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In the living room of decorator David Kleinberg's duplex in Palm Beach, Florida, the custom-made sofas and armchair by Anthony Lawrence-Belfair and the mahogany-and-stone cocktail table by Gurfein Woodwork are all Kleinberg designs; the painting is by Joe Andoe, the curtains are of Albert Hadley's Willows fabric, and the wool rug is by Patterson, Flynn & Martin. See Resources.

# PALM BEACH STORY

INTERIOR DESIGNER DAVID KLEINBERG SIDESTEPS FLORIDA CLICHÉS TO CREATE A WINTER GETAWAY THAT'S SOPHISTICATED AS IT IS SUNNY

TEXT BY MITCHELL OWENS · PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM WALDRON · STYLED BY CARLOS MOTA



Clockwise from far left: In the dining room, a framed ink drawing by Jim Lutes. The guest bedroom curtains and wall covering are of a fabric based on an 18th-century pattern; the Claudia Moreira Salles desk is from Espasso. An Alex Katz lithograph and a vintage console in the dining room. The metal chair in the kitchen is circa-1960 American. In the master bedroom, the pillows, bedding, and throw are by Chaz Stevens, and the stools are by Stephane Ducatteau. Walls sheathed in white Carrara marble in the master bath. The living room's limed-oak-and-bronze cabinet is vintage. The chairs by André Sornay in the master bedroom are covered in a Romo fabric that is also used for the curtains. Interior designer David Kleinberg. See Resources.



**FEW FANS WOULD THINK** of David Kleinberg as an old-fashioned kind of guy. But with a career of creating interiors characterized by up-to-date adjectives—sleek, modern, cerebral, suave—it does come as a surprise to learn that when he purchased a place in Florida as a part-time getaway from his New York City digs, he shied away from the Sunshine State's celebrated hot spots. "Miami Beach and South Beach are just too hectic for me," admits the debonair decorator.

Palm Beach, on the other hand, was just his cup of tea. "It's calm, neat, and manicured—all the things I like," Kleinberg says. "Plus it's livable and easy." Another draw was a six-story concrete-and-stucco apartment building designed in the early 1960s by Edward Durell Stone, a modernist with a distinctly ornamental attitude. Kleinberg had long admired the structure, and with its slender white aluminum columns and glassy graphic façade, "it almost looks like the Kennedy Center from the exterior," he says, referring to the Washington, D.C., high-culture complex that Stone created. And then there was the view from the two-bedroom duplex apartment he ended up buying in the Stone building: a dead-on vista of the Atlantic Ocean, foamy waves crashing onto snowy sands.

So far, so swell—at least after he gutted the apartment, resurfacing walls, installing new floors, and constructing au courant baths and a new kitchen. The floor plan remained untouched, however, because Kleinberg felt the original layout, with spaces for entertaining

on the first floor and private rooms above, was pretty perfect. When it came to the decor, he was determined to steer clear of style that smacked of old-time Florida. "That '60s-revival thing is not who I am," he says. On the list of things to avoid? Acid hues, palm-tree motifs, seashells, and white-plaster funkiness. "Once you've adopted even one of those elements, it's a slippery slope," Kleinberg states dryly. "But I did want to play with colors, especially those I don't normally gravitate toward."

So the decorator took his preferred palette of crisp whites, grays, and blacks and goosed it with calculated doses of chromatic brilliance. Yellow and pink cushions dot the creamy sofas in the living room, whose walls are painted a pearlescent gray. In the dining area, a luscious coral lines the inside of a lampshade, casting a rosy glow. "I had never used these hues before," he explains. "It might seem to be a very timid foray into color, but for me it was a big step in many ways, and enough to make the home feel bright. Palm Beach is a warm, sunny environment, so it's fun to have this place not feel like New York City."

The guest room contains probably the boldest scheme in the apartment, with walls and windows covered in a fabric featuring stylized overscale pineapples rendered in sulfurous saffron and marigold. He likes what he calls "its slightly retro quality—you can't really tell if it's a '70s motif or an 18th-century document." And, as Kleinberg notes, since the space is only for family or friends, "it can tolerate

more pattern." In the living room, he found a spot for an Albert Hadley fabric he loved, fashioning the vintage print of willowlike leaves into full-length curtains. (Kleinberg cut his aesthetic teeth at the acclaimed firm Parish-Hadley Associates and counts the elder statesman of American interior design as a mentor.)

Kleinberg has always had a fondness for streamlined 20th-century furniture, and he peppered his Palm Beach home with some prime examples. In the guest room hangs a tailored midcentury French mirror, while the living room houses graceful oak-and-iron side chairs near a gleaming limed-oak-and-bronze Art Deco cabinet. In the corner sits one of his favorites—a comfortable '50s Italian lounge chair by Osvaldo Borsani perfectly positioned by the window "for reading the Sunday paper and gazing out at the waves," as he says. Kleinberg also designed several pieces, notably a round cocktail table topped with polished fossil stone and a set of white-lacquer chairs inspired by the work of Scandinavian icon Kaare Klint that surrounds the mahogany table in the dining room.

The master bedroom is the only part of the pied-à-terre that makes an overt reference to the setting. Awash in a clear shade of pale blue, it seamlessly connects with the sea beyond the windows. "I've never had a colorful bedroom before," Kleinberg exults. And though he swears the choice of blue was inadvertent, when a visitor points out another nod to Palm Beach in the large white coral formation that rests atop the dining table, he sheepishly demurs: "Well, I am in Florida after all." ■