

COOL  
SEASON



# Happy hunting

## Site offers inspiration for creative types

Creative people — be they visual artists, writers, musicians, etc. — are always on the hunt for inspiration for their next project. Viewing work done by others is often a good way to feed that creative appetite. The Internet can provide a bountiful hunting ground for inspirational images.

The website **CoolHunting.com** was designed to provide prey for creatives on the prowl. The site started in 2003 as a personal reference file for a designer and has evolved into a collaborative effort of editors, contributors and viewers from around the world.

Cool Hunting is a collection of images, videos and stories covering design, technology, style, travel, culture and dining. The overall feel of the site is a kind of urban chic, like a mixture of the Sharper Image catalog, Smithsonian magazine and Maxim.

### If you can make it there ...

There's an upscale smugness in the writing that can be a little off-putting to plain folks like me. Names of designers, artists, photographers, companies, etc., are frequently dropped with the expectation that everyone is familiar with them. It's like listening to a conversation among a group of New York City "high-society" types.

Once you get past the Big Apple clique-iness of the site, there's a lot of interesting and inspiring content.

The home page features an eclectic mix of content that is updated daily. On the day I wrote this there were articles on making tiny terrariums, a line of vitamin supplements for dogs, a couple profiles of photographers, jewelry designed to look like viruses, a video interview with comedian Aziz Ansari in a taco restaurant and more.

### This, that and the other thing

The navigation tabs are spread across the bottom of the pagetop banner. Below the banner, the page is divided into two columns. The wider column on the left features Recent Stories. The narrower column on the right contains promos and links to interior sections of the site, as well as ads, tweets and links to social media sites.

The Recent Stories column can be expanded to view large photos and complete articles on the various subjects covered, or collapsed to view thumbnail photos with headlines and one-line summaries of the articles. Clicking on the picture or headline takes you to a page with the complete coverage. Scrolling down the page reveals numerous featured stories, starting with the most recent at the top.

Cool Hunting produces videos, which are featured in their own section on the site (as well as being accessible from promos scattered throughout the pages). Like the rest of the site, the videos cover a wide range of subjects. Most videos feature interviews with people doing noteworthy work in their chosen field. This could be anything from the hand-crafted luxury that goes

into a Bentley automobile, to a woman whose art consists of cutting out all the individual letters on a newspaper page by hand and replacing them with other letters, to an extreme snowboarder who gets dropped on mountain tops by helicopter and takes death-defying rides down to the bottom. They vary in style from hand-held camera shots to slick movie trailer productions.

The Gift Guide offers an entertaining browse through an unusual selection of items. Nothing in this guide would be considered a necessity by anyone I know, but a lot of them just look like fun. You can get an Ivy + Bean children's book for \$6, a Best Made ax for \$135, or charter a Flexjet for a price to be determined upon request.

### Not just a pretty package

The content on the site is contained in a slick design with simple navigation. A contemporary palette of greys, black and white with simple, clean typography allows the images to shine. A deep banner across the top of the pages features a wide range of artwork that changes from page to page and day to day. The photography, writing and structure of the site are all very professional.

Even though the subject matter on the site varies greatly, it's all tied together by the creators' sensitivity to aesthetics and design. Not everything you see will be your cup of tea, but every tea cup has been thoughtfully designed and lovingly crafted.

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