

CALL MY DESIGNER!

When a French entertainment honcho wants his Parisian loft to make a powerful impression, his first move is clear: Put the über-chic Milanese designer Fabrizio Casiraghi on speed dial.

BY **ALEXANDRA MARSHALL** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **CERRUTI & DRAIME**



In the living room of a Paris loft designed by Fabrizio Casiraghi, the custom sofa is in a Pierre Frey velvet, the vintage cocktail table is by Willy Rizzo, and the Balthus lamp is from Astier de Villatte. The pendant is by Isamu Noguchi, and the triptych is by Roberto Ruspoli. **OPPOSITE:** A wall in the dining area is paneled and painted in a custom green lacquer and inset with a niche containing a 19th-century club from Fiji. The paintings are by H. Craig Hanna. For details, see Resources.

I WAS TERRIFIED OF ANYTHING TOO OSTENTATIOUS,” SAYS

the owner of this petite loft in a 1910 building in Paris’s 10th arrondissement. Even though he is a well-known player in the French movie business, the man had never worked with a designer to the same degree that he did here with Fabrizio Casiraghi, whom he knows through mutual friends. “The point wasn’t to show off,” he observes, “but to create an elegant environment.” Mission accomplished.

Casiraghi reduced the 650-square-foot space to rubble, then rebuilt it as a riff on an English gentlemen’s club but seen through the eyes of the Milanese designer Gabriella Crespi and the Austrian architect and theorist Adolf Loos. There are certainly eye-catching motifs: the channel-cut wood paneling in lacquered forest green running through the living room and eat-in kitchen that took six coats to come to luster; the Isamu Noguchi paper lanterns that fill out the 13-foot ceilings like graphic clouds; fresco painter Roberto Ruspoli’s Jean Cocteau-esque deep blue triptych above the custom embossed velvet sofa in the living room. But there is also a warm equilibrium. Shine and softness interplay, from the entry walls and ceiling, lined in delicate basket-woven straw and then painted over in matte ivory, to the guest and main bedroom walls and ceilings, covered in the same straw but this time exposed, with a hint of varnish. Flooring follows the same logic of contrast: braided jute fiber in the living room, ivory wool bouclé wall to wall in the bedroom, but green marble inlay in the kitchen. “He made it a cocoon,” says the owner of the overall design. Yes, but one fit for purpose for someone who moves in a glamorous world.

Loos and Crespi aren’t accidental references for Casiraghi, who opened his Paris studio six years ago after working for Dominique Perrault in Paris and Dimorestudio in Milan. They represent his roots. Despite the Italian name, he’s also one quarter Austrian and feels his *Mitteleuropa* aesthetic inheritance as much as his deep Milanese one. (His parents worked at the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper and Milan Polytechnic; you don’t get much more Milanese than that. They weren’t design freaks, but they liked their things.) For Casiraghi, “there’s a generosity of form, material, and color, but also a rigor” in both Loos and early-20th-century Milanese design that he reaches for time and again.

One can certainly see it in this apartment. It’s a masculine space, with a graphic sense and palette that’s imposing, but not at all macho. In spite of the muscular paneling and very linear zinc-topped kitchen, there’s a pleated skirt on the sofa. “I use that skirt in all my projects,” Casiraghi says, referring to hotels like the Experimental Chalet in Switzerland, opened in 2018, and the soon-to-open Bellevue Hotel in London, and a renovation of St.-Tropez’s iconic Hôtel La Ponche, as well as extensive residential projects in Miami and California. “I have it in my apartment too. I like the contrast of that bulky top and feminine bottom, for lightness.”

The one element that feels like a nod to the ultracustom, kitted-out bachelor pads of the 1960s is the television,



The dining area’s custom walnut table is surrounded by a set of midcentury dining chairs. At left, the galley kitchen’s custom cabinetry has a zinc counter-top, and the oven is by Miele. The flooring (left) is travertine inset with Verde Alpi marble. **OPPOSITE, BELOW:** Casiraghi in the kitchen.



hidden behind the green wood paneling opposite the living room sofa. “Normally I like to work with technology,” Casiraghi says, “but either we put this thing out and it ate up the entire wall, or we hid it.” The TV, an important work gadget for someone who screens movies at home constantly, is nestled inside its compartment in a vertical position, and pulls out and turns with a twist and a click.

The owner doesn’t really cook, though he does entertain, so the kitchen needed to be functional and fluid, someplace people can eat in comfort and style, even if the food is brought in. “These were the hardest things to find,” Casiraghi says of a set of straight-backed dining chairs with hints of Arts and Crafts. But then collecting is a crucial component of Casiraghi’s work; he sets aside at least an hour a week to go over vintage finds with clients. The combination of objects is always greater than the sum of

its parts. For this job, almost everything was acquired except for a few paintings, and it wasn’t easy. “I wanted to be lovestruck by each piece,” the client says, though it took Casiraghi’s help to show how they’d all tie in. “We spent a full day together at the flea market,” Casiraghi recalls. “We thought we’d leave with tons of stuff, but ended up just with this vase!” he says of the hammered-metal 1940s piece that dominates the low-slung Willy Rizzo cocktail table. Other elements came in their own time, like the bowl full of marble eggs. Each one is colored even more brightly than the last, and each one was acquired separately. “My team and I looked for them together,” Casiraghi says. “We got obsessed. It’s not hard to find marble eggs in general, but which marble? We had so many we didn’t like. But that’s the fun. We do big things, walls, rooms, and then we’ll go nuts finding the one perfect little objet.” ■



ABOVE: In the bathroom, the sinks and fittings are by Imperial, the walnut stools are Art Deco, and the oval mirror is custom. The sconce (one of a pair) is by Hans-Agne Jakobsson, and the ceramic wall tiles are by Ceramica Vogue. **OPPOSITE:** Circa-1940 French nightstands topped with vintage Czech functionalist lamps by the architect Frantisek Anyz flank the bed in the main bedroom, where a Curtis Jere sculpture hangs on a wall sheathed in a CMO Paris raffia, and the carpet is by Jules & Jim.