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INSPIRATIONAL INTERIORS

FROM PARISIAN SALONS
TO A VENETIAN PALAZZO

180 PAGES ALL ABOUT STYLE



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DESIGN NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE**



GENTLEMEN'S RELISH

MUTED TONES, SPLASHES OF COLOUR, PATTERN AND DECORATIVE TOUCHES MAKE THIS A PLACE FOR ALL SEASONS.

TEXT BY LYDIA BELL. PHOTOGRAPHY BY SIMON KENNY.

OPPOSITE PAGE
CREWELWORK
CURTAINS ARE TEAMED
WITH VENETIAN BLINDS.
AN ANTIQUE
FOOTSTOOL IS
UPHOLSTERED IN
SILK/VELVET BY
RUBELLI. **THIS PAGE**
DURING SUMMER
KIMBER DINES ON
THE VERANDA
DECORATED WITH CANE
FURNITURE AROUND
A STONE TABLE.





THE VICTORIAN COUNTRY HOUSE

PRIVATE SYDNEY

THIS PAGE THE 18TH CENTURY CHINOISÉRIE PRINTS WERE BOUGHT BY KIMBER IN SAN FRANCISCO. UNDERNEATH THE PRINTS IS A BAMBOO TABLE. A SOFT RESTFUL LOOK THROUGHOUT IS HEIGHTENED BY THE CHOICE OF FABRICS. KIMBER OPTED FOR A MALABAR COTTON STRIPE TO UPHOLSTER THE SOFA. **OPPOSITE PAGE** WALLS ARE DECORATED WITH A COLEFAX & FOWLER WALLPAPER IN THE HALL.



Interior designer Cameron Kimber has a hallmark adjective: “appropriate”. “Interior design should aim to be appropriate,” he argues – to the architecture, the climate and the taste of the client. Applying these principles to the design of his own garden apartment, Kimber found no need to agonise over the desired look.

“You will find throughout my work, comfort and good things from all periods. I’m not frightened of mixing styles and periods, if appropriate. To be appropriate is what good taste is all about,” he says. This was Kimber’s “first real home. I knew I wanted fabric and colours. I knew the furniture that I loved, and what would work, and it fell into place.”

Kimber has always favoured flowing interiors, avoiding jarring, grandiose statements or anything “that jumps out”. He opted for a soft, restful atmosphere, using subtle colours against neutral backgrounds. “I like contrasts of colours against plain. Decoration is about contrasts,” he says.

The design – “classic and relaxed, with references to the English country house” – was strongly influenced by the classic nature of the 1920s building. Interiors should follow architecture, he believes. “The interior should reflect the building. My home needed an update, so I

decorated to a lighter palette, keeping myself within a classic framework.”

The furniture consists of antique pieces collected over time from dealers and markets. Buying and selling furniture over a decade, Kimber has gained a cherished core collection of originals and reproductions.

He selected soft furnishings that are personal favourites. “I wanted my favourite patterns and fabrics. I used Colefax & Fowler wallpaper in the hall, which I’ve always liked. On the walls and curtains in the living room I used crewel Indian fabric.”

He exercised his penchant for chintz. “As far as chintz goes, I like using it very sparingly, so it’s not over the top. It adds a bit of personality and stops it looking like a hotel.” On the floor, he used plain seagrass. “I love the understatement and contrast of old furniture on something as neutral as seagrass matting. It stops things from looking too plush.”

Kimber has decorated the apartment with objects that are “stylish, whimsical or practical”. Antique favourites and quirky pieces – Chinese glass pictures, lacquer and an eccentric shell collection are on display. The sitting room has a “big gutsy, painted table in there as a decorative piece, with a 19th century mirror hanging above”. Next to it sits a red Chinoiserie lacquered chair. Also in the sitting room is an English 18th century painting – he loves its muted refinement. >

THIS PAGE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY EUROPEAN PAINTINGS DOMINATE THE WALLS. **OPPOSITE PAGE** THE FORMAL BUT SOFT MASTER BEDROOM USES COLEFAX & FOWLER FABRICS. ABOVE THE BLACK, ELEGANT CHINOISERIE TABLE FROM MARGOT MONTGOMERY HANGS AN 18TH CENTURY IRISH GILT MIRROR WITH ORIGINAL GLASS.



Venetian blind fabric covers long windows in the sitting room. In the halls, an 18th century Tole clock hangs from the mirrored wall, over the hand-painted faux parquetry floor. In the dining room, black lacquered Chinoiserie shelves with painted seams are stuffed with simple shells and corals. Beside them sits a set of painted 19th century French chairs with original paintwork in green. London blinds match upholstered walls.

The bedroom is formal, but soft and inviting. The curtains, valance and bedhead are covered in Colefax & Porter fabric; an 18th century Irish mirror hangs on the ticking stripe walls. An armchair is covered in hydrangea and rose chintz. A bedroom lamp casts a soft glow on silver and enamel brushes.

In the summer, Kimber dines on the veranda, decorated with contemporary furniture, covered with cotton. The lighting is soft and unassuming. "I relied largely on table lamps because they are softer. With modern architecture I use halogen, but not in this home." There are lanterns in the hall, sitting room and veranda.

Kimber brought his designer experience to the finishing touches. "I put a new skirting board right through and painted it in two tones, an 18th century trick I often use. I paint them in quirky, offbeat colours. Subtle things like this make a room memorable." □

