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MARRAKECH • BEIRUT • PARIS • LONDON • SÃO PAULO

ISSN 2409 - 9643
25
Inclusive of VAT
9 772409 964009
BHD 3, KWD 2.5, OMR 3, AED 30, LBP 20,000

The chandelier in the family room is from Arteriors. The photo on the wall is by the American artist James Casebere. The floor lamp is from Ralph Lauren. The sofa is from Eichholtz and

the coffee table is by Jonathan Adler. OPPOSITE A glazed lava stone artwork by Jean-Baptiste Bernadet hangs in the master bedroom. The console is by Studio 63 for Marioni



Pied à PARIS

WORDS IAN PHILLIPS
PHOTOGRAPHY STEPHAN JULLIARD

Dashing designer *Rodolphe Parente* has combined wit, irreverence and *good taste* in this *chic Parisian* apartment



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odolphe Parente has very clear ideas of what constitutes elegance. “It’s a skilful mix of grace, attitude and irreverence,

which is not linked to the notion of good taste,” says the French interior designer. In his own work, he always likes to shake things up a little. “I try to incorporate something a little different, an unusual element that provokes a dialogue,” he continues. For the 2017 *AD Intérieurs* showhouse in Paris, he imagined a dry cleaners with walls made from metal cladding more usually found on construction sites. His dream kitchen, meanwhile, has a tarmac floor.

Still, not all of his projects are quite so radical. This 309 sq/m apartment, which acts as a pied-à-terre for a French couple based in Singapore, is a perfect case in point. It is located in a building dating from 1910 in what is known as the *Triangle d’Or* (or “Golden Triangle”), a highly sought-after part of Paris’s 8th arrondissement, bordered by the three stylish avenues — Montaigne, George V and the Champs-Élysées. The space previously housed the offices of a law firm, who had fitted it out with a series of large rooms and bright-red walls.

Parente completely reworked the layout, placing a luxurious master suite at its heart and a family room and two other bedrooms at the rear, accessed via a circular antechamber. “We realised we needed a breathing space and opted for a round form to make it more dynamic and enveloping,” he states. Although he removed a number of existing fireplaces, he was keen to retain other architectural details, such as the cornice mouldings and delicately sculpted window and door frames. He also commissioned the Paris-based decorative artist Florence Girette to paint a cloudy sky on the vertiginous double-height ceiling in the sitting room.



The rest of Parente’s intervention is typical of his work, which is characterised by a rigorous approach. “I like precision and a certain graphic quality to my rooms,” he says. He cites design maestros such as Carlo Scarpa, Pierre Chareau and Peter Zumthor amongst his influences, and claims that the genesis of his style can also be traced back to his childhood. He was born in 1980 in Besançon, a city in the east of France that is overlooked by a fortified citadel designed by Vauban in the 17th century. “The style of its architecture has stuck with me,” he adds. After graduation, he trained in the offices of the legendary decorator Andrée Putman for five years before setting up his own eponymous firm in 2010.

A chandelier from
Arteriors hangs above
Bernhardt dining table
flanked by Fifties
Brazilian rosewood and
straw weave chairs
OPPOSITE The designer
Rodolphe Parente: a
view from the hallway
into the sitting room



“There’s nothing more *unbearable* than a space where *everything matches* too perfectly. You always need to give a room *a touch of spirit*”

The double-height sitting room has two seating areas. The glass chandelier and the marble and ceramic tile fireplace are custom designs by Rodolphe Parent. The artwork above the fireplace is by Phil Chang. The sculpture on the coffee table is by Marten Stuer.



The breakfast nook in the kitchen has a wall made from smoked oak, which mirrors some of the cabinetry. The table is by Jacobo Zibardi for Zanotta and the custom stools are dressed in

Brochier fabric. OPPOSITE The cupboard doors in the kitchen are clad in Stoneleaf and the countertops are made from enamelled lava. The ceiling light is by Peter Zumthor for Viabizzuno





A view from the study towards the dining room. The walls are clad in grey-stained cork and the desk dates back to the Sixties. OPPOSITE Clockwise from top left: A view of the apartment with its large, arched windows from the hotel

opposite; a detail from the hallway, where a Porta Romana lamp and a ceramic sculpture by Mireille Moser sit on Bernhardt sideboard; a painting by Julie Beaufils hangs above a velvet Plant Collections sofa in the study





“The *style* of my intervention is quite *austere* and not particularly French. It’s closer to *1930s Italy*”

Since then, his projects have included residences in Paris and Monaco, a boutique for shoe designer Christian Louboutin in Milan and a chic furniture collection for Pouenat.

His goal here was to update the interior by adding a twist to the traditional Parisian framework. “The style of my intervention is quite austere and not particularly French,” he notes. “It’s closer to 1930s Italy and the Villa Necchi.” To anchor the sitting room, he imagined a voluminous fireplace made from tiles and geometrically arranged blocks of marble. “I wanted something solid that would contrast with the finesse of the sculpted wood panelling,” he explains. A certain order was given to both the dining room and study, where the walls are respectively accentuated with vertical lines and an oversized trellis pattern.

The master bedroom features a custom bedhead in stained oak with brushed-brass inserts and bedside tables by Parente. The sofa is from Duistt and the pendant light is by Kelly Wearstler

“Elegance is a skilful mix of grace, attitude and irreverence, which is not linked to the notion of good taste”







And in Parente's world, even colour is applied for its architectural qualities. "I don't use it in a decorative fashion," he explains. A perfect example is the family room, whose deep terracotta walls and ceiling more or less embrace the visitor.

His favourite rooms to design in any interior are the bathroom and kitchen, and both here are pure tours de force. The former in the master suite features a tub clad in green granite at its centre and an ingenious interplay of angular forms. The kitchen, meanwhile, is a master class in materiality. The breakfast nook is enveloped with ribbed-oak walls, the units are faced with a striking stone veneer and the countertops are in enamelled lava. Parente chose the latter partly

because it reminded him of his grandmother's kitchen. "It's also really hygienic and very durable" he adds. "Plus, it has a surface that's not completely flat. So, it creates wonderfully blurred reflections."

While Parente's architectural approach may be particularly structured and precise, the way he integrates art and furnishings in to his projects tends to appear rather more arbitrary. He likes to create interesting juxtapositions between objects and will often not centre paintings on a wall. "It's important to have things that work well together and others that don't," he states. "There's nothing more unbearable than a space where everything matches too perfectly. You always need to give a room a touch of spirit."



A painting by Valérie Belin hangs in one of the guest bedrooms. The bedhead is upholstered in Dedar fabric and the bed linen is from Rodrilinea. The ceiling pendant lamp is from Arteriors

OPPOSITE The master bathroom has a Verde Alpi bath surround and Estremoz marble flooring. The bath tap is from Graff and the alabaster wall light is from Kelly Wearstler