

At Home

With Designer John De Bastiani

THIS HOME REFLECTS NEW ENGLAND SENSIBILITIES

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The cosy living room contains a pair of armchairs from Jasper, covered with the brand's Mali Stripe fabric. The cocktail table is Lucca Antiques. Wall painting from Cory Daniels in Wells, Maine and the flat weave wool carpet is by Jamal's Rug Collection in Los Angeles.

OPPOSITE In the living room, a cork side table is from CB2, adjacent to a custom sofa from Prestigio Custom Furniture using Kerry Joyce fabric. Vintage leather and metal chairs are by Galerie Half. The throw is from Bunny Williams Home in New York. The fabric on the pillow is from Peter Dunham Textiles in Los Angeles, and artwork on the wall is from S Lee Robinson, Los Angeles.





IN RENOVATING HIS HOLLYWOOD HILLS-AREA HOME, JOHN DE BASTIANI was faced with a few unique challenges. It needed to be a place where he could work effectively, take meetings, entertain, sleep, eat, cook and relax - and all within what is essentially an open area of no more than 700 square feet.

"When you do a small space, you can't just throw anything in it," said De Bastiani. "You have to be conscious of scale and proportions."

The noted Los Angeles interior designer had moved into the home - it essentially once served as the artist's studio of a old Spanish house - four years ago, drawn to the vaulted ceilings and details like Juliet balconies.

Despite it starting to look like it could do with a makeover a couple of years ago, he held off pending plans to move to New York. When that didn't happen, he decided to "pull the plug; I wanted to do it in a way that if I found something that I completely loved, I could bring it here and it would work in the space," he said. Moreover, he wanted the end result of the renovation project - which took about six weeks - to not "reek" of a particular style.

"I wanted it to have its own character, but also be a neutral base," he said. "So if I found a wonderful mid-century piece of pottery, or some modern art, I could put it in the living room and everything would work together."

The living room, demarcated from the bedroom by a large fireplace, has a rich teal blue crushed velvet sofa opposite a pair of chairs covered in a striped cranberry red fabric, which De Bastiani said he surprised himself by choosing.

"I'm not a big red person, and tend to like muted colors. But I loved this color, it's very pretty, especially with the kind of organic, ethnic stripe." The coffee table is made from an aged copper. Other intriguing pieces include a table, elaborate and beautifully textured, made from a tree root that can't be harvested anymore. He also customized pieces like small tables made of



Bookshelves and desk are custom designed and made by John De Bastiani Inc. The sleek lamp atop the desk is from London's Collier Webb, and the collection of small vases are from Formations in Los Angeles.

OPPOSITE TOP The designer said he wanted his space to be done in such a way that any style of artifact or collectible would fit in.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM The designer uses his home for meetings, working and entertaining.

Wicker chair is from Serena & Lily, covered with a cosy sheepskin throw from The Line, atop a patterned rug from Jamal's Rug Collection. The small side table is by Arteriors. All sources in Los Angeles. Photography artwork is by Matt Albani in New York.

OPPOSITE In the bedroom; the bed is from Custom Craft Upholsters in Los Angeles. The vibrant pillow was sourced from Hollywood at Home. The side tables were designed and produced by John De Bastiani Inc. Artwork from Lost Art Salon in San Francisco.



walnut featuring slender pull-out drawers and brought in items like a wicker chair, cozily situated by the fireplace, with a fluffy sheepskin throw over it.

In some ways, said De Bastiani, his personal space reflects his New England sensibility; the Massachusetts-born designer lived in Boston before moving to Los Angeles 11 years ago, and is currently working on projects including a 5,000 square foot Los Feliz Spanish bungalow.

“Even when I am working on a contemporary project, I tend to have more of a traditional approach,” said De Bastiani, conceding that he is known for “using lots of blue.”

“I like clean, organized spaces, but also spaces that feel like they’ve been lived in and that don’t look like showrooms,” he said.

And although designing a personal space can be more challenging than creating one on behalf of a client, De Bastiani said he needed to focus on what was going to make him the most comfortable.

“It is a challenge, because people are going to come over and judge it, no matter what. So you want it to look good, but you also want to do something unique and daring that maybe your clients wouldn’t go for.”

The experience was also, he said, a powerful lesson in objectivity.

“Very often, clients look at a space very differently than I do,” he said. “I can understand the limitations of it. They will show me pictures and say they want their house to look like that, but that’s not their house and it’s never going to look like that. Instead, as a designer, it’s very important to look at a space and ask, “what can this space give me?” CH

