

DESIGN FOR THE WELL-LIVED LIFE

HOUSE & Garden

OCTOBER 2007

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+ A GUIDE FOR THE DESIGN-OBSESSED TRAVELER



Finding the right balance

between comfort and style can be challenging, especially in a city like Milan, where historic architecture stands alongside some of the most visionary, trendsetting fashion houses in the world. When Robert Triefus, executive vice president of worldwide communications at Giorgio Armani, and his partner, Caleb Negrón, were apartment hunting, it took them nearly two and a half years to find just the right place. "When I first walked in, I fell in love with the high ceilings, the three exposures, and the abundance of natural light," Negrón says of the apartment they eventually found and which he decorated.

They wanted a place well suited to a family, as they have two sons, Matteo, 7, and Roman, 3. "The children need to act and behave like children; they need to feel at ease in every room," Negrón says, explaining that comfort and practicality were top priorities. But so were elegance and style. The

Soft dramatic lighting—a Venini floor lamp, Verner Panton's Fun 2 table lamp, and an Oty Box 63 wall lamp—illuminates the living room, which includes a pair of three-legged chairs by Hans Wegner; FlexForm's Groundpiece sectional in Toscana, accented with a brown throw and a striped pillow from Armani/Casa; a bespoke daybed; and a tray table in mahogany and red leather, also by Armani/Casa. Photographs are propped up on ledges, making it simple to change the display of the collection.

Daringly dark furniture works well in rooms that



finished apartment is simultaneously cozy and stylish. Warm, saturated tones of red and brown were used for the walls, while the floors were painted a brilliant white. "When Robert and I lived in New York, our apartment was stark white—walls, furnishings, everything," says Negrón. "While visiting places in Milan, we found splashes of bold color everywhere. I thought I would give that a try."

Negrón turned to Mimosa International, a specialist painting company based in Varese and New York City that inspired him to try the Marmorino effect, which involves applying many layers of colored plaster to the wall, followed by a layer of wax that is then polished. The choice of colors, Negrón says, was inevitable: "I have always had a passion for chocolate brown. My first car was brown, and my first dog was a chocolate Lab."

Although the living room walls were done in a rich, textured brown, the master bedroom is an intense red. "I use red in a lot of my decorating, and this particular one looks elemental and organic," Negrón says. He offset the darkness of both rooms with hazy backlighting to create an environment that can be either soft or dramatic, depending on one's mood. The gleaming white floors are a mixture of resin

A deep red wall in the kitchen, above, connects the Greek paintings in the hallway with the chocolate brown dining room. Cherner stools in ebony and chrome line the bar and workspace, created by Valcucine. Red Coconutrug by G.T. Design. ■ Romeo Sozzi's Dumbo table and Caffé chairs go well with a patchwork cowhide rug. *Untitled* by Wang Tong (2006) adds an unexpected blue note.

have an abundance of natural light and gleaming white floors





and cement. Since natural light floods the apartment, Negron added dark furniture to contrast with the brightness of the floors. His wood of choice for furniture is *wenge*, because "it gives a rich feeling to the atmosphere of a room."

In the living room, a potted palm and an antique Moroccan rocking horse "help soften the modernism of the space," he says, adding that "the rocking horse makes the setting more playful. The children don't hesitate to hop on and go for a ride whenever they want." Negron has added other informal touches, too; he frequently places art—including an extensive collection of photographs, with works by Richard Avedon, Irving Penn, David LaChapelle, and Nan Goldin—on ledges rather than on the walls. "I feel like the look is less contrived and gives the room a more laid-back mood," he says.

It was a longing for domestic tranquility that led Negron to decorate in a way that represented both Triefus's style and his own: "Robert has a sophistication and elegance that comes across so naturally. I have a more eclectic and eccentric way about me." It has turned out to be a winning combination. □

IN THE DETAILS TRADE SECRETS

COLORED PLASTER WALLS Although Triefus and Negron wanted dark walls, they were determined that the mood of the apartment not be drab. Mimosa International solved the dilemma with its Marmorino finish, a simple plaster made from lime paste applied in multiple layers with a metal trowel. The complex patina that emerges is paradoxically both dark and vivid.

THE LONG NARROW SCENCE "I'm not a fan of overhead lighting unless it's in the kitchen," Negron says, explaining why he spent a good bit of effort researching alternative options for the living and dining areas. He eventually discovered the Oty Box 63 light, designed by Eugenio and Andrea Pamio. It's a long, narrow sconce that, when fixed along the ceiling, softly highlights the walls with a warm glow.

BRILLIANT WHITE FLOORS Negron spent a lot of time considering the floors. Black-stained hardwood seemed too dramatic, and cement too cold. When he was introduced to Cementix, a durable surface of resin and cement, he saw a solution. As a contrast to the deeply hued walls, he says, "the continuous flow of white going through the whole apartment feels clean and pure."

The bathroom's graphic brown and white palette is clean and fresh. The rounded forms of Boffi's Adda sink and a basin from Flaminia's IO series complement the thick custom wenge wood counters and shelves. The photographs are by Burt Sun.

■ Negrón's love of striking colors inspired the bedroom's palette, this page. Verner Panton's sweet Flower Pot table lamp in black sits on a nightstand by Cappellini. The bed was re-covered in a white leather that stands out boldly against the rich red walls.



Love Learn Locate

HOUSE & GARDEN'S SHOPPING GUIDE

312-755-0202. Amy Lau Design, Inc. NYC. 212-645-6168. Michael Simon Interiors, Inc., NYC. 212-307-7670. Joe Lucas Studio, Inc., West Hollywood, CA. 310-858-6884. Sara Bengur Interiors, NYC. 212-226-8796.

76 AT THE TABLE Table: bleached beech trestle table, Amy Perlin Antiques, NYC. 212-593-5756.

82 UNCORKED Bar: Le Bar du Plaza Athénée, Paris. plaza-athenee-paris.com.

84 AT THE BAR Juicer: try the Ikon Multispeed Juice Fountain, \$200, Breville. brevilleusa.com.

Syrup: elderflower syrup, Myers of Keswick, NYC. 212-691-4194. **Schnapps:** DeKuyper Sour Apple Pucker, available at Crush Wine & Spirits. 877-980-9463.

IN THE GARDEN

115 ASTERS Nurseries: Bluestone Perennials. bluestoneperennials.com. Canyon Creek Nursery. canyoncreeknursery.com. Forest Farm. forestfarm.com.

118 FIELD TRIP Artist: Hiroshi Senju. hiroshisenju.com.

FRONTIS

125 Sideboard: R. E. Steele Antiques, East Hampton, NY. 631-324-7812.

DYNAMIC DUALITY

126 HAYNES-ROBERTS, INC., NYC. 212-989-1901. haynesroberts.com. **Paint specialist:** Mark Uriu, Inc., Brooklyn, NY. 718-858-2977.

Venetian plaster: Lillian Heard Studio, Brooklyn, NY. 718-230-8693. **Contractor:** Uberto Construction, NYC. 212-874-4100. **Floor:** Bateige gray honed limestone slab cut to custom size, Studium, NYC. 212-486-1811. studiumnyc.com. **Chair:** 18th-century, Monluc Antiquaires, Paris. 011-33-1-42-96-18-19. **Console table:** ca. 1950, Galerie Jean-Louis Danant, Paris. 011-33-1-42-89-40-15.

128 Capsule: Hervé Van der Straeten, Ralph Pucci International. ralphpucci.net. **Tables:** C. J. Peters, NYC. 212-752-1198. **Pillows:** in Rogers & Goffigon's Putti in Goat 93402-07 and in Holly Hunt's Velvet in Amber 1601/18. **Sculpture:** Flower (Tulip), 2005, by Donald Baechler.

130 Armchairs: in Rogers & Goffigon's Peloton in Breakaway 92518-01. **Chandeliers:** French, ca. 1960s, John Salibello Antiques, NYC. 212-838-5767. **131 Wool:** Wyeth, NYC. 212-243-3661.

132 Mantelpiece: 18th-century, A&R Asta Ltd., NYC. 212-750-3364. **Surround:** fabricated by Studium, NYC. 212-486-1811. **133 Ewer:** Mondo Cane, NYC. 212-219-9244. **Bowls:** Magen H

Gallery, NYC. 212-777-8670. **Chandelier:** Bernd Goeckler Antiques, NYC. 212-777-8209.

FANTASTIC VOYAGE

134 ALIDAD, London. 011-44-20-7384-0121. alidad.com. **Antiques:** Sylvain Lévy-Alban, Paris. 011-33-1-42-61-25-42. **138 Porcelain:** Meissen. meissenus.com.

FAMILY ALBUM

142 ARMANI/CASA armanicasa.com. **Designer:** Caleb Negron. negron@librero.it. **Architect:** Micaela Ceriani, A & F Architettura e Futuro. micaela.ceriani@archef.it. **144 Floor lamp:** Carlo Scarpa, \$11,840, Space Lighting. jlr@spacelighting.com. **Lamp:** Fun 2 table lamp in shell, \$700, Design Within Reach. dwr.com. **Sconce:** Oty Box 63, \$452, lightingforum.com. **Chair:** other colors available, ch07 by Hans Wegner, \$2,010, Hive. hivemodern.com. **Sectional:** FlexForm. flexformusa.com. **Throw:** Nuvola alpaca throw, \$800, Armani/Casa. **Table:** Oreste table, \$1,080, Armani/Casa. **146 Stools:** Cherner, \$549, cherner chair.com. **Workspaces:** Valcucine. valcucinena.com. **Rug:** G.T. Design, at Suite New York. suiteyny.com. **147 Table and chairs:** Romeo Sozzi. promemoria.com. **Vases:** Timbaktu, Armani/Casa. **148 Sink:** Boffi. boffi.com. **Basin:** Flaminia. ceramicafiaminia.it. **Walls:** Mimosa International. mimosainternational.com. **149 Table lamp:** Verner Panton. scandinaviandesigncenter.com.

Table: Cappellini. cappellini.it.

RAJA ROMANCE

150 CARTIER 800-227-8437. cartier.com. **152 Fabric:** embroidery JF-2647/E on blue silk damask, Jean-François Lesage SA, Paris. 011-33-1-44-50-01-01. **154 Fabric:** Embroidery JF 02 SPL 60 on dark gray cotton velvet, Jean-François Lesage SA. **155 Fabric:** embroidery RM 35 Frivolités on blue silk taffeta, Jean-François Lesage SA.

THE LIGHT HOUSE

156 ZEM JOAQUIN, San Francisco. ecofabulous.com. **Organizations:** globalgreen.org. healthy child.org. **Interior design:** Aaron Mutschler, San Francisco. 415-497-8359. **Sofa:** Ironies, Berkeley, CA. 510-644-2100. ironies.com. **Table:** Past Perfect, San Francisco. 415-929-7651. **158 Console:** tstdibs.com. **Sculpture:** Adam P. Gale, San Francisco. 415-846-9247. adampgale.com. **159 Chairs:** Pegaso Gallery International, L.A. 310-659-8159. **Tables:** Eboniste, eboniste.com. **Mirror:** Todd Merrill Antiques, NYC.

TO THE TRADE: IN THIS ISSUE

FABRICS

Claremont 212-486-1252
Clarence House clarencehouse.com
Cowtan & Tout 212-753-4488
Holland & Sherry 212-758-1911
Holly Hunt 212-755-6555
John Rosselli & Associates 212-593-2060
Pierre Frey 212-421-0534
Pollack 212-421-8755
Robert Allen 800-333-3777

Rogers & Goffigon 212-888-3242
Stark Fabric 212-355-7186
Zimmer + Rohde 212-758-5357
FURNITURE
Beauvais Carpets 212-688-2265
Blanche P. Field 617-423-0715
Decorative Crafts 800-431-4455
Julia Gray Ltd. 212-223-4454
Phillip Jeffries 800-576-5455
Profiles 212-689-6903
Stark Carpet 212-752-9000

212-673-0531. **160 Sofa:** Trout Farm, Berkeley, CA. 510-843-3565. **Cork:** Cork Concepts, through Renewable Sources. 866-690-2433. corkconcepts.com. **Radiant heat:** Warmboard. warmboard.com. **Paint:** AFM Safecoat. afmsafecoat.com. **Hardware:** Liz's Antique Hardware, L.A. 323-939-4403. **Rug:** Twentieth, L.A. 323-904-1200. **Coffee table:** Benjamin Storck Ltd., San Francisco. 415-863-1777. **Art:** Sloan Miyasato, San Francisco. 415-431-1465. **Art:** photo lithographs by Corey Kaplan. coreykaplan.com. **Sphere:** Stoneward at Sloan Miyasato, San Francisco. **Window coverings:** Smith + Noble. smithandnoble.com. **161 Bench:** Emmerson Troop, L.A. 323-653-9763. **Bed:** Pottery Barn Kids. 800-993-4923. **Photo:** Grant Ernhart, at Sarlo Wick, San Francisco. 415-863-2002. granternhart.com. **Chairs:** Blackman Cruz, L.A. 310-657-9228. **Car:** Toyota, toyota.com. **Sink:** Kallista. kallista.com. **Art:** Sloan Miyasato, San Francisco. 415-431-1465.

AMERICAN HISTORY

176 CHARLES J. STICK Charlottesville, Virginia. 434-296-1628. **Earthworks:** D. E. Hawthorne, Inc., Rockville, VA. 804-749-3834. **Masonry:** Kendall Smith, Rogers Masonry Inc., Orange, VA. 540-672-4770. **Millwork:** Richard Wyatt, Gaston & Wyatt, Inc., Charlottesville, VA. 434-293-7357.

CORRECTION

September 2007, cover: styled by Jeffrey W. Miller. **Vase:** by Jacques and Dani Ruelland from Alan Moss, NYC. 212-473-1310.

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