



HOME OBSERVER

FALL 2011

Five Generations at the San Remo

Decorators à la carte

Paris on the Upper East Side

A NEW VIEW *on* Entertaining Collecting Seasonal Living

Uchi Life Downtown's view from a Chelsea home.

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84 (Upper) West Side Story
Five generations of women
at the San Remo



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Alex Papachristidis



that is highly service-oriented and one that is infused with an appreciation for the little things.

You are a native New Yorker. How does having grown up in New York inform your process in designing New York living spaces?

I love New York—the pace, the buzz, the energy—and growing up here I developed an understanding of the need for private space. The home has to have a peaceful clearing, somewhere to take a break from all the excitement.

You have a wonderfully international portfolio. How do New York City projects differ from those in other urban capitals?

New York is a city of doers, a center of nonstop action. In other words, it's a lot easier to get things done in New York. There's a culture here that embraces ambition and efficiency and leans toward a challenge.

How has the way we live as New Yorkers changed over the course of your career?

Life and culture are always changing, and trends come and go. But my style has always been based on creating a timeless "meeting" of classical and contemporary. Your interior should support and enrich your life on any occasion—rather than you changing your lifestyle to fit your interior. I always encourage my clients to embrace an aesthetic that combines elements of the

modern casual and the traditionally elegant.

Modern-day architectural bane: I am not generally a fan of open kitchens but they can work in a loft setting.

Greatest challenge you've faced in a project:

Rebuilding an apartment on

the top of a building with elaborate terraces & pergolas. It was complicated and challenging yet extremely successful in the end.

What is your favorite room in New York City, whether public or private, and why?

Our living room, filled with so many personal and beloved



Top left: Alex Papachristidis with Teddy. Above: Måison Jansen commode in Papachristidis' Upper East Side apartment.

BORN AND RAISED on the Upper East Side, Alex Papachristidis still lives there—but only when he's not travelling the country (and the globe) working on projects for clients who love his sophisticated vision. The Parsons graduate talks with **The Home Observer** about inspiration, accessories and why it's easier to get things done in New York than anywhere else.

Where do you live?

I live on the Upper East Side in a postwar building, retitted inside to have the feel of a prewar.

What is your favorite aspect of your apartment?

You can build a beautiful home anywhere, but what you find when you leave your home in New York is irreplaceable. Variety and convenience are essential aspects of life in New York and two qualities I love in my neighborhood. It is also a neighborhood

Native NYer

objects and pieces of furniture. Everywhere I look in our living room, I am reminded of moments, images, people and places that mean a great deal to me. A room tells the story of those who inhabit it, and the most wonderful rooms are those whose stories are told in the most layered and unique ways.

Where do you go to be inspired?

I am most inspired by meeting with my clients in their own homes. The combination of people and the spaces they live in, the fixed architecture and the expanse of their imaginations is what makes me feel most passionate about the work I do.

What era of New York City architecture most inspires you?

Prewar architecture is my favorite. It was a time when generous and grand living were the norm.

Great design has become accessible—Parsons tables at West Elm, Missoni for Target, Ikea for everyone. Are there any catalogs or large chainstores you find particularly inspiring or well done?

I do buy from catalogs here and there. For rooms such as playrooms, kids bedrooms and staff quarters, I like to mix high and low, using pieces from Restoration Hardware, Crate & Barrel and West Elm for example.

What are you working on now?

- A townhouse for a young family on the Upper East Side in a classical, modern style;
- A combination of multiple apartments in a 1912 West Side building, where we're creating our interpretation of an Arts & Crafts interior;



Papachristidis' colorful New York bedroom.

- A stone home in New Hampshire, in a private club with an American flare for casual living;
- A sophisticated country manor in Millbrook with an exciting layered palette of English & French styles;
- A suite of rooms for a spectacular home in Connecticut that we are adding on to an existing project.

Best advice for choosing a color scheme for a home:

Ask yourself what color you

look best in. Also think about what colors are on the modern side of timeless and what colors you have a personal feeling about.

Best "instant fix"

Re-accessorize! Buy new lamp shades, pillows, pretty throws, etc. It's amazing how new details can make an older room feel brand new and exciting. Shop pier shows, flea markets, ABC Home and West Elm. If you see it and think you might love it, try it out. You can always change it again if it doesn't work.

Favorite local (New York) shopping source or haunt

J.Crew, Bergdorf, Hermès, HM Luther, Louis Boffending, Liz O'Brien, Todd Romano.

Most special place you've ever lived—whether special for personal or design reasons!

Our family home in the Hamptons. It is a beautiful place and I love it for that, but more importantly it is a place where we have all been together, and that permeates every inch of the house for me.