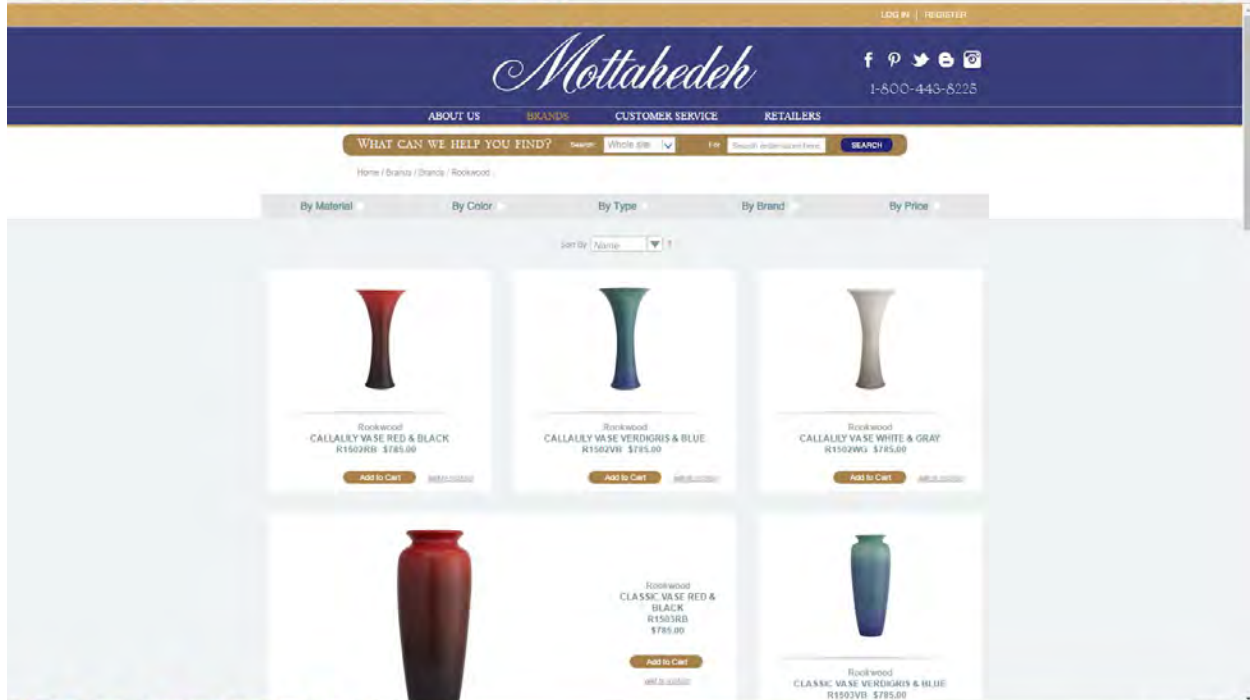
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- Look and feel needs to be consistent with other pages



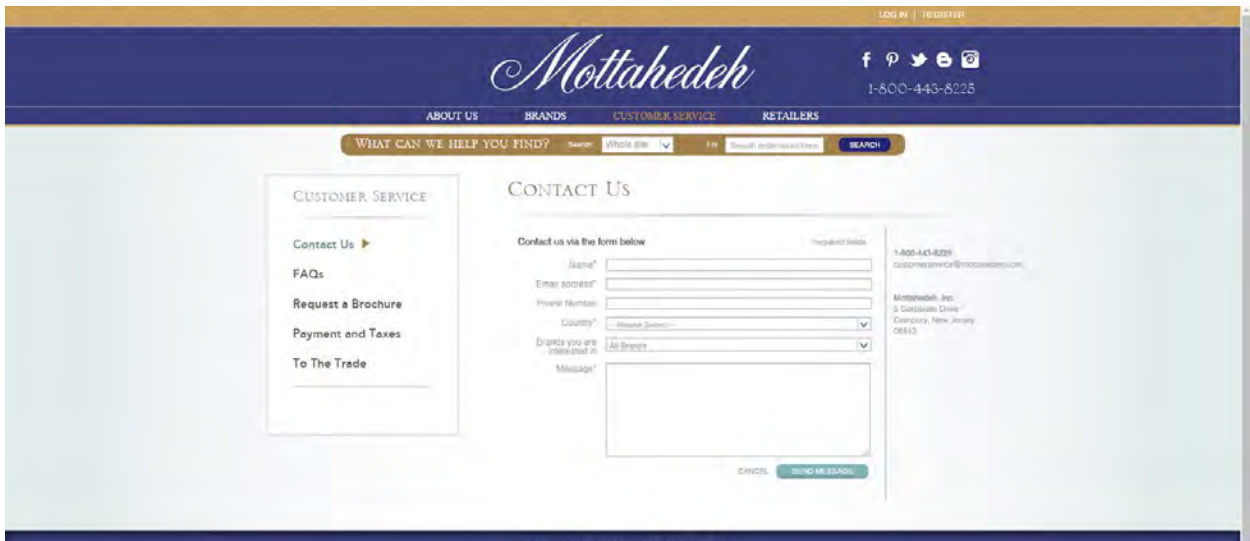
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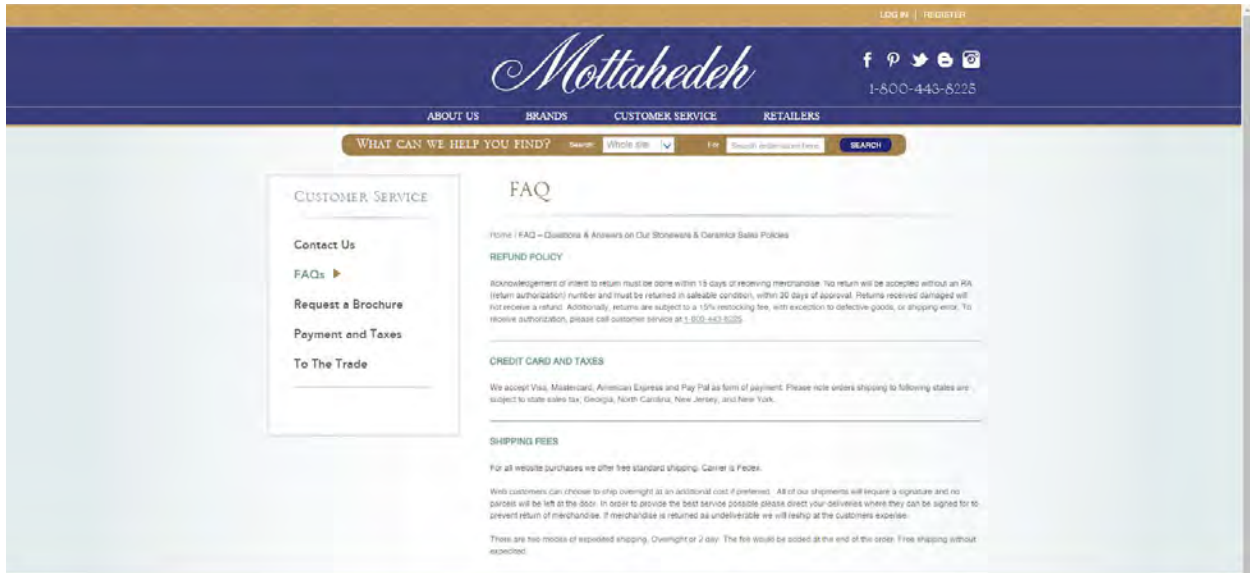
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<https://www.mottahedeh.com/to-the-trade/>

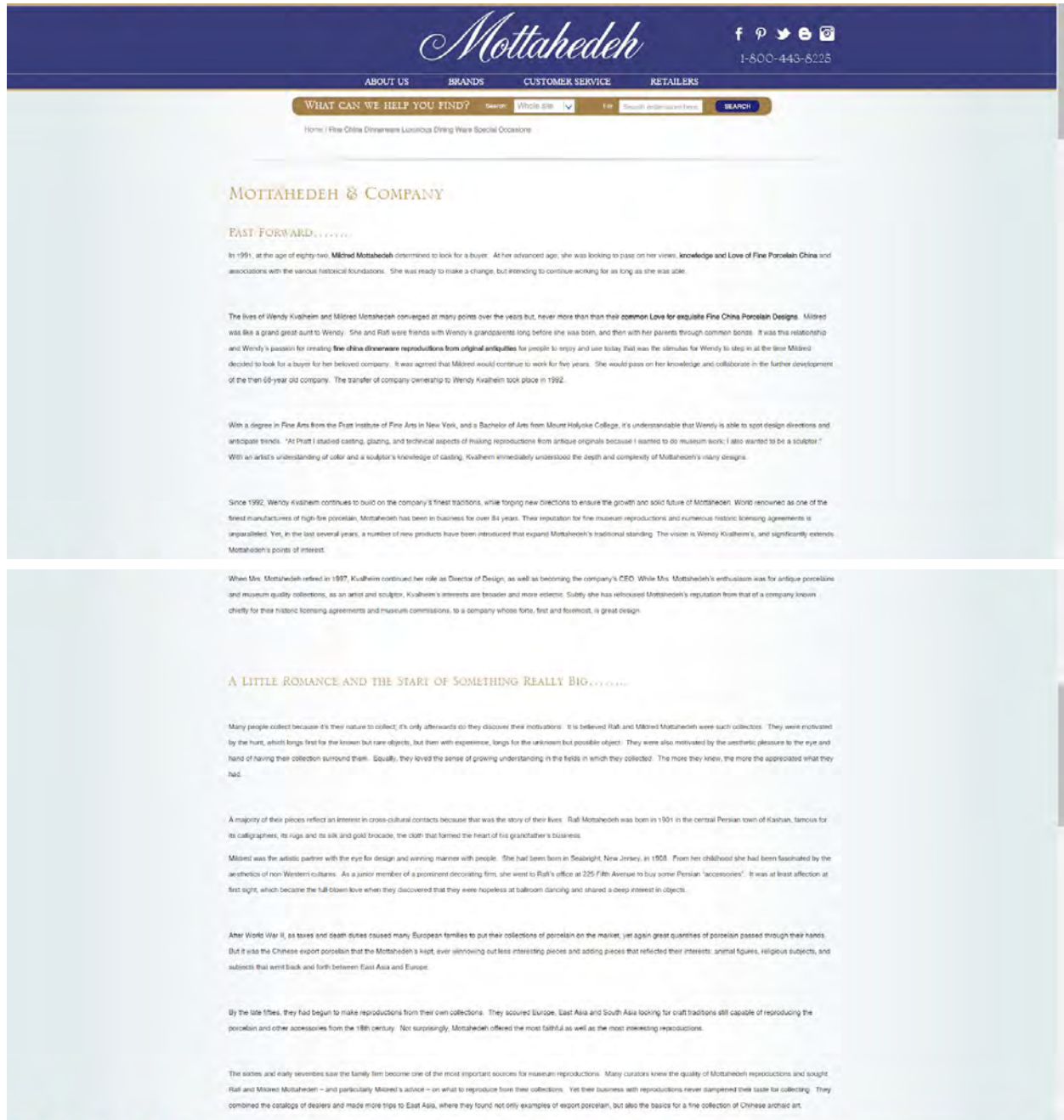
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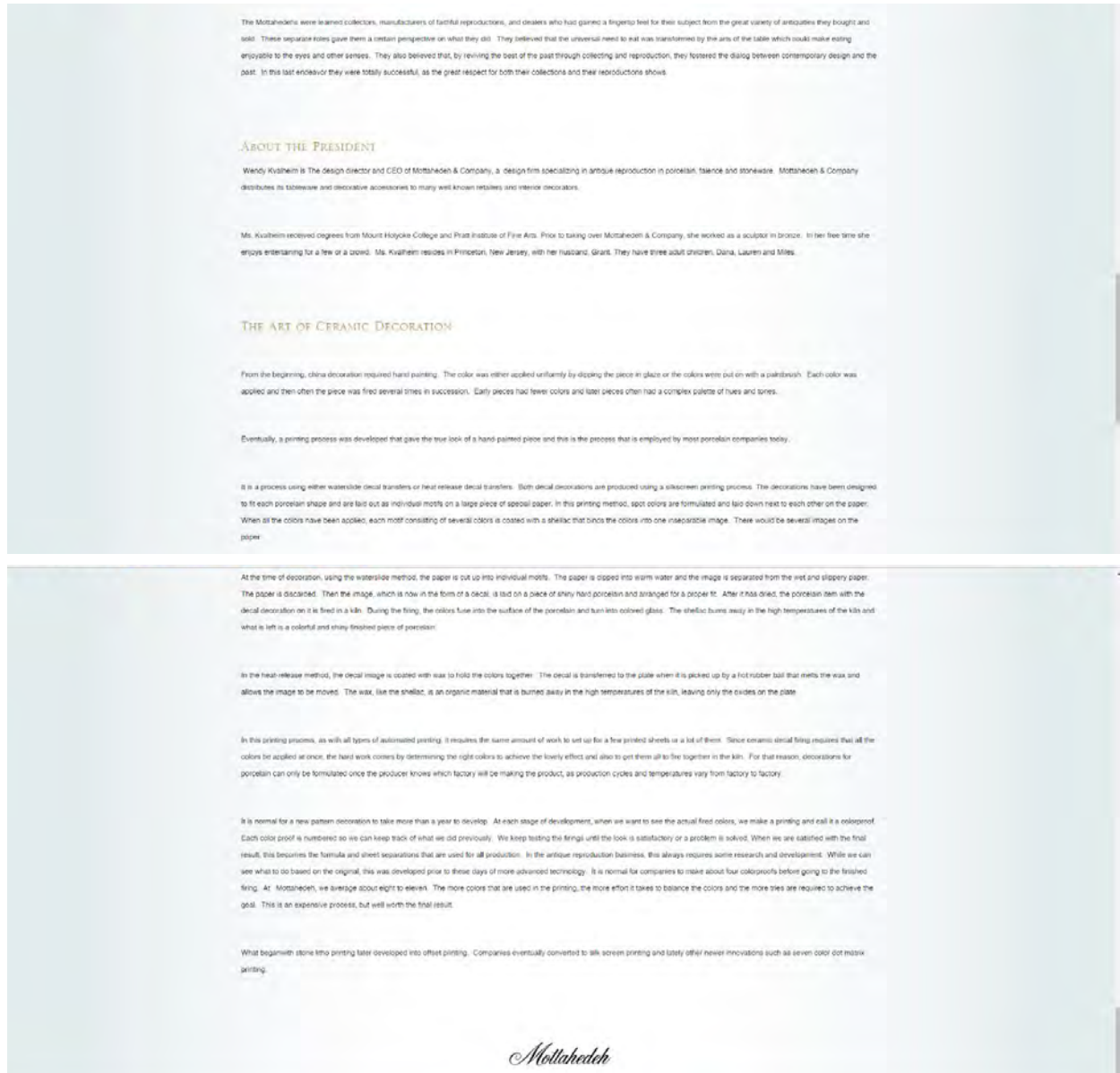


(under Brands Footer)

<https://www.mottahedeh.com/mottahedeh-and-company/>

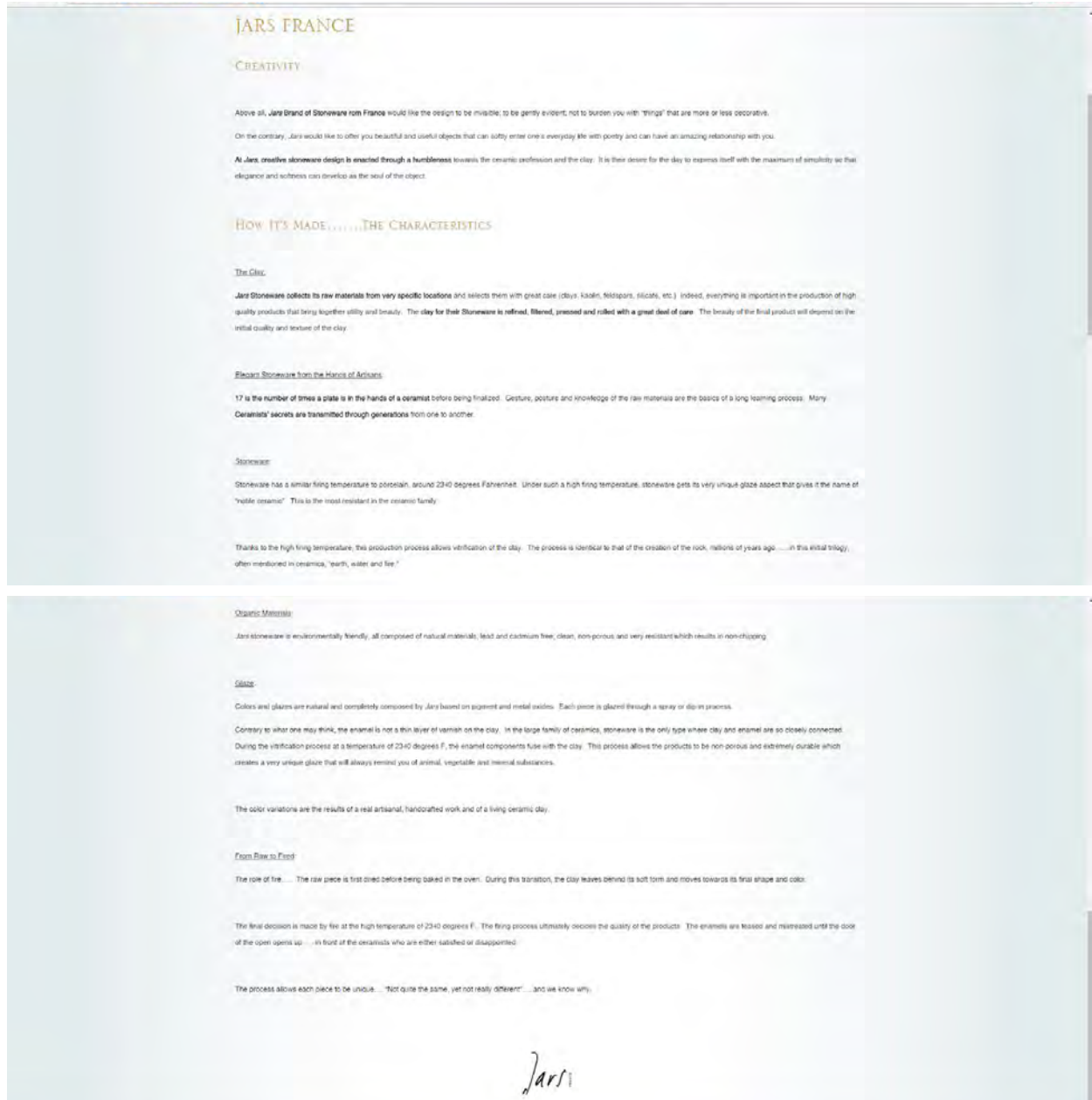
- Text too small
- Same grammar and text formatting issues as other pages
- Very text-heavy. There are no photos on this page at all
- Redundant information. What makes this different than the About and History pages? The content on this page can be cut, streamlines with the content on the About and History pages. The pages itself can be removed.





<https://www.mottahedeh.com/jars/>

- Text too small
- Same grammar and text formatting issues as other pages
- Very text-heavy. There are no photos on this page at all
- Redundant information. What makes this different than the other Jars page? Also, the information on how the product is made can be streamlined into the first page on porcelain. This page can be removed.



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/r-haviland-and-c-parlon/>

- Text too small
- Same grammar and text formatting issues as other pages
- Very text-heavy. There are no photos on this page at all
- Redundant information. What makes this different than the other HP page? Content can be streamlined into other pages, and this page can be removed.

ROBERT HAVILAND & C. PARLON – LUSTROUS FINE CHINA DESIGNS

HOW IS IT MADE?

The Art of Making Fine China

A subtle blend of kaolin, feldspar and quartz, the paste used to make fine china dinnerware comes in several formats: powder (used for isostatic pressing), paste (for calibrating) or liquid (known as the 'slip' and used for casting).

The majority of Fine China plates from R. Haviland & C. Parlon are produced using molding via isostatic press. This production method consists of firmly pressing powder mixed with a binding agent between two molds (the 'stamps' forming the top and the 'membranes' forming the bottom). Other circular pieces, such as cups, serving bowls and serving dishes, are molded from paste using the calibration technique: turned by hand on a modeling wheel. Finally, for so-called 'hollow' pieces such as teapots, cream jugs and sugar bowls, the paste is poured in liquid form ('the slip') into hollow plaster molds (1), where the water absorbed by the plaster interior forms a crust. After drying and demolding, but before the first firing at 900° C (called the 'warm up'), handles, knobs and spouts are individually glued to the slip; this is the process of glazing (2). Thus, a coffee pot may be composed of separate parts produced by five different molds. Each piece is then carefully deburred, a finishing stage to trim, clean and remove any seams or rough edges.

Once the pieces are removed from the first 'warm up' firing oven (3), they are more resistant to breakage and have been rendered more porous and receptive to glazing. Glazing is a delicate operation whereby each piece is plunged into a liquid bath of carefully dosed mineral components (4). They are then placed in an oven for the second firing or 'high firing' at 1400° C which vitrifies the glazed porcelain, giving it the shiny and transparent appearance of fine china.

HOW IS IT DECORATED?

The Art of Making Fine China

There are multiple decoration techniques: chromolithography (or transfers), hand painting, inlaying and staining. All of these techniques require exceptional manual skills and craftsmanship.

Chromo (or transfer) decorations are printed on transfer paper which must be soaked in water; the decoration is then delicately lifted from the paper by the decal applicator and painstakingly applied to the white porcelain (5). This difficult operation is further complicated by the complexity of details which must adhere perfectly to rounded shapes without any visible seams.

Hand painting (6) requires great dexterity. This technique is notably used for painting the fine borders around plates and serving dishes, or for painting handles and knobs on pouring pots and soup tureens.

Inlaying is a highly luxurious method of ornamentation requiring an entire series of operations entrusted to expert hands. It consists of engraving chromo decorations directly into the porcelain, after having first protected the rest of the piece with a coating of var. Then the engraved motif is covered with gold or platinum powder, fired again, sanded, polished and finished with spate for an incomparable shine (7).

More than thirty artisanal processes in as many days are carried out by loving hands, to obtain just one piece of fine chinaware manufactured and decorated by R. Haviland & C. Parlon.

THE HISTORY AND ROMANCE BEHIND THE PATTERNS

ARC EN CIEL

Simply elegant, this classic model features a colored rim bordered by a thin line of gold motté and gold edging. Available in eight colors: chestnut, fuchsia, terracotta, prissy rose, bronze green, golden yellow, almond green and emerald green.

LES ABELLES

This pattern originates from the Napoleon 1st era. At that time, the eagle represented power and the military, while bees were the symbol of wealth and prosperity.

BENGALIS

Created by the Sevres porcelain factory for La Pompadour to reflect the subtleties, severity and graceful curves of Louis XV's favorite royal mistress, the bird motif is inspired by her famous jewelry.

CHANDIGARH

Representing an emblematic city at the dawn of the 1950's, a crossroads between tradition and innovation, a symbol of hope, and the pattern for a new world. A concept that resonates through the pure lines of its architecturally structured design.

CONSTELLATION

The constellation of stars imprisoned in a fine gold mesh stands out against the cobalt blue background of this dramatic pattern.

COQUEL

A classic pattern with a gold motté border, it is the ideal showcase for personal monograms or a gold coat of arms. This dinnerware is used by Belgian Embassies throughout the world.

FARAVANAZ

Inspired by Persian art, this pattern evokes the geometric ceramic designs decorating the mausoleum cupola in the Iranian village of Shiraz.

COQUETTE

A recreation of the porcelain dinnerware that was used by the famous novelist in her country home, featuring a fine gold or platinum scalloped edge.

DYNASTY

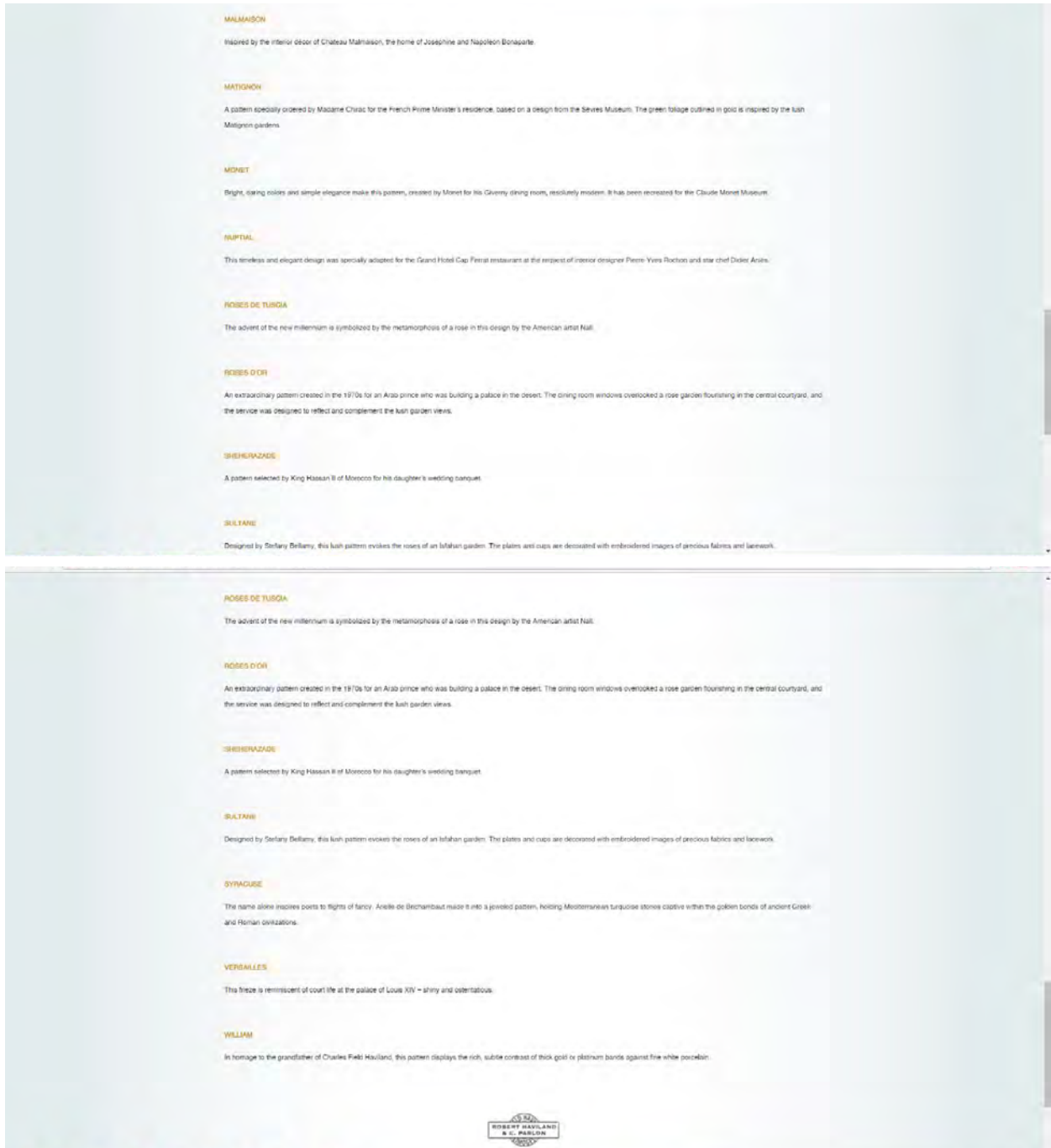
Entirely decorated in gold or platinum, this service created in the late 1920s requires skilled hand finishing and craftsmanship.

ELISABETH

Originally produced in 1782 by Falconet for Empress Catherine II of Russia, this service was recreated in 1960 for the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

FLAMME D'OR

André Parlon created this pattern to celebrate the 'art of fire', the firing technique used to create fine china. The flames vary from blue to orange, according to the temperature.



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/milestone/>

- Text too small
- Needs content.
- Can probably be removed.



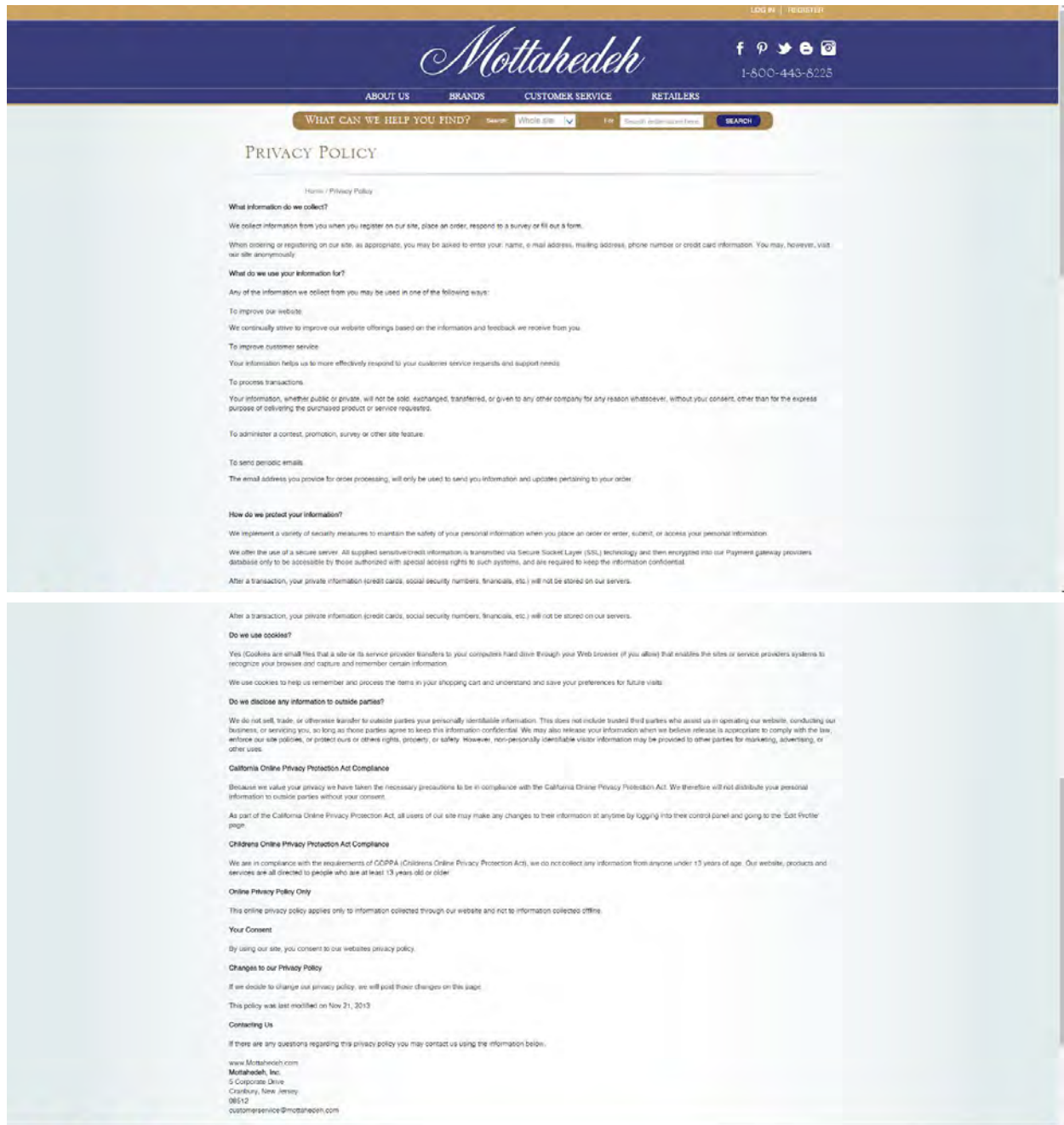
<https://www.mottahedeh.com/retailers/>

- Text too small
- It's not immediately obvious who this page is for. Is it for people who sell Mottahedeh? Is it for people looking to buy from Mottahedeh?



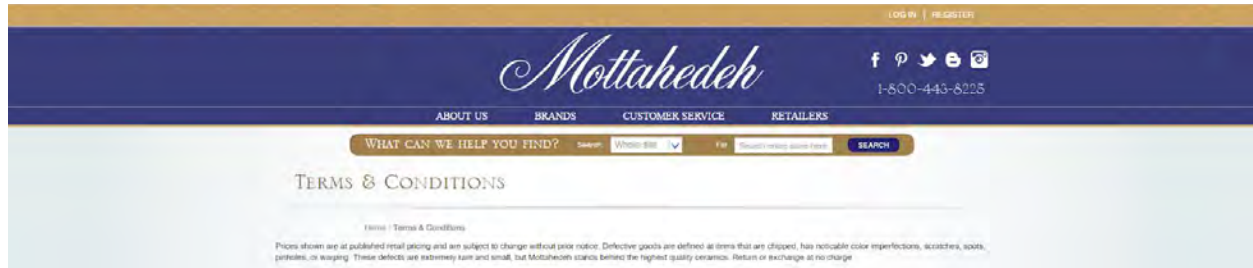
<https://www.mottahedeh.com/privacy-policy/>

- Text too small
- Same grammar and text formatting issues as other pages



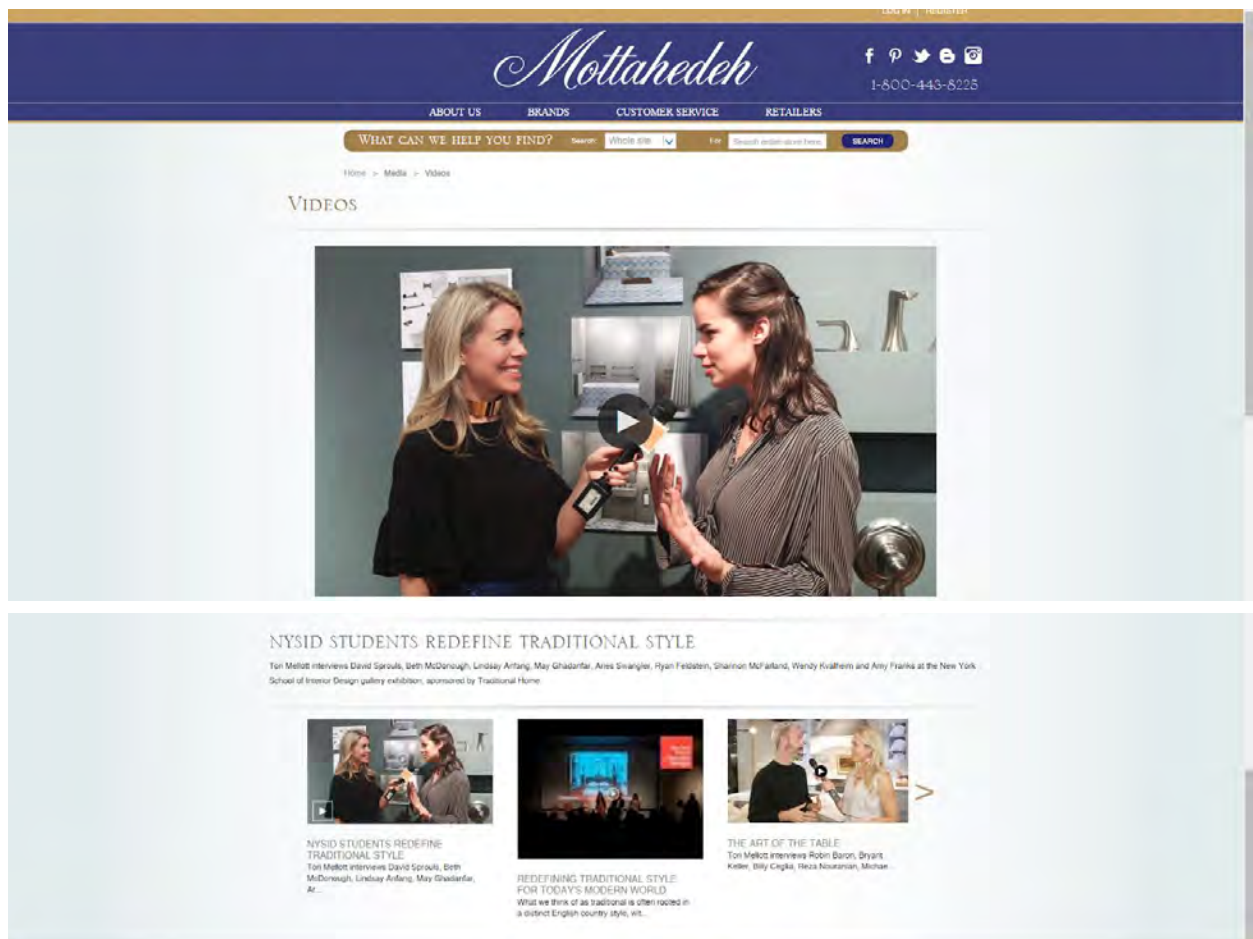
<https://www.mottahedeh.com/terms-and-conditions/>

- Text too small
- Same grammar and text formatting issues as other pages



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/video>

- There needs to be a Mottahedeh media page. This should be a subpage of that.
- Text too small.



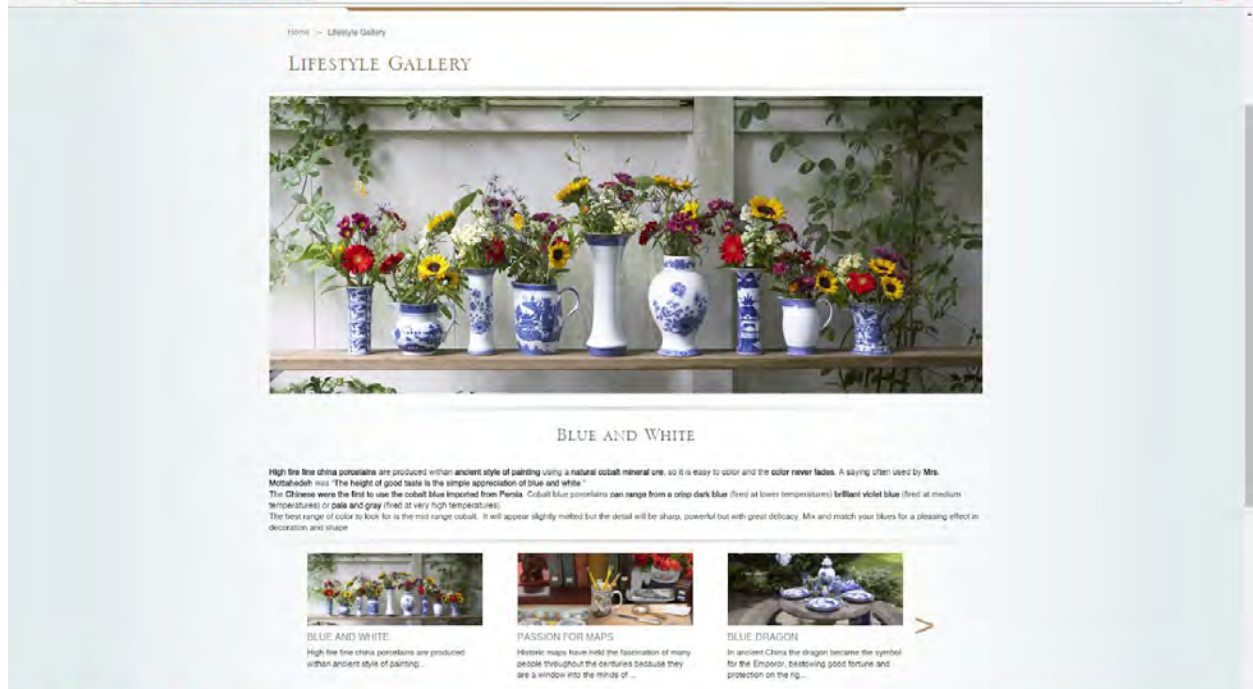
<https://www.mottahedeh.com/newsletter>

- What is the purpose of this page? Does anyone read this?
- The newsletter should have exclusive content for Mottahedeh subscribers, and should be used to point readers the website. This page should probably be removed to create that exclusivity.
 - Or, it should be a landing page only to drive subscriptions to the newsletter.



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/lifestyle>

- Text too small
- Same grammar and text formatting issues as other pages
- What is the point of this page?



<https://www.mottahedeh.com/showroom>

- Text too small
- Same grammar and text formatting issues as other pages
- What is the point of this page?

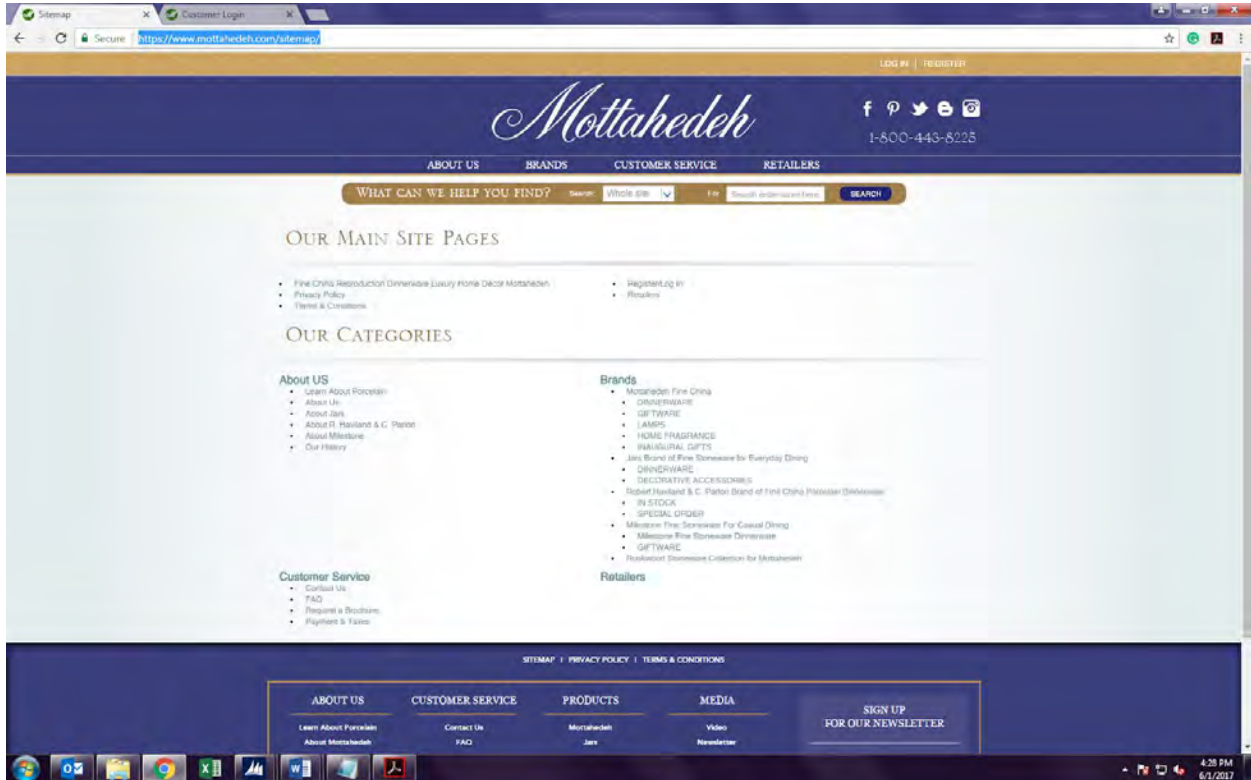


<http://mottahedehchina.blogspot.com/>

- Same grammar issues as website
- Blogspot has a perception in North America as being unprofessional. It's very easy to get a white labelled blog (something like: www.mottahedeh.com/blog).

<https://www.mottahedeh.com/sitemap/>

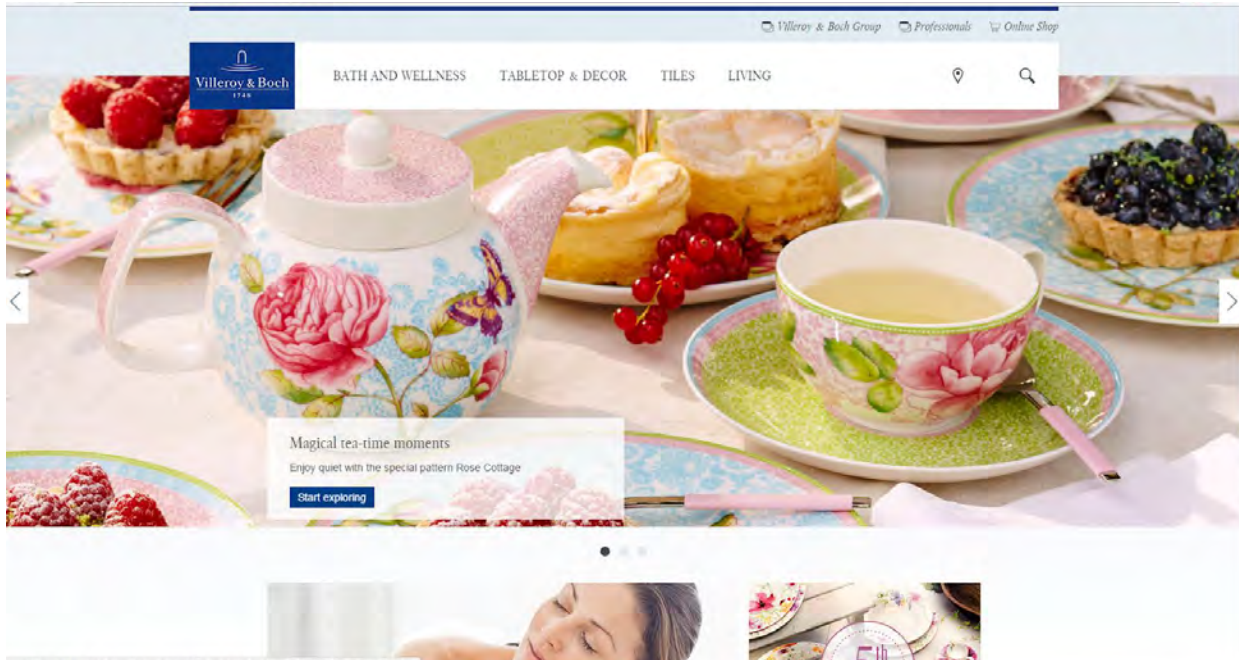
- This doesn't need to be a prominent link. No one looks at sitemaps anymore.



2. Competitive Sites

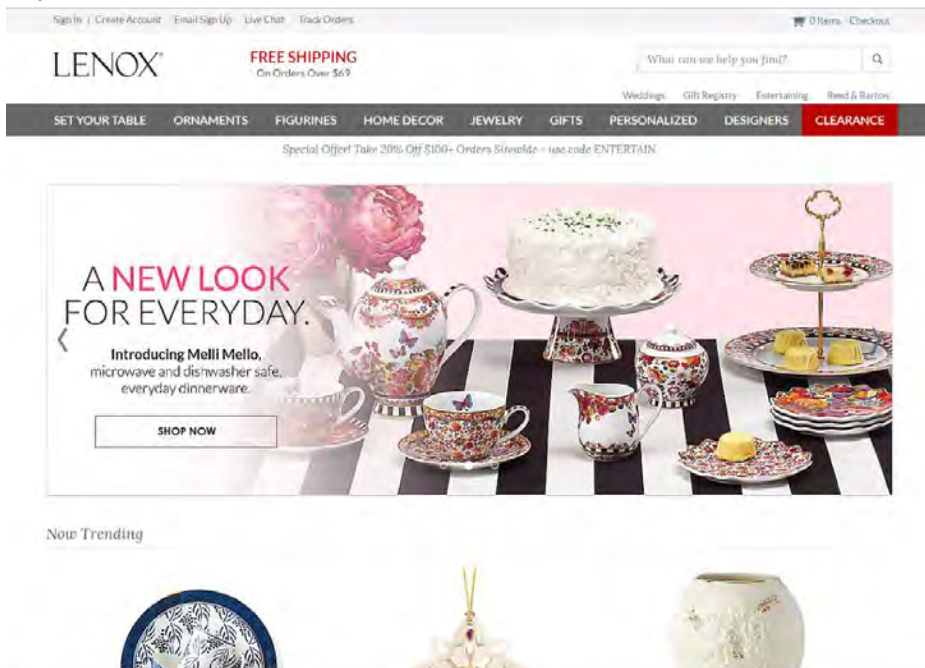
Villeroy & Boch: not the best, but very clean and consistent.

<https://www.villeroy-boch.com/>



Lenox – this is closer to what the Mottahedeh site should be. Very clean with strong branding. I like the “Now Trending” at the fold.

<https://www.lenox.com/>



Now Trending



NEW



2017 Annuals



Best Sellers

Special Offer! Take 20% Off \$100+ Orders Siteside - use code ENTERTAIN



Special Offer! Take 20% Off \$100+ Orders Siteside - use code ENTERTAIN



Everyday Dinnerware



Special Occasion Dinnerware



Personalized Dinnerware



Flatware



Glassware



Personalized Gifts

So Much to See



Get Social



Award Winning



Breakage Replacement Program



Videos



2017 Catalog



Clearance

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Contact Us
- Email Preferences
- Track Orders
- Lenox EasyPay
- Shipping Rates
- Returns Policy
- Breakage Replacement

ABOUT LENOX

- About Us
- Careers
- Secure Shopping
- Privacy & Legal
- California Supply Chain Disclosure
- Affiliate Program

MORE WAYS TO SHOP

- Catalog Request
- Online Catalog
- Hospitality Catalog
- Designers
- Store Locator
- Barbieri Home

Stay Connected

Sign up to hear about new arrivals, exclusives & promotions

SIGN UP

Follow Us



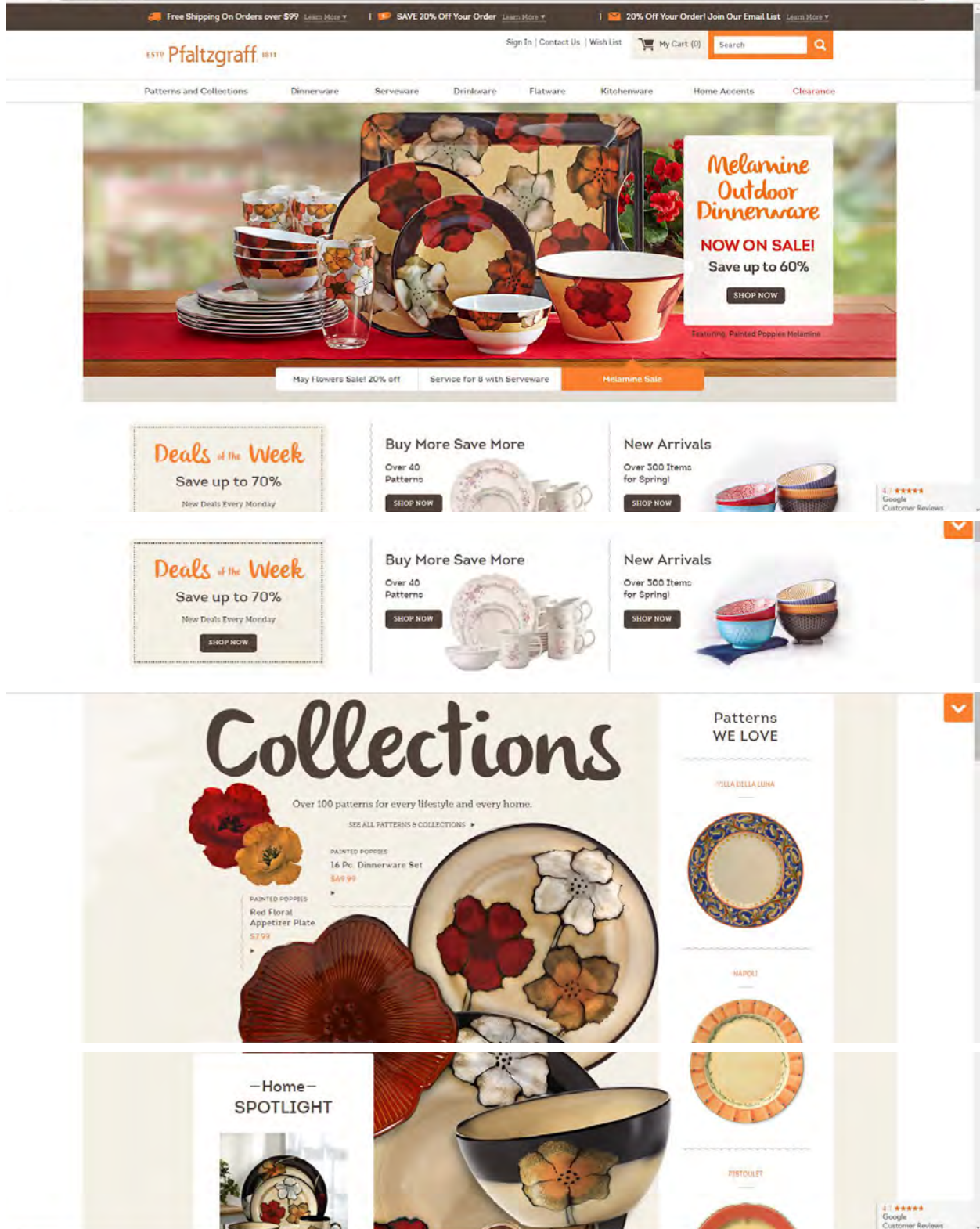
Mikasa: Focused on B2C. Very clean looking side with strong CTA above the fold.

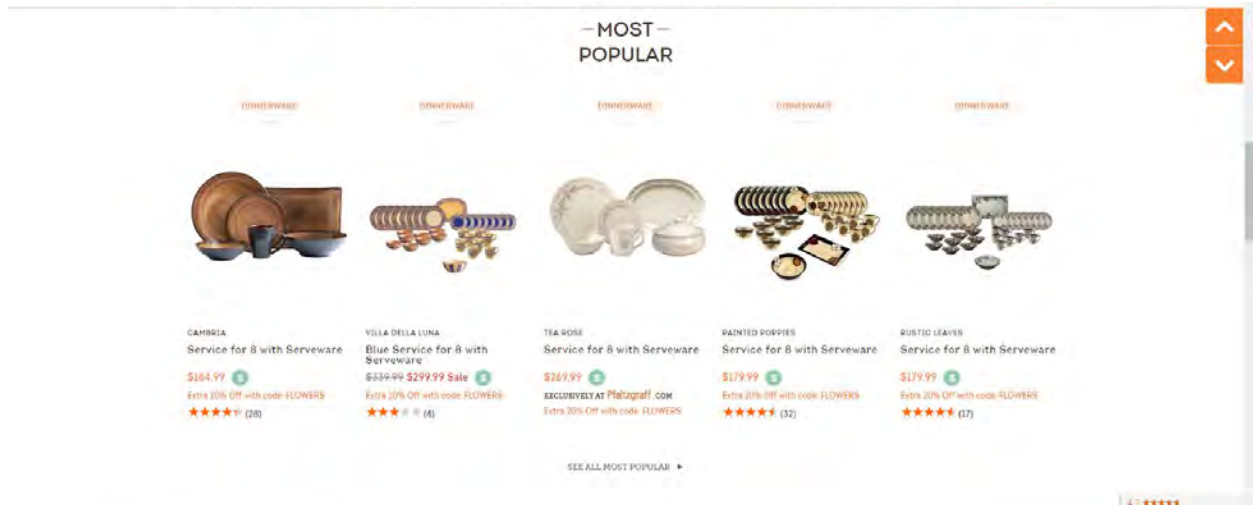
<http://www.mikasa.com/>



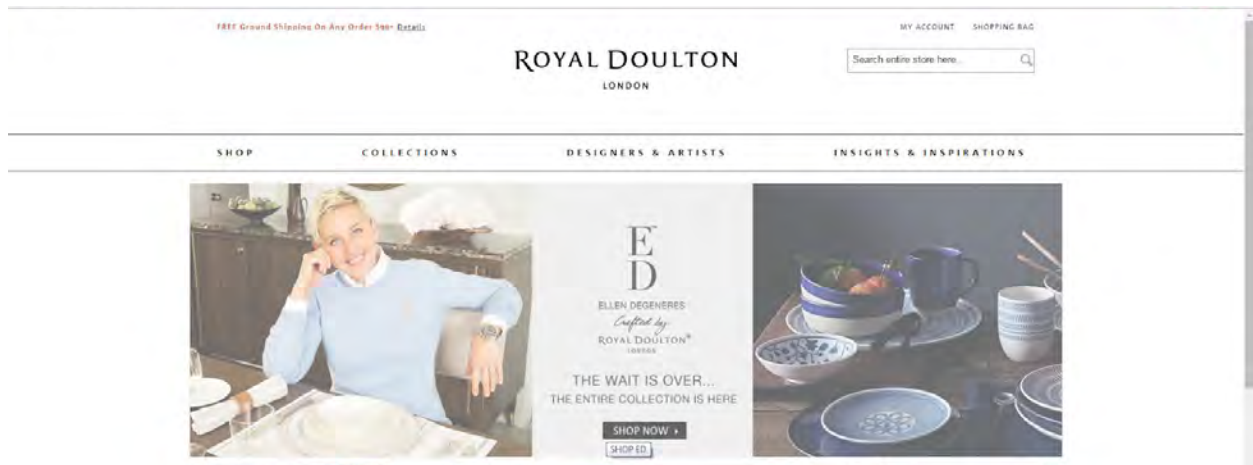
Pfaltzgraff: an improvement over Mikasa. Still on the heavy side, but easy to navigate. The “Most Popular” section is cool. The “Collections We Love” section goes on a little long. Whole home page goes on too long but this what the Mottahedeh website should overall strive for.

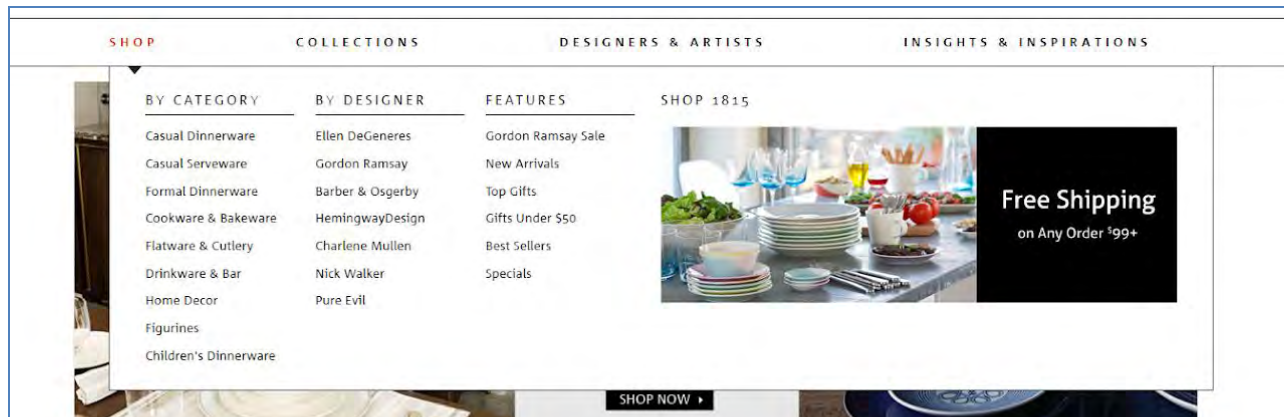
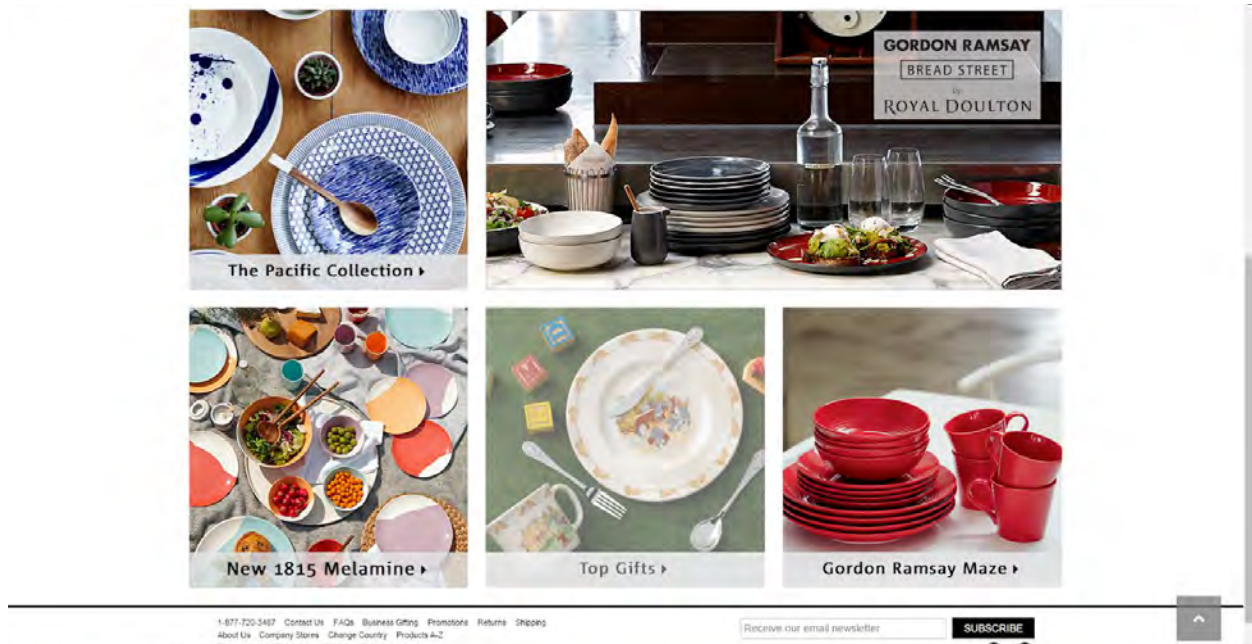
<http://www.pfaltzgraff.com/>





Royal Doulton: The navigation is especially good and easy to use. The home page is small, but effectively shows off plates and designers
<http://www.royaldoulton.com>

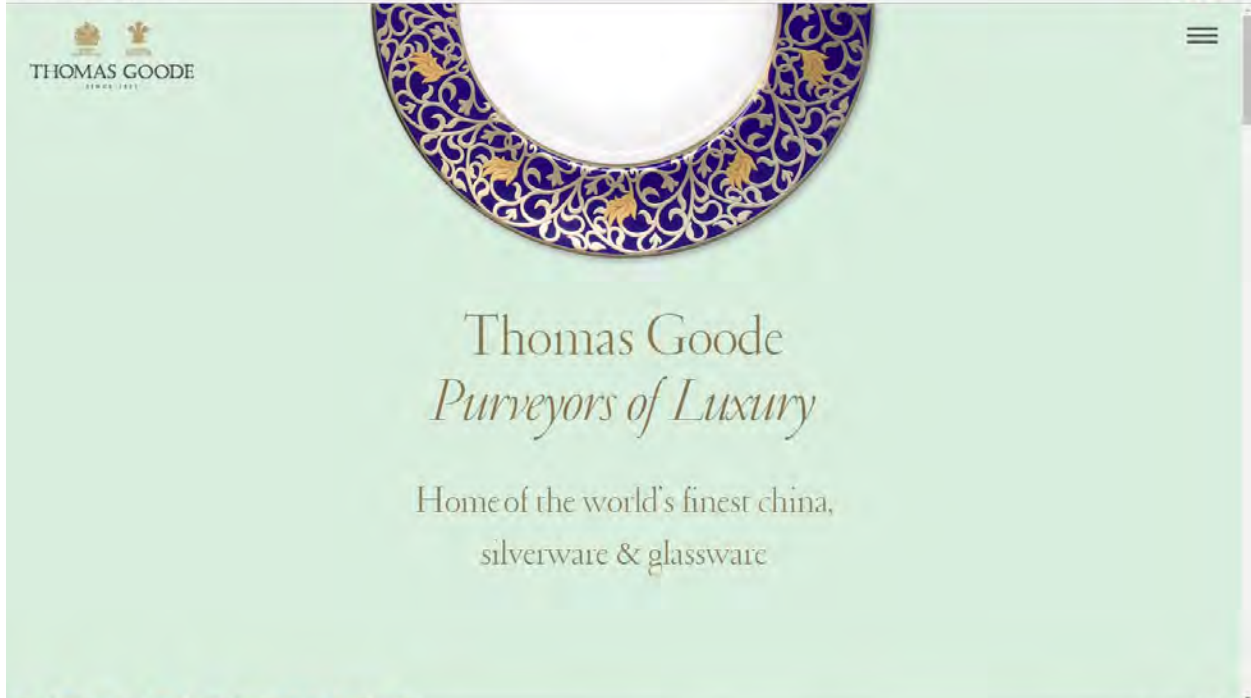




Thomas Goode*:

- Clean site
- Simple to navigate
- Focus on history and images
- Menu a minus: hard to find in upper left
- Otherwise, this is what the Mottahedeh website should strive to look like

<http://thomasgoode.com/>



THOMAS GOODE
SINCE 1827

– Profile

Established in 1827 and long recognised as the home of the world's finest china, silverware and glassware, Thomas Goode is a global institution situated in the heart of Mayfair. Thomas Goode holds two royal warrants and is very proud of its long standing relationship with the British Royal Family which still continues today.

ABOUT US



The Thomas Goode Elephants



— Two Great Landmarks

The twin Elephants of Thomas Goode & Co have stood sentinel over South Audley Street since Victorian times and most recently one was lent as the centrepiece of the 'Sculpture Victorious' exhibition at Tate Britain, in 2015.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE THOMAS GOODE HISTORY](#)

Dinner services fit for Kings and Queens

— The Thomas Goode Museum

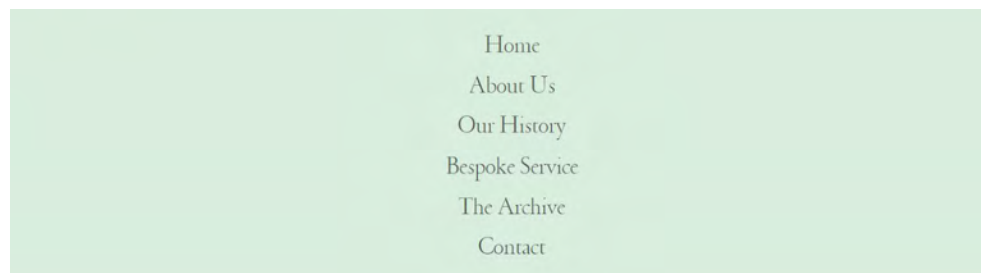
Thomas Goode & Co was transformed into London's foremost tableware emporium by the founder's son, the enterprising William Goode who, throughout the mid-nineteenth century, travelled the world in search of the finest porcelain and bone china designs.

[VIEW THE ARCHIVE](#)





Menu:



Additional sites to consider:

Spode: Slow to load. However, it has a good footer that makes it clear there are other brands.

<http://www.spode.com/>

Wedgwood: Bold, full width hero. A little too busy, but has good menu and navigation.

<http://www.wedgwood.com/>

Mary Mahoney: The animations are annoying, home page is long, but overall cleaner look and feel than the Mottahedeh website. <http://marymahoney.com/>

Additional Notes:

- Most sites have white or backgrounds
- Text and photos are balanced and consistent
- All are light and easy to read

