

METRO home

& Entertaining

VOL. 10 NO. 6

**CELEBRATING
CHRISTMAS
WITH...**

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HOLIDAY GIFTS
FOR EVERYONE
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CRAFTS

DURAVIT'S
LIVING
BATHROOMS

**COMFORT
AND STYLE**

MODERN EASE: A WARM WELCOMING HAVEN
EXOTIC ESCAPE: A MOROCCAN INSPIRED HOME
PICTURE PERFECT: A PRETTY CITY APARTMENT

contents

VOL. 10 / NO. 6



82 The Family That Built Their Home Together

ELEMENTS

9 Festive All Year Round

Why should we turn on the bling and shine in our homes for the holidays?

11 The Good Life Gets Better

Places and things to enrich and enhance the way you live

13 Creative Champs

The best of Filipino designs win in the 2013 Katha Awards

14 City Living Convenience

World class amenities in four towers

15 A Luxurious Bathing Experience

German brand Kaldewei launches flagship showroom in the country

16 Curated for the Home

Where "warm industrial meets rustic chic"

17 Food and Art Edition

Indulge your senses for good food and great art

18 Otherworldly Nest

Touches of ingenious whimsy

19 'Retail Theater' for the Home

Choice home finds in shelter's newest location

20 Cobonpue in Manila

Newest boutique of the iconic designer opens in Makati

21 Urban Affordable

Updated furniture classics

22 Destined to Design

A passionate architect turned to an advocate of creativity

24 Space Saver Specialists

Modern and modular cabinets are not just an open-and-shut case

26 Fresh Selections

Heima's Garden Stories breathes funky design and function into your home

28 Stocking Stuffer

The Stockroom could have what you're looking for

29 Trending Now!

Four fashionable looks for the home

34 Welcome Christmas

Ready, set, Christmas! Get your home holiday-ready.

36 Wellness by Design

Rejuvenation and designer elegance in Duravit's "Living Bathrooms"



ON THE COVER
Esplanade bathtub by Duravit

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF
KUYSEN / DURAVIT

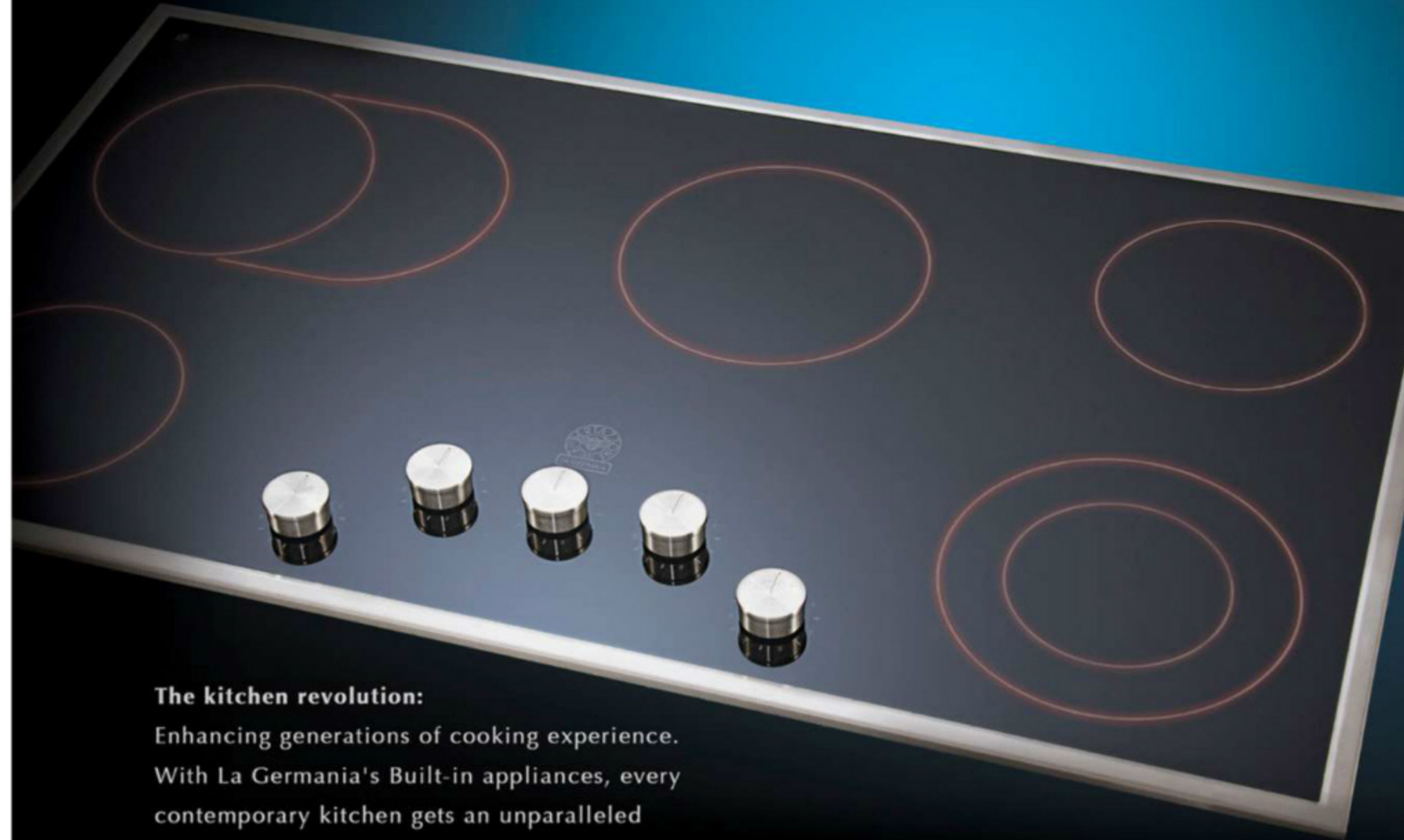
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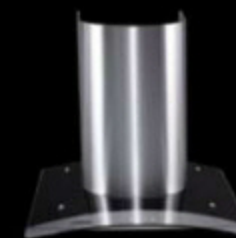
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contents

VOL. 10 / NO. 6



104 One Happy Place



92 Moroccan Escape

FOLIO

44 Unapologetically Old Fashioned

Amidst all the high tech artistry, it's refreshing to meet a genuine old school artist who proves that it still takes talent, skill and a lot of heart to make pretty things

48 The City So Nice They Named It Twice

New York appeals to every visitor—after all, it's the city that never sleeps

HOLIDAY

54 The Scented Home

Turn your home into a haven with the redolence and romance of the perfect fragrance

58 Gift Gallery

All the gift ideas you'll ever need, from whimsical and witty, lovely and luxurious, to glitzy and glamorous. They're all here.

63 Christmas Color Stories

Holiday hues to bring out your true Christmas spirit

66 A Place for the Holidays

A look into the holiday decors of celebrated personalities

76 Mr. Snowman, Not Frosty

He'll make a winsome holiday table centerpiece

77 Woodland Wonder

An arrangement that is as festive as it is easy to put together

78 Evergreen

This wreath will last beyond the season, for years to come

79 Something Sweet

Delight your loved ones with these yummy, season-appropriate favors

80 Holiday Foliage

A eucalyptus wreath to fill your space with the holiday scent and spirit

HOMES

82 The Family That Built Their Home Together

Everyone collaborated to make their dream home a reality, and now they just love being home!

92 Moroccan Escape

Walking into this family home is like being transported to another exotic world

104 One Happy Place

Previously dark and gloomy, the remodeled condo brought the outdoors in

ENTERTAINING

116 Home for Christmas...Finally

With plenty of reasons to celebrate, including the homecoming of her sister from

Toronto, globetrotting chef Stephanie Brimo prepares a feast of hearty indulgences

122 Have Yourself a Casual Little Christmas

Fun, dynamic elements turn an informal gathering into a lively feast

123 Yuletide Brews

Revel in the flavors of the holidays with these beverages you can make at home

124 Hearty Palate

A new concept restaurant aims to revive the culture of home-cooked Pinoy dishes

125 The Dress Code

The appropriate attire for the right occasion

128 Lady of the Flowers

Her signature touch blooms into amazing floral designs

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Christmases past, present, and future



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

IT IS NO EXAGGERATION that Christmas led me to my passion for design and decorating the home. Both my mother and grandmother loved to spruce up the home for the holidays, and those Christmases past were among my first visual imprints, and gave me a visceral understanding of the value of making a beautiful home.

As we are a magazine devoted to the home and entertaining, this Christmas issue could justifiably be our most special and important issue. We gather with family and friends at home at this time, and so this is also when we want our home to look its best. But this year, we usher Christmas under very different circumstances. The devastation and tragedy that befell our nation are still fresh on our minds, and some people are confused. How do we celebrate and feel joy when we are still surrounded by so much sadness and loss?

Perhaps it would be best to just go back to the basics. We decorate trees, and bake goodies not to show off our opulent taste or indulge in gluttony. The decoration on the trees symbolize that the Saviour's birth brings light in the darkness. The baked goods symbolize the sweetness that we taste when we realize that God is with us. And the first Christmas was not just the birth of a baby, but the beginning of the Holy Family, thus, we all congregate with our families to remember the first night of the Infant Jesus, the Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph as a family.

So let's not be guilty that we are celebrating. Yes, we must do our share to help out with the relief and rebuilding. But let's not deprive ourselves of the joy of the season. And let's do what we can to spread that joy to those nearest and dearest and to those affected by the battles in Zamboanga, the earthquake in Bohol and Cebu, and super typhoon Yolanda in the Visayas.

Nana Nadal is a freelance PR and events consultant. Her byline can be seen in various publications. She likes writing about people, food, homes and cars, not necessarily in that order. She recently developed a fascination for mental health and advocates awareness for depression and suicide prevention. For this issue, she wrote about a bright, beautiful home ("One Happy Place," p.118).

Maan D'asis Pamaran is a freelance writer who enjoys talking to people from different industries. Here, she talked to the owners of CNEX, makers of modular cabinets ("Space Saver Specialists," p.38). She is quite appreciative of beautiful homes and gardens, even though she is hopeless when it comes to keeping her own home organized and her houseplants alive. Her madcap world consists of four boys, a cat, a dog, and a slew of deadlines.

Elga Reyes is constantly at the edge of her seat, as she awaits the day when she has her own *The Selby* moment—or that point when she has finally made her own home of curios



nana



maan



elga

just like in her favorite design and interiors blog. In the meantime, she spends her time writing about the subject, born out of her personal interests and her recent experience as an editor for *Surface Asia* and *Dwell Asia* in Singapore. She has also contributed to *Expression Indonesia*, *Robb Report Singapore*, *Jetgala* and *Cubes* magazine. In between these and attempting to do creative pursuits, she also serves as the Philippine-based correspondent of *Eco-Business.com*, writing on sustainability and other environmental news in the Asia Pacific. In this issue, she finds inspiration from two go-getter sisters who are after their own passions while being able to whip a stellar holiday party ("Home for Christmas...Finally", p.130).

Nana Caragay is the former editor-in-chief of *Chalk* magazine under ABS-CBN Publishing. She is currently working as a freelance writer and a voice over talent. For her first time contributing to **Metro Home & Entertaining**, she wrote about a lovely Moroccan abode on page 106. Getting to see such gorgeous homes up



nana



paulo

close has inspired her to try and beautify her own living space.

Paulo Antonio Valenzuela always had an eye for composition, lighting and capturing angles one may think that isn't there. Never hesitant and is willing to learn new techniques and keep up with the trends in contemporary photography, he applies it with such enthusiasm, you can clearly see it from the quality of his works. Aside from editorial, he has also done commercial photography for restaurants, resorts, airlines, and insurance companies among others. Here, he photographed two takes on designing the front door for Christmas ("Welcome Christmas, p. 48).

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Festive all year round

WHY SHOULD WE TURN ON THE BLING AND THE SHINE IN OUR HOMES ONLY FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

BY **BARBIE PARDO-TIANGCO**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **JOVEL LORENZO**



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Gold skull, P3,300, Dimensione. Black chair bookend, P1,795, Dimensione. Lady's bust Christmas ornament, P650, Chrysara Nest. Plastic space sparrow snow globe, Kish, P1,600. Gold gun memorabilia, P2,900, Dimensione. White grab hand hook, P8,795, Dimensione. Hanging Christmas ball with rhombus and pearls antiek, P900, Kish. Swimming lady, P1,300 (set of 3), Chrysara Nest. White star decor, P2,500, Space Cowboy. BACKGROUND: Toile gift wrapper, P200, Kish.

HERE ARE 8 BASIC TIPS to keep in mind when creating inspired vignettes.

1. Start with one piece you absolutely love. The painting that you bought from that artist you've long since admired or that beautiful mirror you found at a flea market. Whatever it is, make sure it is deserving of such an important space in your home.

2. Create levels. Often people forget to install something above or below eye level. Every time you group a bunch of decorative items, make sure each level is addressed.

3. Think out of the box. Think your son's vintage toy RC would look great on top of the hardbound books on your coffee table? Why not just leave it there? There are no hard and fast rules for decorating. Allow yourself to be playful.

4. Consider color. It's always best to use complementary or contrasting colors in one single vignette, just to keep it cool on the eyes.

5. Add one living thing. This is always a good rule for the home. Add an indoor plant, a gold fish bowl. It's always a crowd pleaser and adds warmth to any corner.

6. Vary textures. Spice things up by adding something shiny, something furry, something printed, etc.

7. Edit. This is the most difficult of tasks but also the most vital. Sometimes it's best to keep things simple and practical versus having too much on display.

8. Tell a story. The story may not be literally obvious; it can beg questions from guests as to its origin, why you purchased it, etc. It's important to be able to portray a feeling, a mood with every vignette in your home. 📌



TOP: Sunburst mirror, price upon request, Chrysara Nest. ON THE DESK (from right): Mannequin Rosa with wings, P2,800, Chrysara Nest. Scottish Terrier wood decor, P2,600, Chrysara Nest. Red & yellow geo box, P1,200, Chrysara Nest. Jonathan and Mildred bookends, P2,600, Chrysara Nest. dinner time chicken glass cover, P41,800, Dimensione. Resting lamb with silver sunburst, P2,000, Chrysara Nest. Smoon cage lamp, P55,00, Dimensione. St. Michael wing and Gabriel Wings candle holder, P1,350 each, Chrysara Nest. BOTTOM (from right): Gold mirror, P18,800, Dimensione. Mounted wing in dome glass, P5,100, Chrysara Nest. Firefly side table, P8,500, Space Cowboy. Mannequin Celestina with wings, P2,800, Chrysara Nest. Mounted wings on dome glass, P6,500, Chrysara Nest. Ampersand light sign, P24,000, Space Cowboy.

The Good Life Gets Better

PLACES AND THINGS TO ENRICH AND ENHANCE THE WAY YOU LIVE



A SWISS-INSPIRED VILLAGE IN TAGAYTAY

Crosswinds is a 100-hectare Swiss-inspired community in Tagaytay. The name was inspired by the continuous interweaving of the winds from Tagaytay and Laguna de Bay. It is the only pine estate south of Metro Manila with over 20,000 pine trees cared for and grown inside the property.

The place is not a fun and recreation resort. To inundate the property with amenities would be destroying its calming embrace, and defeat the whole idea of a weekend sanctuary or refuge.

Crosswinds is a mixed-use development. Product lines include single-detached homes, lots only, duplex units, quad units and a mid-rise condominium.

For inquiries and property previews, call 794-9999 or visit www.brittany.com.ph.

'LIVING FOOD' CULINARY PHILOSOPHY

In collaboration with the culinary team at Peninsula Manila, The Farm at San Benito is introducing its signature, award-winning raw "living food" culinary philosophy by incorporating certain ingredients and techniques into the luxury hotel's existing menus.

Peninsula Manila's new "360 Wellness, Naturally Peninsula" menu will not use any flour, wheat, grain, sugar, canned, boxed or packaged foods or anything that is processed. Dishes in this menu will use only certified organic extra virgin olive oil and Absolutely No Heat Process (ANH) virgin coconut oil, as other vegetable oils are considered nutritionally deficient and wreak havoc with one's health. Starch fillers are also eschewed since these impair cell rejuvenation and cause a serious strain on the body's endocrine system.

For reservations, please call (+632) 8848074; email: reservations@thefarm.com.ph; or The Peninsula Manila at (+632) 887 2888.





WOLF INDUCTION COOKTOP

Think extraordinary control that achieves an instant boil or an equally fast true simmer, extreme energy efficiency and a level of safety and control that gas simply can't deliver—that's what the Wolf Induction Cooktop brings to the table. With no exposed flame, there is unparalleled safety. Its True Melt and True Simmer functions give you precise control of temperature for that perfect result, every time. Also available in stainless steel frame, its minimalist sophistication and subtle exterior give a clean and sleek touch to any kitchen. *Wolf is available through Focus Global Inc. Pioneer cor. Reliance St., Mandaluyong City. Tel. 634-8587.*



A SPOT FOR HOME DECOR AND FIXTURES

"High-end furniture at reasonable prices" is how Furniture Republic positions the core of its brand. Despite being fairly new in the industry, it is already fast becoming a trusted importer and retailer of quality products from countries like China and Malaysia.

With barely four years in the furniture business, the opportunity for expansion came early for the company. Its first branch in HK Sun Plaza in Pasay City was launched in 2010, followed by its Robinsons Place-Dasmariñas, Cavite branch, which opened in November 2012. Recently, Furniture Republic opened its doors to the Southerners with its shop in Festival Mall in Alabang.

Focusing on providing decorative art pieces, Furniture Republic's offerings are masterfully crafted to suit different lifestyles and design preferences, from minimalist to the most elaborate, from classic designs to trendy ones.

Furniture Republic has all areas of the house covered, with pieces for the living room, dining room, bedroom, office, and the outdoors. Also available are home furnishings like throw pillows and covers, curtains, bedsheets, lights, lampshades, florals, paintings, carpets, vases, mirrors, and wall clocks.

Visit Furniture Republic at HK Sun Plaza, Macapagal Blvd., Pasay City; Robinsons Place Dasmariñas, Cavite; and Festival Supermall Alabang. Visit their website at <http://www.furniture-republic.com.ph/> —Grace Libero / Photographs by Jovel Lorenzo

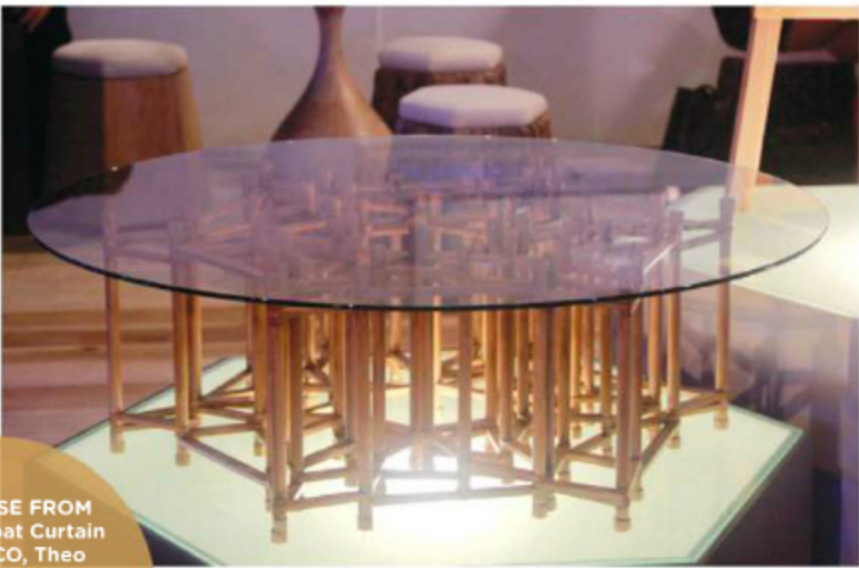


GREEN COMMUNITY RISES IN THE SOUTH

Located along Real St., PulangLupa Uno in Las Piñas City, Paseo Verde at Real is set to be the newest 'green' landmark of the city. This three-tower project offer amenities that focus on the groundbreaking green architecture and emphasis on the company's three environment focus: climate change, the Clean Air Act, and the safety and health of its residents. Two of the towers will have 314 units, while the nine-storey tower will hold a total of 156 units ranging from studio to three-bedroom homes. *Paseo Verde at Real is accredited by the Building for Ecologically Responsive Design Excellence (BERDE) and a member of the Philippine Green Building Council. For more information, please call 854-1652.*

THE BEST OF FILIPINO DESIGNS WIN IN THE 2013 KATHA AWARDS

Creative Champs



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Lambat Curtain by TADECO, Theo Cocktail Table by Stonesets International, Inc., designed by Vito Selma, Newspaper Pompoms by Paper Capers designed by Arlene Gaddi-Maceda

KATHA AWARDS honored product design and innovation excellence during the Manila FAME Networking Night on 17 October 2013 at HallONE: Design for Exports, ITC Complex, Roxas Boulevard corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Pasay City, Metro Manila.

Best Product Design which distinguishes innovative, purposeful, and artistically rendered interpretation of design, each from furniture, home décor, holiday décor and gifts, and fashion were awarded to: "Theo Cocktail Table" by

Stonesets International Inc., designed by Vito Selma (furniture); "Lambat Curtain" by TADECO, designed by Maricris Brias (home décor); "Newspaper Pompoms" by Paper Capers, designed by Arlene Gaddi-Maceda (holiday décor and gifts); and "Buko Twigs Clutch Bag" by Imperial Nova, designed by Ann Ong Borromeo (fashion).

Industria won for Best Booth Display while the "Paper Wall Decor" by Far East Manufacturing Corporation won the Eco-Design Award, a special

distinction conferred to a product developed with respect for a healthier and more sustainable environment.

The Katha Awards is considered as the most prestigious award in the Philippine design scene and is a significant platform where product design innovation and excellence is recognized. Its goal is to give distinction to ingenious designs and encourage exporters to raise their design standards for Philippine export products as well as to pursue a skillful exploration of earth-friendly

materials and processes.

The selection and evaluation of all the Katha Awardees is a collaborative effort of the Manila FAME Secretariat and the National Council of Industrial Designers of the Philippines (NCIDP). The winners were chosen by an esteemed board of judges led by NCIDP's Rino Datuin, including Amina Aranaz-Alunan, Isabelle Berenguer-Asuncion, Jean Dee, Gwyn Guanzon, Nikki Laurel, Loejai Lopez, Rachelle Medina, Eric Pineda, and Mitch Shivers. 11

City Living Convenience

WORLD CLASS AMENITIES
IN FOUR TOWERS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JV NORIEGA

SAN LORENZO PLACE luxury residences by Empire East Land Holdings, Inc. is a 4-tower residential address that features world-class amenities.

Sit back and relax as you enjoy the first-class amenities in this magnificent enclave. Check out the 20-meter lap pool, wading pool, children's water play area, paved sunbathing deck, tennis court, children's playground, changing rooms and outdoor shower area, day care center, fitness gym, and outdoor fitness station or jogging path.

Location and vicinity advantages

It has easy access to the country's premiere business and commercial centers as it is physically connected to the MRT-3 Magallanes Station, making it the ideal home for every member of the family.

For the convenience of students, San Lorenzo Place is near five prestigious schools: Bosco Technical School, Assumption College, Asian Institute of Management, Ateneo Graduate School of Business and Asia Pacific College.

The entire family and their guests can spend leisure time or get some serious retail therapy at the malls in the Makati and Ortigas Central Business Districts, and in Bonifacio Global City.

For your physical and spiritual well being, there are four hospitals and five churches in the area.

Unit sizes and choices

Unit sizes come in studio type, and one to three bedrooms. The studio type has a floor area of 20.5-26 sq.m. The 1-bedroom unit has a floor area of 26 sq.m.; the 2-bedroom has 30-61.14 sq.m.; the 3-bedroom has 60 sq. m.



Cozy model units in San Lorenzo Place. These boast of wood grain vinyl planks for flooring and ceramic tiles in the toilet and custom built under-counter cabinets.

All units have wood grain vinyl planks in the living, dining, kitchen and bedroom areas, ceramic tiles in the toilet and bath, custom built under-counter kitchen cabinets, provisions for mechanical ventilation for

kitchen and toilet as well as for air-conditioning unit opening for bedroom/s. **Visit San Lorenzo Place at EDSA corner Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City, Philippines. Contact 09293969273 or 09275360406**

A Luxurious Bathing Experience

BY GRACE LIBERO

GERMAN BRAND
KALDEWEI
LAUNCHES FLAGSHIP
SHOWROOM IN
THE COUNTRY

NINETY-FIVE YEARS AGO, in 1918, the family-owned business of Franz Kaldewei GmbH & Co. only had five employees producing home and kitchenware made of steel for the enamel industry. Today, this German brand has showrooms in more than 70 countries worldwide.

A recipient of over 80 design awards, Kaldewei has become a pioneer and style icon in design competence, introducing the concept of bathing as a luxurious experience. Kaldewei credits its success to their unique products made of refined 3.5mm steel enamel, a material thicker than the grade of steel used in cars. Aside from durability (Kaldewei is the only company that gives a 30-year warranty on their tubs), its award-winning products are 100% natural, recyclable, hygienic, abrasion-proof, chemical- and heat-resistant.

Kaldewei recently launched its flagship showroom in the country at the main showroom of its Philippine distributor, Kuysen Enterprises Inc. Of this collaboration, Kuysen's president, Jensen Go, says, "Kaldewei is an excellent addition to our cache of world-class brands. Its wide range of designs allows us to satisfy the varying tastes of our customers."

In an exclusive one-on-one interview with **Metro Home & Entertaining**, Kaldewei Sales Director in Asia and Oceania, Lei Wang, says, "The Philippines is a central market for us, because we see a very fast growth in its economy and tourism industry. We think it is the right time to get into this market and cater to the discerning Filipino consumers."

Kaldewei carefully considered the needs and wants of Filipinos, whereby smaller and



TOP: Kaldewei's luxurious designs are now available to Philippine households and establishments. **BOTTOM:** Kaldewei's premier products, the Centro Duo bathtub (right) and the Ellipso Duo oval bathtub (left).

more economic choices seem more suitable. As Mr. Wang points out, "A product should not just have a nice, trendy design, it should also fit well the requirements of its owner."

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KALDEWEI AND KUYSEN

Curated for the Home

WHERE 'WARM INDUSTRIAL MEETS RUSTIC CHIC'

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



Filipino craftsmanship at its finest, Urban Abode's pieces are surely for the people who appreciate one of a kind pieces.

SPECIALIZING IN CUSTOM furniture design and fabrication services for residential and commercial clients, Urban Abode is also a showroom for its own bespoke furniture pieces, along with one-of-a-kind home accessories and lifestyle products.

Filling a gap in the local market for furniture and accessories in the genre they call "warm industrial meets rustic chic," creative couple Kristine Neri-Magturo and Mike Magturo expanded their custom furniture design services into a charming retail space at Urban Abode. Kristine, a licensed interior designer, is the director of product development and styling at Urban Abode while Mike oversees the business development aspect of the venture.

Urban Abode offers furniture design consultations and a bevy of inspiring products that place Filipino craftsmanship front and center. Themed collections, currently the Lakeside, Riverside, and Viking lines designed by Kristine and manu-



RIGHT: Wall decor frames that are locally made. LEFT: Urban Abode's eye-catching facade

factured at their Quezon City workshop, bring international design trends home. Herringbone wood tables, vintage floral print ottomans, burlap and canvas pillows are a few of the customized, handmade products found mingling in the store.

Complementing Urban Abode's fresh, in-house designs

is a curated selection of vintage found items such as shoe forms of 1940s era Americana in customized, mirrored shadowboxes, and antlers from Texas, Montana, and South Africa. Upcycled pieces—items given a new life function other than their original purpose—capture the imagination, from wooden

wheels transformed into rustic accent tables to reclaimed wood repurposed as distressed consoles, coffee tables, and even an aquarium stand in the stunning Viking Collection.

Urban Abode is located at the CW Home Depot Complex in Ortigas. Open 7 days, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Contact 586-0026 or 0917-577-5683; email: urbanabode.ortigas@gmail.com. For updates and promotions, visit www.facebook.com/urbanabode.media.

Food and Art Edition

INDULGE YOUR SENSES FOR GOOD FOOD AND GREAT ART

BY ANZENNE ROBLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



A LIFESTYLE STORE and cafe that features art, furniture and conversation pieces, Edition is a perfect one-stop place for people who love food and works of art. Business partners Isabel Villar, an art consultant, and interior and furniture designer Mark San Diego decided to put up a shop that encourages their clients to design their own bespoke pieces, and playfully label their customized works with "The <insert your name here> Edition." This café also serves Latin-inspired dishes for a totally unique experience.

"We put up the shop because we love art, and we love finding interesting pieces to share with others. When Mark would design projects, he would have a hard time with accent pieces. I think what's different about us is we choose and produce pieces that are meant to stand out and not blend in," says Edition co-owner Isabel Villar.

Alongside their products, Edition also houses an art exhibit featuring a group of young, talented Filipino artists that will



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Edition's Greek god bookends, P7,500. Enjoy delicious Latin-inspired dishes while appreciating art inside the cafe. JR Atienza's Retrospect artwork collection, part of Edition's art exhibit. Pewter glasses, P1,850 each.

surely inspire conversations on arts and design.

Enjoy a relaxing, friendly dining out and shopping experience at Edition, Outdoor Shops, CW Ortigas Home Depot. Contact 621-7406 or e-mail editionlifestyle@gmail.com. Visit www.editionlifestyle.com or follow them on Instagram @editionlifestyle.



Otherworldly Nest

TOUCHES OF
INGENUOUS WHIMSY

ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: Entrance of Chrysara Nest houses a collection of *belen* and cage *santos*. The second floor contains vast collections of various references, from botanical to chinoiserie. A box shaped like a partridge. Decorative wall art of ancient Roman streets. BELOW: Angels rendered in metal, wood and paint.

BEFORE ITS RECENT MANILA STORE LAUNCH, items from Chrysara, a long-time wholesaler and manufacturer of *santos*, faux finished mirrors, candelabras and jewel boxes became available to its Manila audience only through its bi-annual booths in Manila FAME, which has gained for the company quite a cult following among designers and lovers of all things fine.

Chrysara wholesales its items to American retail giants Restoration Hardware, Ballard Designs and Wysteria, but its inventory boasts of Pampanga-made, Filipino craftsmanship. This zeal for promoting Filipino creative ingenuity seems to be a life-long mission for its founder, Alicia Van Doorn.

"After starting Chrysara in Manila, our creative director, Ballet Philippines founder and former artistic director Alicia Van Doorn moved its operations to Pampanga," says Chrysara PR and Marketing Director, Rhea

Bautista. "She just has this infectious creativity, always doing something artistic."

A visit to the two-story store in Mandaluyong reveals vignettes laden with gilded angel's wings, ethereal Madonnas, whimsical boxes shaped like your favorite canine creatures, bookends in the form of abundantly rotund swimmers in striped bathing suits, and jewelry drawers in the form of Colonial dolls and La Mañanita, after the famous painting by Spanish baroque artist Velasquez.

Those smitten by the old world and things that speak of provenance will revel in Chrysara Nest's selection of home finds. Every object has a story to tell, and a reference to an era gone by. 📖

Instantly infuse the charm of yesteryear into your spaces by visiting Chrysara Nest at 77 E. Rodriguez St. (formerly East St.), Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City. Visit on Facebook through www.facebook.com/ChrysaraNest.

'Retail Theater' for the Home

CHOICE HOME FINDS
IN SHELTER'S NEWEST
LOCATION

BY ANZENNE ROBLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: The new Shelter store in Edsa Shangri-La East Wing. Shelter's Christian Lacroix Papier series. Droga Chocolates' special holiday Peppermint Peppies. The Christian Lacroix Papier stylish note cards.

GET YOUR QUICK FIX of home retail therapy—accessories for the home, gifts for the imagination—at the latest Shelter store in the metro. Since 2011, Shelter has continuously offered different brands and styles of home furnishings. Visit their newest store, a total "retail theater," in the convenience of a shopping mall.

Seasoned US based retailers Joey Luna and Lee Imperial partnered with Philippine interior designers Ivy and Cyn-

thia Almario and businessman Guillermo Nieva, who started their stores in Jupiter St. Makati and San Juan. They have now branched out to Edsa Shangri-La's newest wing.

Catering to their customer's various tastes and particular lifestyles at different price points, Shelter has since introduced quality furniture, home acces-

sories and books from the United States, Canada and Italy into the local market. The new branch offers the same well thought out product selection and showcases meticulously designed displays. 📖

Visit the newest Shelter store at 6th Level Shangri-La Plaza East Wing, Mandaluyong City. Contact 633-1626 or email your inquiries to sheltermanila@gmail.com.

Cobonpue in Manila

NEWEST BOUTIQUE
OF THE ICONIC DESIGNER
OPENS IN MAKATI

BY ANZENNE ROBLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Not just a showroom, Kenneth Cobonpue's Manila store is an art space. The Carousel lamp hangs above the Trame armchairs and table. The Yoda ottoman, part of their 2013 collection. The Tropez sofa and other iconic pieces from Cobonpue catches the attention of whoever visits the store.



THE WORLD RENOWNED designs of multi-awarded Cebuano furniture designer and manufacturer Kenneth Cobonpue are now accessible to residents of Metro Manila via his recently opened showroom at The Residences at Greenbelt on Arnaiz Street (Pasay Road).

The two-level KC Manila Showroom showcases the designer's popular and iconic pieces like the red Yoda chair and the Tilt lounge chair, and even some from his more recent collections like the Village Hanging Lamp and Parchment Collection, and the Carousel hanging lamp.

Cobonpue has a showroom in Mactan, Cebu for several years now. He also has several distributors, represented by shops worldwide that carry and promote his creations. He considered opening in Barcelona or Miami, but decided it had to be in Manila as his tribute to Filipino culture and roots.

This 423-sq. meter space filled with Cobonpue's functional works of art is a collaboration among Kenneth's friends, designer Budji Layug and Architect Royal Pineda, with styling by J. Anton Mendoza. This store in Makati may be a tad smaller than the flagship store in Cebu, but it still showcases the same wonderful Cobonpue pieces everyone loves. 📍

Check out Kenneth Cobonpue's showroom at Greenbelt Residences, San Lorenzo Towers, Pasay Road corner Arnaiz Avenue, Makati. Call 576-1639 or visit website www.kennethcobonpue.com.

PRODUCT PHOTO COURTESY OF KENNETH COBONPUE

UPDATED FURNITURE
CLASSICS

BY ANZENNE ROBLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG
WITH ADDITIONAL PHOTOS COURTESY OF URBAN ITALIA

Urban Affordable



THE NEED FOR STYLISH and expensive looking pieces at manageable prices spurred the start of Urban Italia. Inspired by Zara, Urban Italia continues to offer the latest furniture classics. Its collections are a mix of modern luxury and functionality.

Putting emphasis on furniture quality, Urban Italia makes sure that the structure of its pieces is perfect, enough for each to last at least ten to fifteen years. That is why Urban Italia is very much involved in the manufacturing process, which means choosing a higher grade of stainless steel, a harder wood or a better fabric.

The firm even suggests new technologies used in furniture making. "To get the perfect bounce of a specific sofa, we can't simply use wood and foam. In some pieces, we have to use a mixture of individually pocketed



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Stylish and affordable Italian pieces for your living area. A modern dining set is the first thing you'll see once you step inside Urban Italia's showroom. The Libera Ceiling setup.



coil springs, memory foam, latex foam, and some goose feather," says Urban Italia general manager Chester Lim. "For us, at the end of the day, being able to provide excellent pieces is about helping our clients. We want our pieces to fit their lifestyle. We

want them to use the pieces and enjoy them."

Check out the Urban Italia showroom at Parc House 1, 227, Edsa Greenhills, Mandaluyong City. For inquiries, call 234-5094 or email urbanitalia@yahoo.com.ph.

Destined to Design

A PASSIONATE ARCHITECT TURNED TO AN ADVOCATE OF CREATIVITY

BY ANZENNE ROBLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



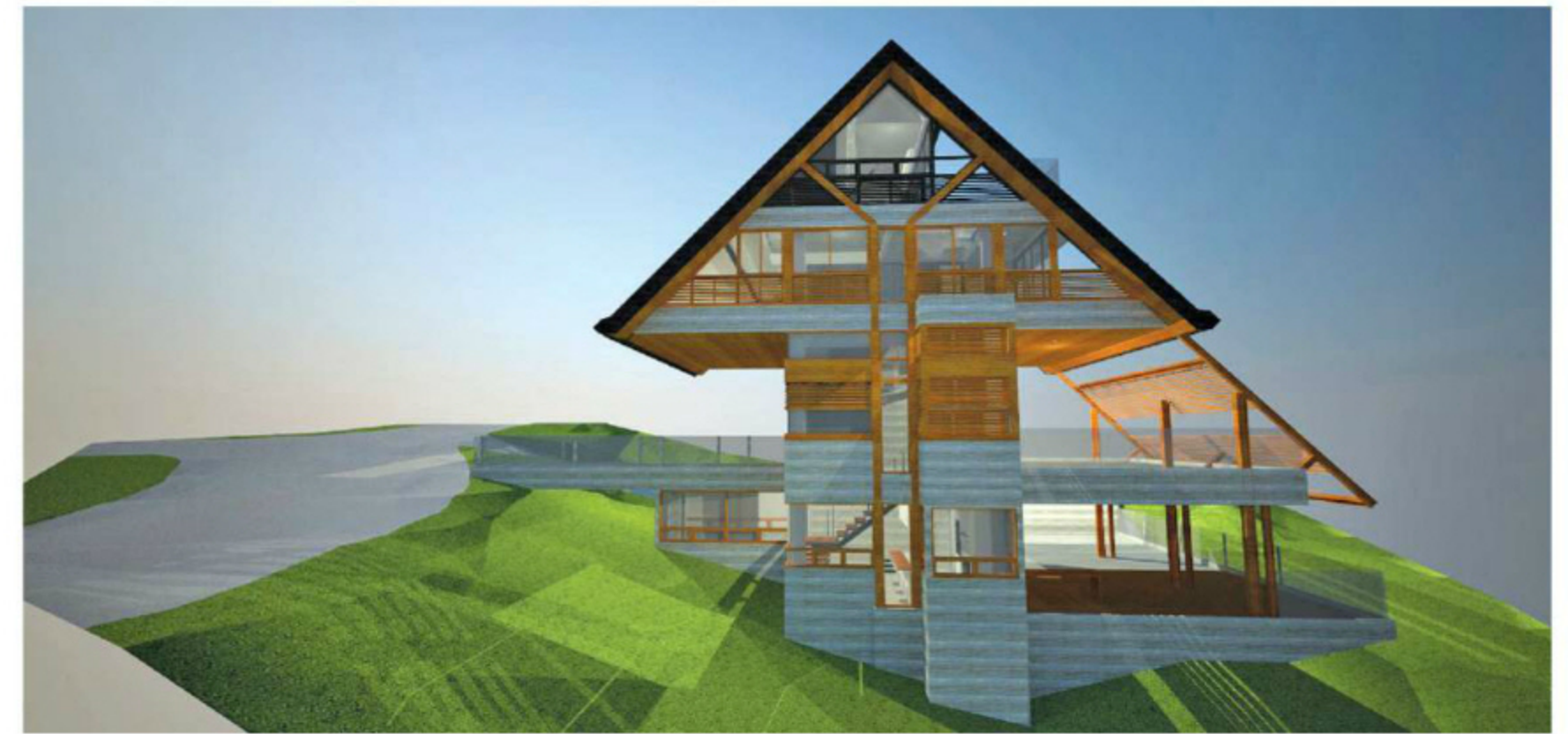
Design principal of Joey Yupangco + Associati and dean of School of Design and Arts at the De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde, Joey Yupangco.

“IT WAS REALLY DESTINY that made me do this. I’m a late bloomer in the sense that I came from a different field,” says Architect Joey Yupangco, design principal of Joey Yupangco + Associati and also the dean of the School of Design and Arts at the De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde, the biggest department of the well-respected, much-admired institution of learning. He has made a few pit stops on his way to becoming the designer that he is today. “I first graduated from La Salle College as a business management student,” Joey explained even admitting that it took him years to finally figure out what he wanted to do.

Finding the Creativity Within

After finishing his business course, Joey had a short stint working in a bar, “I just realized that I was not cut out to do that kind of work. I felt a lot of emptiness.” Then an opportunity to travel around Europe came—he joined the Philippine Bridge Team with his sister and aunt (who was a member of the team) and stayed for a long time in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in Spain. Seeing so many beautiful places during this trip, this has inspired Joey to completely change his objectives in life.

And thus his creative career started. He trained and was an industrial design scholar at Pratt Institute in New York where he met his wife, Gina, who was a fashion design major and became the HerBench fashion designer. This was where he also met his mentor, who is also a big influence in his design style, Rowena Reed Kostellow. He also attended Parsons School of Design to complete his graduate degree in lighting design. His eagerness to gain more knowl-



edge didn’t stop there. He went to Domus Academy, a design school in Milan for his post-graduate studies. He then later joined the design program at the graduate school of the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London, where he was tutored by contemporary and experimental architecture masters Brett Steele and Patrik Schumacher. “The big influences for me were the guys who taught me like Rowena Reed Kostellow, who was a very strong figure in my life. Other influences like Andrea Branzi and also the program I had at AA was instrumental for me to weave a different type of program setting,” says Joey.

The Grand Vision

After staying for several years in New York, Joey and his wife went back to the Philippines and put up their own design team. Among his first projects were retail stores, “Someone gave me a small job, a shoe store. From there everything just went into place,” he shares. The first house he designed is for the Lim family (Gregory Lim) and afterwards he did the house of Rina and Mike Aguilar and Bench owner, Ben Chan.

With all the worldly knowledge he received, there is no doubt that Joey Yupangco has a very rich eye for design. An advocate of special projec-

tions, he is a modernist in the most unconventional way, “we don’t have a specific design that is actually thought out. We all do things impromptu from the given requirements. And then we develop them. We want to establish the relation of space, we don’t have a specific form.” And in the grander scheme of things, Joey’s passion for architecture turned to something much bigger—an all-encompassing creativity. “Now that I’m in the academe, my whole perception is very different. I used to look for this kind of architectural expression but now I look more into how creativity can actually be a guide, and a thing people can share to become better,”



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The cube-like structure with repositioned roof orientations and simplified frontal facade, the H House, deflects the required enforcement of a sloping roof. A scale model of the proposed new College of Saint Benilde building. Joey Yupangco’s creative and spatial vision is visible in this B House which has three circular shapes designed on top of each other.

he shares. In the next years to come, Joey’s projects will be about the designs that make a difference, create public conscience and improve the Filipino living space. 📍

Space Saver Specialists

MODERN AND MODULAR CABINETS ARE NOT JUST AN OPEN-AND-SHUT CASE

BY MAAN D'ASIS PAMARAN
PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM ONG



CABINETS ARE USUALLY not the first considerations that come to mind when choosing a home, so it would be rather unusual to build a business banking on this piece of furniture. But that's exactly what Jose B. Martinez did back in the late Eighties.

He gained a working knowledge about modular furniture when his Middle East employer sponsored his training in Germany. There, he learned the system of modular cabinetry, from the basics of designing to the machineries and equipment needed to run the business.

His eldest son, JC, a graduate of BS Project Management, joined the business in 2008, and currently heads operations for what is now known as CNEX Modufurni Systems. JC takes care of the manufacturing

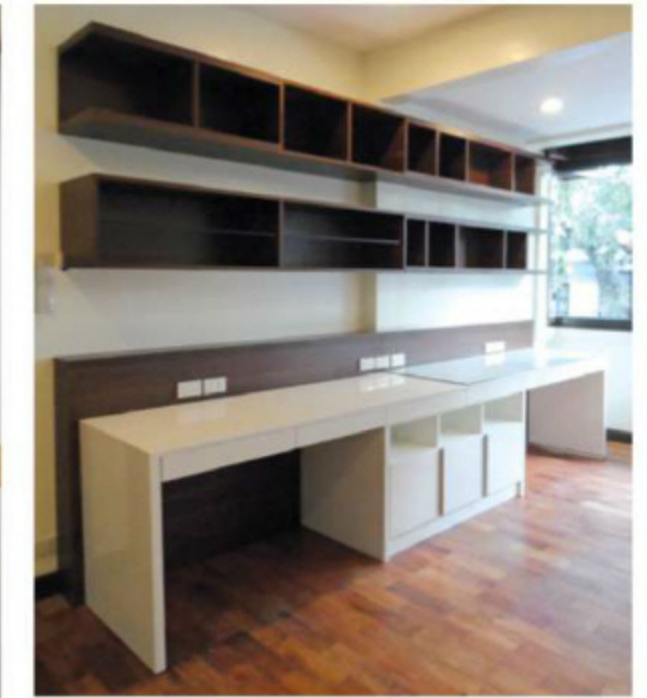
process, deliveries, and installations. JC's sister Ria, a licensed architect, joined the Planning and Design Department, where she conceptualizes designs with and supervises a team of fresh designers.

Current major projects are kitchen / closet / vanity cabinet installations in some of the most prominent subdivisions in Metro Manila. "We even went as far as Batanes and Zamboanga City for our projects," JC shares. "Aside from our staple kitchen and closet projects, we also did laboratory cabinets using TRESPA extremely chemical-resistant countertops from the Netherlands. Their clients for these laboratory cabinet projects include the Ateneo de Manila College of Medicine and Public Health, Far Eastern University

ABOVE: One of their residential projects is this laminated finish kitchen, with solid surface countertop and soft closing hardware. RIGHT: CNEX owners and siblings JC and Ria



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CNEX MODUFURNI SYSTEMS



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: From built-in closets, kitchen cabinets to family hall desks among others, CNEX has proven quality workmanship in every project they commit to.

in Silang, Cavite, International School Manila, and Faith Academy in Cainta.

Form and function

"Design inspiration, in our opinion, results from two things: creativity and knowledge of the latest technologies. To keep updated, we attend international exhibits, like the Interzum exhibits in Cologne,

Germany for Koln-Messe.

"We have also learned to conceptualize new designs based on the latest innovations and trends, like in hardware. In condominiums, for example, units are becoming smaller or narrower. With that in mind, every possible nook and cranny should be utilized. Cabinet designs are also evolving, they must be functional and elegant at the same time."

To ensure a perfect fit, the team analyzes what the client wants, his lifestyle and needs and, of course, their budget. "Budget may be a limitation, but a little creativity goes a long way," JC adds.

He enumerates the merits of going modular: "The beauty of modular cabinetry is it can be assembled or disassembled on site, it's like doing a puzzle. It can also be rearranged, refinished or transferred to another location. Most module sizes can fit standard accessories and organizers like wire baskets, cutlery trays, pantry units. They can also be customized. For closets, sliding doors provide practical solutions for tight spaces and when you're considering functionality. Mirrors can be incorporated, too."

Cabinet considerations

JC Martinez of CNEX Modufurni Systems says the best way to gauge how much storage space you need is to make a list of things you will be storing. "Consider all the little things usually taken for granted during the design phase such as a blow dryer, a vacuum cleaner, a broom, a mop, cleaning detergents, kitchen utensils, and many others. Then, the idea of how much space you need becomes a little bit more realistic," he says. "This will help designers find the best practical solutions for your space requirements."

Sustainability, service and expertise

Sustainability plays a role, too, particularly in their choice of materials. "Almost all of our materials are imported," he says. "The base material is medium density fiberboard, which is manufactured in other countries using the residuals of softwood and hardwood species. Thus, recycling the scrap wood from trees planted in forests for this purpose helps save or reduce the number of trees to be cut. Besides, these tree forests are replanted following a life-cycle analysis to ensure sustainability," JC shares.

During fabrication of the cabinets, the sawdust is gathered and used later as soil additive to fertilize fruit-bearing trees in the factory site. "We also have termite- and water-resistant

boards made of PVC, very applicable for areas highly infested with termites, and / or prone to flooding," he says.

According to JC, they stake their brand name on quality of work, after-sales service, and expertise. "We make sure the client is happy before we turn over the cabinets. As one of the pioneers who introduced the concept of modular cabinetry in the Philippines, we know that to remain this long in the industry, we have to take our responsibility to heart. Client satisfaction is what we aim for, and a happy client will lead to new referrals, networks, and better business."

CNEX Modufurni Systems is at 3/F U4 Maga Center Building, Paseo de Magallanes, Magallanes Village, Makati. You can contact them at 854-3130 or email cnex_cabinets@yahoo.com.ph.

Fresh Selections

HEIMA'S GARDEN STORIES BREATHES FUNKY DESIGN AND FUNCTION INTO YOUR HOME

BY GABY ALEGRE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN. Heima, with its Garden Stories collection, insists otherwise.

Garden Stories seeks to bring back the landscapes of our youth straight to your home. The pieces are reminiscent of days when trees—not skyscrapers—dominated the skyline, and when children played in the backyard amidst patches of green.

The pieces in the Garden Stories collection are stripped down to the core, examples of fine craftsmanship mixed with the wild creativity and whimsy Heima is known for. They are earthy yet fresh—what Rossy Yabut-Rosales, interior designer and creative director of Heima, considers a more

mature application of Heima's signature bold patterns, prints and bright colors.

Rossy says the pieces in the collection evoke a sense of nostalgia, “not in a literal (sense) that they are found or used in the garden, but when you put them in your home, they remind you (of these memories).”

She adds, “We always try to challenge how we can mature because, of course, design should always mature and evolve.” For Heima, evolution means a radical move back to the basics.

Holistic aesthetic

The duo behind Heima—Rossy, with husband and marketing director Bong Rojas—along with their design



ABOVE: Husband and wife duo behind Heima, Bong Rojas and Rossy Yabut. BELOW: Pieces from Heima's Garden Collection.



LEFT: Bright colors and a functional silhouette characterize The Wine and Dine Chair, and ABOVE: The Garden Stories Desk from Heima's recently launched Garden Stories Collection.

team, have consistently come out, since its inception in 2009, with collections that aim to surprise. With Rossy's inclusion as one of the Red Dot Young Designers in the October 2013 edition of Manila FAME, Heima is clearly a brand to watch in the country's thriving furniture design landscape.

Bong shares, “With our experience in Manila FAME, we really want to be part of the design landscape on a regular basis... We should be ready to create new collections that will merit being part of FAME. We want to go for organic, locally made furniture that caters to the local market, but are seen as authentically made in the Philippines.”

The duo is also behind the interior design firm Heim Interiors, although it is a separate entity altogether. But

the consistency and attention to detail that they give interior design clients is something that is so evident in Heima as a brand as well.

“We don't want to (place) labels on the brand because, in a way, what to call the design is up to the designer,” says Bong. Though each collection is always cohesive and complete, he points out that “we do not want our pieces to be bound by a theme. You can always pick a piece and make it part of a mix.”

What's next?

According to Bong and Rossy, the year 2014 is a time to plant and strengthen Heima's roots, to refine the processes that go into the production of their collections, and slowly expand to take on the global market.

“*Sa tagal ng Heima*,” says Rossy, “we feel that it's the right

time to expand our market. That's why we're launching *My Apartment*, a sub-brand that will be officially launched this December at Heima LRI.

Heima is collaborating with 13 Lucky Monkeys for *My Apartment*, which caters to a more masculine aesthetic. According to Bong, “My Apartment is a re-birth of a space we had in Cubao X—the second floor of our store, where we hosted guests, and artists that we collaborated with.”

Known for events that range from design talks to collaborations with upcoming artists like Aelyn Comprendio and Charles Buenconsejo, Heima has maintained close ties with the design community and provided space for local talent to grow.

With a quirky aesthetic and willingness to design beyond the box, Heima is ready to fully bloom. **1**

Stocking Stuffer

THE STOCKROOM COULD HAVE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



“JUST BECAUSE A SPACE is small doesn’t mean that the ideas behind it need to be small,” says photographer Milo Sogueco, who recently launched The Stockroom, a retail endeavor specializing in design-driven, budget-friendly finds for the home.

After years of doing editorial work for **Metro Home and Entertaining**, and a number of fashion magazines, Sogueco’s eyes have been honed to spot just the right thing to spark interest in a buyer.

“Most of the things we carry are for compact living,” Sogueco says. “If you look at the market, a number of condo developments have sprung. We cater to the people who have bought those condos.”

Sourced from the US to Malaysia and China—all over the world—The Stockroom’s



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Fun and functional bottle stoppers. The Stockroom’s generous selection of home goods. Tapestry accent cushion with butterfly print; black bird clock; The Quilt chair, an adaptation of a mid-century modern silhouette; IKEA photo frame.

inventory has a solution for every need, from colorful and quirky spoons with squirrel heads, to foliage-accented cushions and witty stick-on-the-wall clocks, to fetching sofas and love seats. Business is brisk, and items are replenished after frequent buying trips abroad, ensuring that The Stockroom never runs out funky and functional finds for the home.

Visit The Stockroom at the 2nd floor of the new Tiendesitas mall. For the holidays, visit them at Greenhills and World Trade Bazaars. Contact them through Facebook, www.facebook.com/thestockrm.



Trending Now!

FOUR FASHIONABLE LOOKS FOR THE HOME

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO,
WILLIAM ONG AND PAUL DEL ROSARIO



PUTTING TOGETHER a chair that takes after a Mid-century Modern silhouette, an antique door from Morocco, a rustic table, a Moroccan pouf, and a Berber rug seem to be a discordant orchestration of design elements, but they work together here through a restrained, neutral color palette, the background for each of the elements’ textures and form. **Metro Home and Entertaining** highlights four design trends. Go all out on each of them for a distinct look, or sprinkle your space with a touch of each, for an eclectic look you can call your own.

Spice Trail

1. White framed mirror, P1,320, Firma. 2. Jeweled photo frame, P1,480, Firma. 3. Mosaic throw pillow, P4,658, BoConcept. 4. Silver lamps, price upon request, Majorelle. 5. Indian lantern, price upon request, Haute Design. 6. Superheroes stool, price upon request, Cappellini. 7. Tagine, price upon request, Majorelle. 8. Images d'orient coaster, P2,180 (box of 6), Shelter. 9. Images d'orient placemat, P3,200 per pair, Shelter.



Retro

1. Sphere end table, P9,950, Dwell. 2. Cone floor lamp, P35,128, BoConcept. 3. Small refrigerator, price upon request, SMEG. 4. Celia three-seater sofa, price upon request, Dimensione. 5. Beauty desk and drawer, P27,800, Dimensione. 6. Nat accent chair, P52,495, Dwell.



Rustic



Industrial



Welcome Christmas

READY, SET, CHRISTMAS!
GET YOUR HOME HOLIDAY-READY

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAOLO VALENZUELA



Ging Ging Rayos Lopez

GING GING RAYOS LOPEZ has been decorating homes for Christmas since 1987. She credits her good friend Maryanne Ocampo-Carpio as her mentor, and her mother who “would decorate saints for Holy Week, and it was so fascinating to see that you could create something beautiful with your hands.” Her mother influenced Ging Ging to have a deep appreciation for beautiful things.

As Christmas is a time to return to family traditions, Ging Ging wanted a quintessentially familiar holiday look, beginning with the wreath that we traditionally hang on our doors. It came to the Christians from the Romans, who found the evergreen color a potent symbol of hope and the indefatigable cycle of life. They hung evergreen branches on their doors to remind them that winter is not forever.

For Christmas, the wreath celebrates eternal hope, repre-



sented by the birth of the Savior. As our country is still reeling from devastation and despair, Ging Ging Rayos Lopez sees a more special and poignant significance to the wreath. “Green is the color of hope, and yellow symbolizes rising above tragedy,

so I used this color scheme.” She also wanted to create a wreath that could be replicated by **Metro Home & Entertaining** readers. She points out, “I wanted to show that you don’t need a lot of things to make something beautiful.”

DESIGN SMARTS

1. To make a full door impact, choose just one or two colors, and buy accessories and foliage in that color.
2. If you have a big door, a big wreath on its own makes a dramatic statement.
3. Weaving a ribbon through the wreath gives a graceful and fluid look.
4. Do not be afraid of letting elements overflow from the wreath, such as the branches or the ribbons, for a spontaneous and fluid organic look.
5. Instead of encircling the wreath with the same elements, bunch elements asymmetrically for a more contemporary feel.

Team Metro Home

WE DECIDED TO TWEAK tradition by hanging a garland on the door jamb rather than on the door itself. We found topiaries of various sizes and shapes to line up on top of the door. The topiaries form a miniature garden on the perch above the portal, a tableaux that evokes a stately French garden or the centerpiece of an English manor.

On the garland we strung Christmas balls of various sizes. Christmas balls are easily available so they make the perfect element for experimentation. We wanted something bright and bold to counteract the deep green of the topiaries, so we went with a copper, lime, chartreuse, and burgundy color scheme. We also mixed matte and shiny Christmas balls for a more dynamic feeling.

DESIGN SMARTS

1. Don’t feel compelled to smother your door with garlands and wreaths. As we’ve done here, just focus on the top of the door to draw the eye upwards.
2. Christmas is the one time of the year when you can go a little overboard. So if you have many favorite colors but are worried that they won’t all work together, just go for it. After all, it’s the holidays. Just enjoy putting various tones and hues until they look right to you.
3. Find an element you love and find its many permutations. We found topiaries in different shapes, and the repetition created visual harmony. We used the same trick with the Christmas balls. We used varying sizes and textures for maximum impact and minimum effort.



WELLNESS BY DESIGN

REJUVENATION AND DESIGNER
ELEGANCE IN DURAVIT'S
"LIVING BATHROOMS"

BY DAHL BENNETT
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DURAVIT



Duravit's best-selling piece of bathroom furniture, the new outfit for the Starck Barrel series is now available in "American Walnut" real-wood veneer.

FOUNDED ALMOST TWO CENTURIES AGO, Duravit continuously redefines everything that makes a bathroom utilitarian. The use and application of ergonomics, sensorial technology, sustainable materials, and impeccable design all come into play to define what this German manufacturing company has pioneered — Living Bathrooms.

Beyond routines and rituals, Duravit makes homeowners think twice and stop and smell the flowers, so to speak—as they enter their bathrooms. Through design, this quotidian space is elevated to a whole new level, becoming a sanctuary of wellness, health and rejuvenation.

Defined by design

"Living Bathrooms" is the official slogan of Duravit," says Ernie Reyes, Vice President for Sales of Kuysen Enterprises, Inc, the exclusive distributor of Duravit. "This is fuelled by the idea that, today, people expect the bathroom to be more than just a place to take a bath, wash, clean their teeth or take a shower. The bathroom is evolving into a refuge that offers people an escape from the complex demands of modern-day life," he elaborates.

Design is at the heart of Duravit's Living Bathrooms. In fact, Duravit makes no compromises in this area and collaborates with the best designers and innovators in the industry: Matteo Thun, Philippe Starck, Herbert Schultes, Lord Norman Foster, Phoenix Design, Prof. Frank Huster, EOOS, Andreas Struppler, Christian Werner, Sergei Tchoban, and Sieger Design.

Despite its designer pool's varied sense of aesthetics and interpretations of functionality, a common thread runs through the company's living bathrooms—a distinct sense of order and space, classic modernity and a confident statement. Such factors are a product of careful and intelligent assembly of details—from the faucet to flush.

"In the last 20 years, the bathroom manufacturer, with headquarters in Hornberg Germany, has successfully pursued an explicit design strategy and has developed more than 40 projects in collaboration with high-profile names. Duravit designers preferably have an architectural background. The best example of these are the creations by the French star designer, Philippe Starck," says Reyes.



The bathtub from the Esplanade collection measures a generous 1910 x 1045 mm. With contours that are reminiscent of a chaise longue, it invites the user to relax and enjoy a luxurious bathing experience.

Philippe Starck collaborated with Duravit for the Starck 1 Bathroom fittings. Since their market launch in 1994, each piece has been meticulously crafted by hand. OPPOSITE PAGE ABOVE: A certified classic, the freestanding Starck tub. BELOW: Sophistication with a touch of 'feminine lightness', the PuraVida range created in collaboration with Phoenix Design and Hansgrohe.



Starck appeal

The company's multiple collaborations with Starck take inspiration from the basic bucket, tub and washbowl and reinterpret them into something functional yet unexpected. A washbasin from the Starck 1 range gives a modern take on barrels of yore using veneered wood as base with a spacious handle free storage. For another ceramic washbasin design, Starck taps into his own vanity to make a centerpiece with storages that open at a touch of a finger. A classic from this prized designer is the Sensowash toilet bowl that features seat showers that completely close without fastenings.

Ernie says Starck has turned his attention to the bathroom four times since 1992. "Since the 'Barrel's' launch 15 years ago, this vanity unit has become Duravit's best-selling piece of bathroom furniture and can today be found in projects such as the Burj Dubai and the newly opened Formula 1 track in Abu Dhabi."

There's an extensive range under Starck, all exclusive for Duravit, featuring sophisticated tubs, showers, washbasins, and shower trays, among others.

Pure lightness

Another Duravit pride is its PuraVida range, created in collaboration with Phoenix Design and Hansgrohe. Its distinct appeal is a feminine 'lightness of touch in the bathroom.' In contrast to linear, unisex designs, PuraVida embraces characteristic curves and round



corners. Minimalist designs are given gentler, softer treatments that translate to poetry such as the vision of a free-standing bath illuminated by warm LED lighting. Floating, wall-installed furniture such as ceramic washbasins, console and storages not only give a dreamy, feather-light ambience but a gracefulness that radiates throughout the entire space.

"One fundamental characteristic of a Duravit fixture though is its enduring appeal. The trendsetting designs of its products, though daring, are intended never to go out of date," puts in Reyes.

Bathroom intelligence

As the needs of users evolve over time, intelligence in the bathroom is another quality Duravit designs emphasize. Its wide-ranging selections are intended to appeal to one's personal definition of intelligent space.


From a standard utilitarian room, the bathroom has now become a living space, Reyes says, and their Filipino clientele, who are highly globalized, are not far behind in wanting a space they can enjoy and treat as a refuge for wellness. "The Filipino's taste for bathrooms has dramatically shifted to European contemporary designs in the last 15 years. White has been the dominant color of choice for fixtures with the utter simplicity of European fixtures as the new norm. It is apparent that with the growing stresses of metropolitan living, bathroom clutter and intricate lime and dirt collecting molded design lines of old have given way to straight and flowing lines of European fixtures like those of Duravit. Coming home to your private space means coming home to less mess. Less mess means less stress."

Reyes adds that even powder rooms are given a lot of thought as homeowners well know they are subject to their guests' scrutiny.

Bathrooms, like kitchens today, have come to play the roles of living spaces where comfort, privacy, creativity combined with efficiency are key to its owner's satisfaction and enjoyment. It must also reflect an individual taste and Duravit through Kuysen comes in to inspire personal creativity. Ultimately, Reyes says, one's bath has to be a place where you can simply be yourself—it defines who you truly are." *Duravit is available through Kuysen Enterprises, Inc. 236 E. Rodriguez Senior Ave., Brgy. Don Manuel, Quezon City. Tel. 740-7509 and 411-9571.*




The Starck 2 suite is marked by reduced forms and attractive prices. With this suite, high-quality design is afforded at mid-range price points. OPPOSITE PAGE: A pioneering innovation in the world of shower-toilet seats, Duravit's SensoWash with key features like seat heating and wireless remote controlled command options.



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ART / DESIGN / PLACES / INSPIRATION

Unapologetically
Old Fashioned, p.44



Unapologetically old fashioned

BY BARBIE PARDO-TIANGCO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY UY

AMIDST ALL THE HIGH TECH ARTISTRY, IT'S REFRESHING TO MEET A GENUINE OLD SCHOOL ARTIST WHO PROVES THAT IT STILL TAKES TALENT, SKILL AND A LOT OF HEART TO MAKE PRETTY THINGS



ABOVE: Artist Mia de Lara, (with her pooch, Rover) known for her handmade brands, Mobu Days and Homework. RIGHT: Mia's living room is peppered with her creations.

ALL THIS ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGY has democratized art, allowing anyone with a cellular phone and computer to call him/herself an artist.

With just a state of the art camera, the latest computer software and a few dozen YouTube tutorials and Pinterest pegs, you could well be a photographer, graphic designer, baker, chef, even an all-around Martha Stewart, if you are so inclined.

Graphic designer, illustrator and true artist Mia de Lara, makes no apologies about taking the opposite route. After years of being immersed temporarily in the world of computer graphics, flash animation and Photoshop special effects, she goes back to basics with her work at Bloat & Ogle Design.

Organic way of doing things

"The ultra-high-tech environment somehow took its toll on me, which led me to crave for the organic way of doing things," Mia explains. "My current brand Mobu Days was





Mia's dining area with an assortment of goods from her brands, Mobu Days and Workshop.



CLOCKWISE: Scatter cushions handprinted by the artist with fonts and graphics that evoke nostalgia. Monogram stationery and gift tag sets designed and handprinted by de Lara. Aprons from her Homework line.

born from that realization. Mobu was my nickname back in the day when everything was painstakingly and lovingly handmade—lettering, illustrations and print pre-production using layers of tracing paper. Mobu Days is what I'd like to call those days when everything was slow, organic and made by hand.”

A graduate of the College of Fine Arts, University of the Philippines, Mia majored in Visual Communication. Straight out of college she decided to be a flight attendant to appease her insatiable wanderlust. Those hundreds of flights led her to build her picture-perfect happy home with her husband Joseph, children Coby and Annika. Today, she relives her happy travels through her distinctly dreamy, romantic and utterly pretty old world aesthetic.

Creating brand identity

Her client list is quite long and impressive but these days, she prefers helping small start-up companies build their corporate identities from scratch. “It gives me the most satisfaction,” she explains. “At the end of the day, I go to bed knowing that I have somehow helped someone’s dream business come to life.”

While Mia creates many corporate identities, she recently met success on her own with her new home business as well. She is currently busy creating products under Mobu Days Stationary and Homework,

her personal home and lifestyle brand. It’s a venue for her to be her own client, tell her story and share her personal feminine, weathered and worn aesthetic that bring out the romantic in all of us.

In this maddening, fast pace world full of instant gratification, it’s invigorating to meet a “stop and smell the roses” type artist like Mia de Lara, who has learned how to create beautiful things in the manner they were originally meant to be made.

Q&A

What medium do you create with?
Which is your favorite? My favorite is always watercolor and pens. I’m loving what ordinary ballpoint pens can do. If fabric was considered a medium then, it would be my favorite, too. I am equally challenged and enamored by the possibilities one can create with fabric.

Describe your personal aesthetic sense. Each piece I create tells a story. It is often dreamy and poetic but not too serious altogether. I like my work to look a little bit weathered and rustic, as if they have been torn from books found in an old library. I adore designs that are inspired by natural curiosities, oddities and ephemera, soft colors and grey hues. I think this is very much reflected in my work and how our home looks like.

What is your current design fascination? Africa

What are your personal sources of inspiration? I observe everything and the details I find often spark inspiration. With just simple things such as a basket weave, the sunlight through our curtains or a fleeting scene from a period film, I am instantly transported to another world. Books are my obsession. Most of my ideas stem from reading a lot about art, design, travel, history, nature and natural curiosities. I also find designers who veer away from commercialism and find fulfillment in their own craft truly inspiring.

What’s your latest hobby? It’s upcycling objects.

What are your future plans? I am currently in the planning stage of building an actual brick and mortar store. That means more travel and collaborations with creative and inspiring people. I am also expanding with another brand called Craftsmith with Kitty Bunag and other talented artisans.

What is your favorite place in the house? I work with a lot of color and stressful deadlines, and I often find myself decompressing in our living room a few minutes each day. The soothing grey walls and neutral color scheme give me the space to relax and imagine. 🍷

(Check out www.mobudays.com)

The City So Nice They Named It Twice

NEW YORK APPEALS TO EVERY VISITOR—AFTER ALL, IT'S THE CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

BY CARISSA COSCOLUELLA
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF ANTON BARRETTO



The iconic Flat Iron Building, built in 1902 was once one of the tallest buildings in Manhattan, north of 14th Street.

“NYC... NO OTHER TOWN in the whole 48 can half compare to you.”

So goes a song from one of my childhood favorites, the 1977 Tony Award Best Musical, *Annie*. And just as the little girl cooped up in an orphanage in the 1930s discovered upon her fortunate adoption by Daddy Warbucks, people today are still enchanted by the city that’s “bright as a penny arcade—it blinks, it tilts, it rings.”

From my first visit to New York City as a little girl in 1979 to its choice destination for an annual trip with close friends this year, The City So Nice They Named It Twice (in reference to “NY, NY,” the city and the state) mesmerizes me for its ability to appeal to every inclination.

Depending on the destination and the interests of your group, a trip can be planned around a variety of things: key tourist attractions (museums or monuments), special activities (shows, concerts or sports events), conventions or trade fairs, and sometimes pilgrimage sites. On this particular trip, we planned around food. As it turned out, our restaurant selections took us to different parts of the city and afforded us a great opportunity to explore the different areas of the Big Apple.

Uptown and Beyond

The Cloisters Museum and Gardens (Fort Tryon Park, Washington Heights) – On a wooded hill in Washington Heights, where one feels far removed from the frenzy of the city, sits this structure that incorporates elements from five medieval French, Catalan, and Occitan cloisters, disassembled and reconstructed stone-by-stone in the early 1930s. The museum is dedicated to medieval art, among which the *The Hunt of the Unicorn* a series of seven wool, metallic thread, and silk tapestries depicting noblemen and huntsmen in pursuit of a mythical unicorn, is the main attraction.

Daniel (60 E65th Street) – Here, the menu is inspired by the seasons, and we were moved by the symphony of flavors, the elegance of the dining room, and the overall feel that says “civilized.” The Duck Liver Terrine with Hazelnuts Apple Coulis is to



LEFT: Manhattan's Peninsula Hotel. RIGHT: Another New York icon, the Empire State Building

die for, as was the duo of beef, comprising Braised Black Angus Short Ribs and Seared Wagyu Tenderloin. I'm not a fan of madeleines, but I'd go back if only for the ones they serve with coffee.

Levain Bakery (167 W74th Street) – This tiny, unassuming bakery is the home of New York City's best cookies. Go for the Chocolate Chip Walnut and Dark Chocolate Chip, and don't let the monstrous size fool you. They are soft and chewy and gooey inside. If you want to bring some home, here's a tip: put them in an airtight container, and throw in a piece of white bread. The cookies will absorb the moisture in the bread and retain their freshness. Replenish the bread as it dries out.

Treat House (452 Amsterdam Avenue) Take a break from all those cupcakes and try some of their beautifully decorated and equally delicious rice krispies treats. Almost too pretty to eat, the bite-sized treats come in over 20 flavors, some of the more interest-





ABOVE: Exterior view of The Cloisters, which houses the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection of European medieval art. BELOW: The Unicorn in Captivity, dating from 1495-1505 from The Cloisters collection.



ing being Birthday Cake, covered with blue marshmallow frosting, rainbow sprinkles and a white chocolate candle, and Chocolate Pretzel, mixed with salty pretzel pieces, dark chocolate and caramel, topped with chocolate ganache, a hand dipped mini pretzel, and sugar crystals.

Midtown

The Peninsula New York (55th St. and 5th Avenue). The only thing that beats the excellent rooms, facilities, and location of this hotel is its service. They go the extra mile to make you feel that it is home, from the personalized welcome treats (mine was a cupcake with a photograph of my horse FAB rendered in icing).

Per Se (10 Columbus Circle) – One of the highlights of our four-hour nine-course meal at Thomas Keller's urban restaurant was the kitchen tour to which the restaurant manager treated us. Best dishes: Sabayon of Pearl Tapioca with Island Creek Oysters and Sterling White Sturgeon Caviar, and Butter Poached Nova Scotia Lobster.

Bergdorf Goodman (57th and 58th Sts

along 5th Avenue) – It's never crowded, and the sales associates always seem to know what you might like. No fail. They take one look at you, and they know what to take out of the shelves to drape on your shoulder, latch on to the crook of your arm or slip on your foot, and get you to whip out your credit card. And well, it's just very hard to say no. Having said that, one always feels good instead of guilty coming out of the store.

St. Patrick's Cathedral (460 Madison Avenue) – This spiritual haven for both New Yorkers and travelers from around the globe is undergoing a US\$175 million restoration. They say that in the city that never sleeps, everyone needs a place to pray. Visit the Lady Chapel after the daily 5:30 p.m. mass to participate in devotional prayers and novenas such as for the Miraculous Medal, the Rosary, and the Sacred Heart.

The Museum of Modern Art (11 W53rd Street) On view while we were there was the exhibition "American Modern: Hopper to O'Keefe." Catch it until the end of January 2014. Tina's pick: Andrew Wyeth's "Christina's World," a 2007 tempera on panel painting



CLOCKWISE: Editor-in-chief Anton Barretto with author Carissa Coscolluela and Tina Tinio in New York. Another view of The Cloisters. Delicatessen, at the crossroads of Nolita and Soho.



of a polio-stricken woman crawling through a grassy field towards a farmhouse. By the artist's explanation, the woman was "crippled physically but by no means spiritually."

The Halal Guys (53rd and 6th) – While every frankfurter stand in the city boasts *halal* offerings, and copycat food trucks have sprouted in the vicinity, the original truck is the top choice of our *halal* expert Toni. Stand in line for quite a bit of time or wait for an off hour to get a taste of the lamb on rice or the chicken on rice. All for only \$6 a plate! Ask for an extra helping of both the garlic sauce and the yoghurt sauce.

Tenderloin and Theater District

The NoMad (1170 Broadway and 28th Street) – Be seated for lunch or dinner at the glass-ceilinged atrium, the stately parlour with its dark oak furnishings and richly textured fabrics or the two-level library, which features a spiral staircase imported from the south of France. Try Daniel Humm's much acclaimed roasted chicken, stuffed between the skin and the meat with foie gras, truffle, and brioche. Also go for the Milk and Honey

dessert. It's worth going to even as much as for the chicken. If you can manage to get a table, also try Humm's other restaurant, **Eleven Madison Park**, the darling of today's restaurant scene.

Wicked (Gershwin Theatre) – "Who can say if I've been changed for the better? But because I knew you, I have been changed for good." Are you an Elphaba or a Glinda? Wicked Witch of the West or Good Witch of the North? Catch this multi-awarded musical and be entertained by flying monkeys, men turning into scarecrows, and a levitating green-skinned witch during one of the show's most popular numbers, "Defying Gravity."

Meatpacking and Chelsea

High Line – Formerly a freight train track transporting ice, milk, meat, produce, raw materials, and finished goods from warehouses to factories on the west side of New York City, this elevated walkway is now a one-mile linear park and greenway. While the end of the line is a typical tourist's oasis of souvenir stalls and food carts, the walk-

through is pleasant and charming, with the greenery changing from season to season.

Montmartre (158 8th Avenue) – Oh, for a restaurant in the city with garden seating! The small entrance with a bar is deceiving, as this brasserie extends out and down into a courtyard garden complete with umbrellas, teak furniture, and a spattering of trees. The *pot-au-pho*, a Frenchified version of the Vietnamese *pho*, has received great reviews, and the French fries, seasoned with mustard, onion powder, salt and sugar, have been touted as New York's best.

Soho

Prada (100 Prince Street) – Of all the Prada stores in the city, this one and the one on 57th Street are my favorites. But this one is designed by Dutch modernist Rem Koolhaas and has an interesting wooden planked wave cum ramp running through the middle, and fitting room doors that turn from transparent to opaque when a customer is inside. There is also a greater variety of merchandise, if not younger and edgier, than what you might find at, say, the 5th Avenue store. ❶

**Food,
fashion
and finds -
guess who's
turning
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home for the holidays

The end of the year holidays are introspective times, wherein one looks inward, assesses where he/she is in life, and makes plans for the coming year. It's also a time of honoring, all that have been weathered during the past year, the successes, the joys, additions to one's circles of family and friends. As the year draws to a close, and a new one emerges more visible on the horizon, celebrate! No matter how you do it, we wish for all the season's comforts and joys to be with you and your loved ones.



The Scented Home

TURN YOUR HOME INTO A HAVEN WITH THE REDOLENCE AND ROMANCE OF THE PERFECT FRAGRANCE

BY LEAH PUYAT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

FASHION DESIGNER and eminently quotable visionary Coco Chanel said, “A woman who doesn’t wear perfume has no future.” It would be fair to extrapolate that a space without scent doesn’t have a soul. The very word “perfume” comes from the Latin perfume, or “through smoke,” referring to the smoke that came from incense, which has been part of sacred rituals since the Egyptians, thousands and thousands of years ago.

Our sense of smell is intimately wound with the memory center of our brains, and so the scent of a place evokes complex emotions and deep reminiscing. Most home lines and even fashion designers now offer home scent products so that homeowners can design a scent wardrobe for their homes the way they have a personal perfume arsenal. Different rooms and different occasions can be enriched by home scents. Whether one wants to be renewed and revitalized, or to be in a relaxed and restorative state, the right scent, or blend of scents can be the catalyst for the ultimate sensory experience.

Three scent purveyors provide rich and luxurious ways to introduce scent into a space. Cereo Candle Exchange—composed of friends Angeleette Calero, Ana Katigbak Lim, Leah Puyat and this magazine’s editor-in-chief Anton Barretto—prides itself on the artisanal look of their candles. In addition to scent, candles have a diffused, flickering light that



Zen Zest’s array of fragrance diffusers, room fragrance, and linen fragrance help create a serene living space. LEFT: Star anise, an ingredient for spicy scent concoctions.

adds instant cinematic atmosphere to a space. Zen Zest, the brainchild of Michelle Asence Fontelera has a playful, cheeky and fashionable approach to home scents that go with the spirited vibe of her personal scents. Cathy Mahusay created Potentilla four years ago. She started by concocting scents for home diffusers at home, gave them to family as gifts, and then, sold them in bazaars. Now, Potentilla has a permanent store in Robinsons Magnolia.

When did your business start?

CEREO: We started around 2000, and we even had to rush our opening because the mall was launching their new home section.

Potentilla: Four years ago. I started try-

ing out formulations for home diffusers and tested them at home. I thought they were cool and I shared them with family. They loved it, too, so I started selling them in bazaars. It was not easy in the beginning, as most people didn’t know what diffusers were and how to use them!

Zen Zest: Zen Zest started in 2001 when I was only 23 years old. We started selling handmade organic soaps in bazaars in Polo Club, Makati Sports Club and Alabang. We used to make the soaps and fragrances in our house. We then ventured out in a small cart in SM Megamall and from one cart in May 2001, we now have more than a hundred outlets nationwide.



With hints of cinnamon and nutmeg, Cereo’s candle range captures the holiday spirit.



Handpicked from hundreds of fragrance oils, Potentilla's scents are flexible for different kinds of personality. BELOW L-R: Potentilla's Mint Chai diffuser, Cereo's Bloom room spray, cabinet deodorizer in Iris Peony and Anti-Tobacco deodorizer from Zen Zest.



What's your philosophy of scent?
CEREO: We believe that scent should be part and parcel of everyday life. Candles can elevate daily life into beautiful, memorable experiences.

Potentilla: Use what you love or what speaks to you. Scent is so personal. A particular scent may be loved by one person while it may offend another. Potentilla's 8 scents have been handpicked from hundreds of fragrance oils. A lot of which I tested at home and lived with for at least a few weeks before I decide to add them to our scent menu.

Zen Zest: I personally believe that scents make you feel beautiful and they have a way of lifting your mood. When you go out smelling good, people notice you. You get that sense of confidence. You feel beautiful. Scents are also a way of expressing your personality. If you are sweet and charming you would go for floral and powdery scents, while if you are more sultry, you can go for a stronger or more oriental scent. Your personal scent should suit your personality, so to speak. As for home scents, they should reflect the mood that you want. If you want to relax, for example, you can use lavender or chamomile. During the festive season, cinnamon and nutmeg would be good choices. Scents, especially your perfume, should not be too overpowering.

What are your favorite scent memories?
CEREO: We all love the scent of bread baking in the oven, and so our signature scent evokes a French patisserie.

Potentilla: That's easy—the smell of all my kids when they were babies and morning in bed with my husband; snuggling, my nose on his neck.

Zen Zest: My favorite would be my late uncle Rod Dulas' favorites, Anick Goutal, Hermès and Acca Kappa. Whenever I smell those fragrances, I remember him. I also like the scent of vetiver and fresh pine trees because they remind me of his house and his room. Scent has the ability to trigger memories because we often associate a certain scent with someone special.

What scents would you recommend for these different occasions?
Alone time:

CEREO: Lavender
Potentilla: Vanilla or a medium tone scent that encourages introspection
Zen Zest: Lavender, to relax

Long bath:
CEREO: Peony
Potentilla: Vanilla
Zen Zest: Orange and geranium, or

something citrusy, to give you energy and uplift your mood.

Cooking:
CEREO: Chocolate
Potentilla: I don't really recommend using scent to mask the smell of food. The scent of home-cooked food to me is divine. But if I had to pick it would be a citrus-based scent.
Zen Zest: Apple pie or vanilla

Christmas:
CEREO: We have a Christmas scent blend of spruce, frankincense, and cedar
Potentilla: Cinnamon, peppermint or chocolate
Zen Zest: Cinnamon and nutmeg

Having guests over:
CEREO: Hesperides
Potentilla: My favorite scent in our line, Gingergreen. It's floral and citrusy at the same time. Elegant.
Zen Zest: Grapefruit and bergamot give you a positive aura and good vibes.

Home spa day:
CEREO: Eucalyptus
Potentilla: I like our Thai Spa scent which was inspired by trips to Bangkok spas. It has lavender to relax and lemongrass to ground me and encourage stillness.
Zen Zest: Lavender and vanilla. This combination is very relaxing!

What's your signature scent?
CEREO: Since we are constantly in search of new scents, we are also always changing our own scents.
Potentilla: Jo Malone's jasmine and mint.
Zen Zest: I love fresh-smelling and just got out-of-the-shower fragrances. It makes me feel young and fresh.

Who are the scent houses or perfumers that you admire?
CEREO: Everyone in the candle business looks to Diptyque, which really set the bar high for the home scent market.
Potentilla: Jo Malone, Diptyque and Penhaligon's for their English aesthetic in packaging
Zen Zest: I love Creed fragrances and some of the Anick Goutal scents. Both are long-lasting and the fragrances have a certain appeal to my taste and style.

How do you express yourself through scents?
CEREO: Our scents run the spectrum of the fragrance families, because we believe



Available in round and square shapes and various colors and textures, Cereo Candle Exchange's collections are artisanal in look and feel.

that there is a scent for everything, for all occasions and all emotions.

Potentilla: The bolder I feel or need to be, the stronger or more aggressive the scent I use and prefer. The more safe I feel, the more relaxed, the lighter the scent I pick or put on.

Zen Zest: When I have an event or a party, I use my secret fragrance which is a sweet floral scent which I think smells good on me because it is compatible with my body chemistry. During the day, I just wear mild fragrances because I am always on the go and my personality is really just very simple. Mostly, I express myself through scents at home. We have a different scent for each area of our home: coffee scent in the kitchen gives us a perk or wakes us up when we are still sleepy while having our breakfast, a clean floral scent for our bedroom because we want our room to smell like a hotel, a citronella and lemongrass scent for my kids' room and in the living room, a Christmas scent during summer when I want to feel good, eucalyptus with grapefruit when we have guests over — everything depends on my mood.🕯

Scents, like poetry, enhance life. It is only apt that a poem capture the power of a beautiful fragrance:

At dawn I found myself drawn to
the garden to inhale its scent
So I could cure my ills like a listless
nightingale probing its nose
I examined the beauty of a rose
That stood like a ray of light in darkness
So proud of its youth and beauty
That even the nightingale
fluttered away broken hearted
The blossoming narcissus
shed tears of jealousy
The tulip despaired
Lily's sharp tongue reproached
And poppy's open mouth opposed.
Know that the happiness, joy
and youth are fleeting.

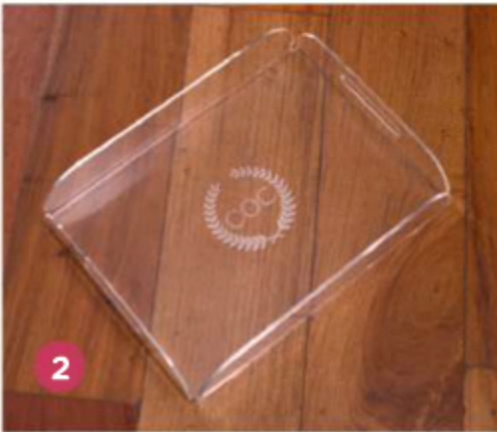
—Hafiz

Gift Gallery

ALL THE GIFT IDEAS YOU'LL EVER NEED, FROM WHIMSICAL AND WITTY, LOVELY AND LUXURIOUS, TO GLITZY AND GLAMOROUS.



1. Artisan scented candles at NEST for old world illumination. 2. Charming and useful, these acrylic trays from Oliver & Maude are monogrammed or personalized. 3. A range of practical and pretty products made by livelihood groups supported by Gifts & Graces. Each piece has a story to tell, a story of taking pride in creating something beautiful with great determination and perseverance. 4. Leather envelopes from SC Vizcarra at NEST for a sleek and stylish way to carry your essentials. 5. Delightful room and linen sprays in refreshing scents like olive, grapefruit, and fresh laundry from Cling Homemade Fragrances. 6. Exclusive home gourmet by Michelle Dee makes this sugar glazed ham justifiably special. 7. Indicate your individuality with these custom made stamps from Thumbprint 14. 8. Fine jewelry superbly crafted with precious and semiprecious stones in classic and modern designs from C Jewelry Line. 9. These personalized stationeries by Cecille Poblador range from whimsical to classic and modern patterns. 10. This caviar pie is an indulgent and sumptuous treat by Amanda Tengco-Banson. By Anton Barretto. Photographs by Paul del Rosario / Photography by Pia Puno courtesy of FOOD magazine



Gifted

Christmas has come to mean more than just giving of presents. It's a time to be grateful for the many good things in life like family and friends and letting them know that they are appreciated and loved. World events have certainly influenced the gift giving season and our criteria for what makes a worthy gift aside from what we can afford. My list consists of items that I think are quite useful and practical, ones that represent that childlike glee that comes with the season and those that are just too yummy to pass up.

1. These specially commissioned ashtrays are designed so that the ashes stay within the bowl without any danger of flying off. These are for those in my list who appreciate the exotic travel locations. Hand painted ceramic Moroccan ashtrays, NEST, price upon request. 2. Whimsical, decorative and useful, these bookends add punch to any display. Dog bookends, Shelter, P5,120. 3. The perfect gifts for the younger set on my list, these items are made with a "green" consciousness. Polo, t-shirt, and cap, Greater Good, P700-P1500. 4. For the shoppers on my list who have everything, this is a gift they can always find useful. Stylish recycable shopping bags, Envirosax, P395. 5. This is by far the best strudel in Manila. Approximately 14 inches long, fresh apple chunks with special spices are rolled within delicate puff pastry baked to flaky perfection. A warm cream sauce accompanies this decadent dessert that's meant to be served warm. Apple strudel, Linda Floro, P1,000. 6. These are great for themed family photos to remember a special trip or time. Colorful photo frame collage, Metro Department Store, P269. 7. This connects wirelessly to any smartphone, tablet or Bluetooth device you have. This is for techy people on my list who not only love listening to music but want the best quality in sound in a sleek and compact package that they can take anywhere. Being above the 10k price range, this gift is for the special ones on my list. Bose SoundLink mini Bluetooth Speakers, price upon request. By Marissa Alejandro Lopa. Photographs by William Ong and Paul del Rosario





Ready for Next Year

A roster of presents for a bright and new home, in time for 2014

1. Ring it in with some bling. KISH's metal wreath, P9,500. 2. Never forget the essentials: family, love and joy. Hand-stamped, scented stuffed apples by Apol Massebieau will fill your drawers with the scent of lavender for five years, La Pomme, Set of 3, P800. 3. and 5. Easily infuse some style and funk into your sofa with these accent cushions, Mr. Owl, P600, The Stockroom, Busy Bee, P1,200/pair, VW Home. 4. For the little girls in your life, a new friend for tea time and many other adventures, The Pepitas by me, La Pomme, P1250. 6. For your work station, the most charming calendar out on the market. Each month is illustrated by a celebrated artist, the likes of Emily Winfield Martin, Jen Corace and Amanda Blake. Made of thick matte stock, it has lots of space to scribble special dates and meetings that will pepper your year. Heima, P1,695. 7. Leave no stone unturned. Don't neglect the bottoms of your beloved glassware. Hand-woven coasters by The Healing Family, L'Indochine, P200 each. 8. Fancy a new hobby? Be inspired with pretty paper flowers. Paper to Petal, P834, National Book Store. 9. For the kitchen, give those tea towels a fetching place to hang. Tea Cup Hangers, P600, Chrysara Nest. 10. For your designated me-space, crown yourself queen all-year long with Heima's Megan Chair in lilac, which is a shade of 2014's Pantone color, "Radiant Orchid", P24,000. By Anna M. Rosete Photographs by Jovel Lorenzo



Present Perfect

Consider your recipients' personalities when shopping for gifts

1. Your mom will like this cool bathroom accent. Iron soap holder with faucet, Dimensione, P495. 2. For your fellow coffee- or tea-addict friend, this chic mug will make her break-time sips more enjoyable. White mug with orange handle, Dimensione, P499. 3. For your fashionista cousin, these unique wrist candies make for chic accessories. Bangles, Alex & Ani, price upon request. 4. For a friend who loves traveling, these quick drying microfiber towels will be among her essentials. Travel Towel Set, Made for Movement at AVA.PH, P800. 5. Gift your sister a stylish and functional gift. Eiffel Tower wall clock, Furniture Republic, P3,995. 6. For your vanidosa aunt, the latest foundation from Revlon promises a fresh and flawless-looking skin. Nearly Naked Pressed Powder, Revlon, P450. 7. Your busy-bee gal pal will find this stylish memo pad useful for jotting down important reminders. It features a watercolor illustration by Filipino artist-entrepreneur Rina Albert-Llamas. Big Memo Pad, Rinadesign at AVA.PH, P169. 8. For yourself, a little something like a cute organizer to hold your favorite trinkets. Playful Wide Glass Storage Box with Shelf, Costa del Sul at Taste Central, P4,400. 9. For your dad or boyfriend, he'll love a trendy pair of shoes that suits his personality and lifestyle well. Footwear, Milanos, price upon request. By Grace Libero Photographs by Jovel Lorenzo

All Year Round

Christmas may be the season of exchanging gifts but it doesn't mean it's the only time of the year to enjoy the bliss of giving out presents to your loved ones. Here's a list to prepare you for next year's get-togethers, birthdays and other special occasions.

1. Customized items gives a personal touch to your gifts for your family and close friend, this artist pillow by Darrel Lagasaca, P6,800 from Edition is a perfect example. 2. Skull paperweight, P4,800, Firma, for those who love unique finds. 3. Chic and functional, perfect for the stylish ladies, is this vintage oval multi-purpose box, P599, Metro Department Store. 4. You can also share your love for the arts without burning a hole in your pockets. Minidress digital print canvas, P299.75, Metro Department Store. 5. This candle stand, P299, Metro Department Store doubles as a mini drawer and decor. 6. A statement piece as well as functional, this stingray iPhone case, P2,300 each, Edition is for the tech savvy. 7. For the special man (or men) in your life, Jack Black post shave cooling gel 57mL, P1,000, Shelter. 8. For your athletic or active guy friends, Jack Black Dragon Ice relief balm 118mL, P1,190, Shelter. 9. FAE vegetable soap, P490 each, Philux. Organic and available in various scents, this is worth sharing with your girl friends.

By Anzenne Roble
Photographs by William Ong
and Paul del Rosario



Christmas Color Stories

HOLIDAY HUES TO BRING OUT YOUR TRUE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Elements from the earth

Rustic, neutral tones—brown, copper, beige—are updated by juxtaposition with a subtle metallic patina. Touches of glitter and shine make for a good contrast with raw textures, adding a contemporary flavor to a traditionally, exuberantly vivid holiday. A mix of the natural and understated with the shiny, more formal foliage is fresh and unexpected.

Design Smarts:

1 Twist some wire on the base of pine cones so you can attach them to the tips of your Christmas tree branches to give it a natural look.

2 Mix other types of foliage for added texture and variety. They will also help make your tree look full.

3 Enhance the earthy colors by choosing a glossy finish or glittered surfaces over a matte of flat finish.

4 Magical metallics like copper and bronze will uplift the use of natural colors, adding the right amount of sparkle and shine.



Winter White

Clean and bright, effortless and timeless. A white color scheme is serenely sophisticated and perfectly complements a modern and minimalist space. In a very busy and hurly burly season, having a white holiday look will create a calm and reflective feeling. White will always look right.

Design Smarts:

- 1 White decor on a tree will pop out so choose ornaments with interesting shapes and finishes.
- 2 If you wish to add a complementing color, silver will work wonderfully with your white scheme.
- 3 To emphasize the pureness of white keep the shapes simple and elegant.



Rich Red

Festive, fun and never out of fashion. Red will always liven up any space; it is the color of celebration and energy. Its appeal is endless. In fact, many design professionals go as far as treating red as a neutral and advocate its liberal use in a home.

Design Smarts:

- 1 Red will give your tree and holiday decor a festive look. Vary the selection of decor and ornaments but keep to a monochromatic scheme for drama and detail.
- 2 Using silk flowers is a delightful way to glam up a tree. Gently nestle them on the branches so they look natural.
- 3 Artificial red berries or fruits are a great way to fill in the gaps of your Christmas tree, and they will help unite the other elements.

A place for the holidays

A LOOK INTO THE HOLIDAY DECORS OF CELEBRATED PERSONALITIES

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Beauty in Simplicity

For **Metro Home and Entertaining** magazine editor-in-chief Anton Barretto, decorating for Christmas doesn't need to be extravagant or expensive, it needs to mean more than just mere displays in one's house. "I always try to give meaning to the way I decorate my tree, my tree should tell a story," says Anton, whose tree this year is designed around nature, using earthy colors and natural elements.

Usually planning his Christmas tree a year in advance, Anton enjoys all the holiday preparations—from sourcing out materials for his tree and having things made to personally wrapping all the gifts, despite his busy schedule. "This year I'm using a navy blue wrapper with an embossed shagreen texture paired with a black ribbon that has a graphic snowflake like pattern printed on it that I found in a recent trip to New York," he shares.

Though his holiday theme varies every year, he makes sure that he never goes overboard with his designs, "I want to express that simple can be stylish, limiting your decor to a few elements can make great impact." —*By Anzenne Roble / Photograph by Paul del Rosario*

A Homemaker's Holiday

Whenever she hears the song "Merry Christmas Darling" by The Carpenters, it's a signal that the holiday season is coming for RCC Marketing Corporation managing director and a mother of three boys, Riana Hechanova-Trajano. This is also the start of a weeklong bonding and celebration with her family. "On Christmas eve, I have dinner out with my husband and three sons at a favorite restaurant, after which we go to mass at our village pavilion," Riana shares.

Their holiday tradition includes feasting on Christmas homemade lunch at her mother-in-law's place and then spending dinnertime at her mother's place. "The family has grown to around ninety of us so it has to be catered unlike when we were young kids, it was potluck. Now, we have games for everyone and raffle off prizes," says Riana, who also added that their party is not complete without praying the rosary. And when the clock strikes midnight, they bring out a cake and sing a song to celebrate the birthday of her mother Mely and cousin Robie. "We spend New Years at Hong Kong with my parents and siblings. This is the only time of the year that when we travel, we are complete. It is family bonding time," tells Riana. —*By Anzenne Roble / Photograph by Paul del Rosario*





Organic Whimsy

"My holiday celebration has always been traditional and spent here in the metro," fashion designer Randy Ortiz says. His usual holiday activities include parties and get-togethers with friends, old classmates and colleagues as soon as the first day of December comes. "It has been a yearly opportunity to catch up and spend the night away remembering old times and past getaways," he adds.

And this year is no different, except maybe his holiday decors, as he tries to reinvent them every year. This year, he opted for "something that looks organic, functional and inexpensive," a contrast to the usual indulgent and extravagant themes popular this season. Aside from this, Randy tries to make time for wrapping his presents using his personalized ribbon and wrapping paper months before the holiday rush starts.

Despite the glitz and glamour of being in the fashion industry, Randy remains simple and a kid at heart when it comes to Christmas. "I am a person who looks forward to the Christmas season for the reason that I grew up in the consciousness that the holidays are the happiest months of the year, celebrating it in whatever simple way I can," he says. —By Anzenne Roble / Photograph by Terry Uy

Profound Display of Spirit

Delighting in the holidays in light of the calamities that befell the nation this year seems like a thoughtless thing, but the Christmas holidays will come, no matter how dreary the state of things. For Andy Vasquez Prada, Christmas celebrations and décor will be a minimalist celebration of the essentials—family traditions, friends, and his clientele at W17.

He points to a vignette replete with intricate carvings in dark wood, designed by him. "This is not normally here. This is very Filipino, with its very Catholic feeling, because of those ivory saints. Before Christmas I thought I just wanted more ornate things, which I'm really not into, but things are different this year in light of what's happening," Andy says, referring to the tragedy that was Typhoon Yolanda. "We accept that sales will go down, and rightfully so. There's also the not wanting to have parties, not doing things excessively. In that sense, what we do to decorate and create the spirit—that is enough," he continues.

For the man who began his career in luxury items for the home through curating and buying for Rustan's, and then moved on to his own social enterprise with Kaye Tinga, W17, Christmas will be marked by this sensitivity to mankind. "Christmas is very personal to me," he says.

Evidenced by his unadorned natural Christmas tree, one cannot help but believe that the essence of Christmas is truly in the heart. The decorations may be for naught when what is essential, true and appropriate are forgotten. And in true Andy Vasquez Prada fashion, only perceptive souls can muster such sensitivity. Photograph courtesy of Metro Society





Ties That Bind

"For me, it's about family. Every Christmas is memorable because it's with family," Renna Hechanova Angeles quips. "My most unforgettable Christmases were when my grandparents were still alive. They passed away in 1977, but every year, the whole clan still gets together during Christmas."

Despite being a busy lady (she's the vice chairman of Concepcion Durables, Inc.), for more than 30 years now, Renna has been organizing Christmas reunions and various small gatherings on the eve and the day of Christmas with relatives and close friends. Their holiday tradition is pretty simple yet intimate. She attends the 10 o'clock mass at Santuario de San Antonio on Christmas Eve, after which her parents, siblings, and a few friends gather at her house for *noche buena*. She usually spends Christmas Day with her in-laws, who come over to visit. By lunchtime, they leave to celebrate with the Concepcion side of the family. With the clan having over a hundred members, their gatherings are always festive and memorable.

As Christmas Days always bring back happy memories, Renna keeps her decorations all year round. Her tall tree, which gets a design makeover every now and then, is always lit up. Different Santa Claus figurines are also stylishly scattered around. "I like a happy house," she muses. For her, the Christmas decors are a year-long reminder of their family's most anticipated holiday. *Photograph courtesy of Metro Society*

Moroccan Merriment

Maritess Tantoco Enriquez has a secret ally for the flurry of holiday preparations. It's a leather-bound notebook entitled "Menus and Friends," a trusted partner to ensure that this hostess doesn't repeat herself for her festive soirees.

At an early age, Maritess, who hails from the Bienvenido Tantoco clan of Rustan's, learned that as much as it is a season of celebration and good cheer, the holidays are also a time of feverish activity. "My mom always made me work during the Christmas season. And then I also had gatherings with my own friends and I would also complete the *misa de gallo*! I must have gotten by on two hours' sleep. But that's what it's like that when you're young," she says. It used to be that Christmas was not just an annual celebration for her. It was top of mind from January through December, for she spent her earlier years as a buyer for Rustan's. Currently, her passions have led her to pursue importing home accessories from Morocco, where she lived for several years.

The influence of Morocco's magic made its way to Maritess' Christmas décor whose jewel tones dance in the glow of Christmas lights. Replete with sparkling foliage, her tree has elements of nature encrusted in the requisite splendor of Christmas, as glittered birds and ornaments hang from it. When she entertains on her own, the flavors of Morocco make their way to the feast, courtesy of her cook who has been with her through her years in Morocco and Italy.

In the spirit of the season, Maritess infuses her space and her table with global flavors, making one and all feel right at home. *Photograph courtesy of Metro Society*





Burnished and Festive

"I wear only black, but everything else—my makeup, fireworks, flowers—has color," says Katrina Ponce Enrile. Irony, because this year, for this hostess, the holiday décor scheme revolves around metallic colors.

In front of her outdoor bar, six tall, festive trees are lined up. They are covered in burnished hues—copper, gold and silver. The seventh tree is inside her home. It is in the season's color, a sanguine red. "I want it to be that when you come in, it just hits you. Especially at night, when there's really no light in here, and the light that comes from the Christmas tree gives this warm glow." Her friend, Sony Francisco, takes the helm for the Ponce Enrile residence holiday décor, annually. Together, they source these decorations from a variety of places, from Divisoria to Rustan's.

The lushness portrayed by the holiday embellishments in the home is echoed in her table, a place where she gathers family and friends, even ones that she "adopts," expats whose families live abroad, leaving them solo for the holidays. Fresh, exotic flowers adorn the tabletop, replete with roses from Bangkok, dahlias and carnations from Holland. Eucalyptus, this hostess' favorite, joins the table ensemble. A family keepsake, a fine table cloth in white, is the backdrop for the rich assembly of flora. It was used in the weddings of her daughter, Kara, and her son, JR.

For this hostess, who starts the holiday festivities in November with Thanksgiving, the colors of the season are made even more spectacular with fireworks. "I love fireworks," she relates. "I sequence it and I don't know how to do it like it's seamless, but I try as much as possible. And I have a crew that already knows what to do."

By sharing her home and table with family and friends, merriment of this glittering season shines even brighter for Katrina Ponce Enrile. *Photograph courtesy of Metro Society*

Spirit of Renewal

For someone who says she doesn't like to party, dermatologist-business-woman Vicki Belo sure knows how to throw one. She credits this flair for hosting to her being competitive, constantly trying to live up to the traditions, if not outdo herself every time.

When it comes to sprucing up her house for Christmas, Vicki and her interior decorator Adele Cordova always make sure to come up with unique ideas. Last year, cute stuffed teddy bears cozied up the residence. This year, Vicki wanted something spiritual; her chosen accent is the colorful peacock, which symbolizes integrity, immortality, and renewal. The Christmas tree—decorated with giant red drop crystals and Christmas balls collected from her travels—have two gold peacocks perched on it. From her frequent sojourns, Vicki gets inspired a lot; she hints at her plan for next year's Holiday, "Maybe next year, I'll go to India. I would love to have an Indian-looking tree."

Vicki usually attends four family Christmas celebrations. Christmas Eve is typically spent with her mother-in-law, the Lichaucos. She has lunch the following day with her adoptive mom then celebration with the Henares clan shortly after. Finally, she spends the evening with her biological parents, the Cancios. Then after all the Holiday indulgence, Vicki schedules yoga sessions with her children, saying, "The family that works out together stays together!" *Photograph courtesy of Metro Society*





Gilded to Perfection

"I wanted something different from the usual red and copper-orange stuff. You see red everywhere, and I've used it for so many Christmases already. For a change, I used these colors, with an emphasis on muted gold, which I think is very subtle. It matches the décor of this place," says Linda Oledan-Coscolluela, the daughter of Liding Oledan, who was one of Manila's top hosts during her heyday.

Last year, Linda didn't put up a Christmas tree, but this time around, upon her kids' prodding, she put up a tree and decorated it with newly-bought accents and old pieces from previous Christmases.

Even after she got married, Linda prefers spending Christmas with her parents. She spends *noche buena* with them then attends the midnight mass. Among her best memories of Christmas are celebrations with their family over plenty of food and gifts. These kinds of family get-togethers makes her look forward to the season. "It's because we're really all there having dinner together while waiting for midnight. For me, that's already Christmas." **Photograph courtesy of Metro Society**

All-Out Oplulence

Just like a scene off of TV cookery program *Heston's Feasts*, Christmas gatherings at the house of Ricky Toledo and Chito Vijandre are heightened to a multi-sensory experience. As Vijandre says, "Christmas is a time when you shouldn't hold back." From the food, to the drinks, to the decoration, this couple behind lifestyle home brands Firma and AC+632 never fail to wow their guests.

Once, they threw a Japanese-themed dinner, where they put together a Kyoto garden table setting, complete with bonsai trees and koto players creating music. Sushi and sashimi were served, with live fish swimming around in little ponds as accents, plus real butterflies forming a small aviary.

For this Holiday, their Christmas tree exudes the same lavishness. A product of Firma, the tree, which has cones and holly already attached, also features butterflies and dragonflies. Extravagant as it is, this tree is actually fairly simpler than what they normally put up: a 10-foot crystal chandelier tree with ornaments of antique marquis, dagger, and other various-shaped crystals they've collected over the years that need to be placed one at a time. **Photograph courtesy of Metro Society**



Mr. Snowman, Not Frosty

HE'LL MAKE A
WINSOME HOLIDAY
TABLE CENTERPIECE

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Mr. Snowman, made of carnations, ginger, carrots and berries, makes a charming centerpiece that you can make at home.

CREATE MR. SNOWMAN out of fresh carnations. He will surely delight friends and family, and bring holiday cheer to your Christmas setting.

Materials:
White carnations, floral foam, a pair of socks, a small carrot, berries, and barbecue sticks

- Instructions:**
1. Soak floral foam in water. Cut in two portions, the first to form the head, approximately 1/4 of the foam block, and the remaining half is for the body. Trim edges to form a circle.
 2. Cut stems of carnations, leaving just enough to insert these into the foam (approximately an inch and a half of stem).
 3. Insert each carnation into the foam until you are able to form perfectly shaped balls of flowers.
 4. Use the barbecue stick as a peg to join together the head (small ball of flowers) to the body (big ball of flowers).
 5. Once you have the shape of Mr. Snowman, you can start putting together the other elements to bring him to life. Use the carrot for the nose. Insert a barbecue stick on the base of the carrot so you can insert into the foam. The same goes for the berries that will be used for the eyes.
 6. For Mr. Snowman's cap, no need to cut the sock, just roll it up to the rounded portion and rest on the head.
 7. For the scarf, cut the other sock lengthwise so it's long enough to wrap and tie around the neck.
 8. To help balance Mr. Snowman, surround him with ginger to form a base. ❶

Woodland Wonder

AN ARRANGEMENT THAT
IS AS FESTIVE AS IT IS EASY
TO PUT TOGETHER

BY MARISSA LOPA
PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



A chicken, symbolic of the season's abundance, takes the stage amongst a bevy of natural greens and tree branches in this centerpiece that you can achieve at home.

CHRISTMAS IS NOT the same without the usual wreaths and other festive decor adorning our homes or, the very least, a beautiful arrangement to represent the joyous season. Not all arrangements are created equal, thankfully. We've come up with an elegant one that is surprisingly simple to do. You'll need to gather just a few items left over from your Christmas stash among easy to find materials.

- Here's what you'll need:**
- A few pieces of faux pine leaves
 - 2 to up to 4 pieces of cut branches of a tree, uneven in height
 - 1pc. 4-5 in. height and at least 2.5 in. diameter
 - 1pc. 6-7 in. height and at least 2.5 in. diameter
 - a third or fourth piece should be at least a 1/2in. Taller or shorter than any of the others.
 - A wooden bowl
 - A figurine symbolic of the season, personal or otherwise
 - Tea light candles
 - School clay or glue gun

Position your "logs" standing upright off center or to one side of the bowl within the vessel. One or two of them on the other side for balance. Secure the bottom of the wood pieces with clay or glue gun. Arrange the pine leaves artfully around the standing "logs". Take a step back if you must to get a better sense of how balanced your arrangement is so far. When satisfied, position or in this case, perch the figurine on the edge of the front of the bowl like it would be found in a natural setting. Place the tea light candles on top of each "log," securing them with clay or glue gun to keep them in place. ❷

Evergreen

THIS WREATH WILL LAST BEYOND THE SEASON, FOR YEARS TO COME

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



A MAN OF VISUAL ACUITY, Doltz Pilar combines interior design and painting to balance his avenues of expression.

Create a welcoming Christmas wreath out of twisted fabric.

Muted shades of copper and brass with shimmery threads of gold and bronze form a holiday sculpture.

Materials:

- Fabric of your choice
- Wooden ring
- Glue gun

1. Cut strips of fabric (thickness and length will depend on diameter of your wreath), sew two strips together so that it looks like a sash.

2. Glue one end to the wooden ring and continue to wrap fabric around the ring twisting the fabric to create a ruched effect and continue twisting till each end meets and forms a perfectly round wreath. 

Wreath of found textiles by Doltz Pilar offers lessons on crafting for the holidays and beyond.

Something Sweet

DELIGHT YOUR LOVED ONES WITH THESE YUMMY, SEASON-APPROPRIATE FAVORS

RECIPES BY PENK CHING
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



Royal Icing Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup eggwhite
- 1/2 tsp cream of tartar
- 1 lb confectioner sugar

1. Beat eggwhite at low speed, add powdered sugar and cream of tartar. When all ingredients are blended, increase speed to no. 8 and beat for about 10 minutes.
2. Pipe 2" diameter to make a shell base.

For the decors:

Gumpaste Recipe

- 3 Tablespoons cold water
- 1 Tablespoon unflavored Knox Gelatin
- 1 Tablespoon Shortening
- 2 Tablespoons glucose
- 2 1/2 cups powdered sugar

Procedure:

1. Sprinkle water on top of the gelatin in a saucepan.
2. Set aside for 30 minutes.
3. Add glucose and shortening.
4. Mix over low fire until well blended.
5. Pour on 2 1/2 cups powdered sugar.
6. Knead until smooth elastic.



Festive Foliage

A EUCALYPTUS WREATH TO FILL YOUR SPACE WITH HOLIDAY SCENT AND SPIRIT

BY PATRICIA PASTELERO
PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM ONG



1. Supplies:

- A foam wreath base made for use with fresh flowers (For first timers, best to purchase a ready made foam wreath base from any local wholesale florist shop).
- Fresh Eucalyptus Foliage and/or leaves
- 3" Wide Red Velvet Ribbon (about 2 yards)
- Florist shears or scissors
- Florist wire

2. Prepare the wreath base. Dip the entire wreath base in water. You want it to be damp, but not saturated. (If you saturate it with water, it will drip when you hang it.)

3. Make the hanger. It is much easier to make a hanger for your wreath before you begin to decorate it. It also provides you a visual reference point for the top of the wreath.

- Pass a length of florist wire through the center of the wreath base.
- Bring the two ends together and twist them several times to secure.
- If it is helpful, hang up your wreath while you work. This way you can see what it will look like when it is hung.

4. Insert the leaves.

- Leaving the stem on, clip each individual leaf from its branch.
- Beginning at the edge of the wreath and working inward, insert the stems of the leaves into the form.
- Make sure all the leaves point the same direction, and that you overlap them so that the base does not show through.
- Continue inserting the leaves in a clockwise direction until the entire base is covered.
- Make sure the leaves slightly overlap the inner and outer edges of the form so they do not show.

5. Add the ribbon as a final touch. Wind a length of ribbon around your wreath in soft curls. Tie or glue it to the back of the wreath form so it stays in place. ①

homes



One Happy Place, p.104

Double height living room allows maximal light to filter into the space. A palette of wood finishes and neutrals dominate this home for a family of six children.

THE FAMILY THAT BUILT THEIR HOME TOGETHER

EVERYONE COLLABORATED TO MAKE THEIR DREAM HOME A REALITY, AND NOW THEY JUST LOVE *BEING HOME!*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

“Home interprets heaven. Home is heaven for beginners.”
—Charles Henry Parkhurst

IN THIS COUNTRY, WHEN PEOPLE WANT to tell you that you are good-looking, they’ll say you should have been a movie star. When you first meet the lady of the house, this very thought comes unbidden. She is quietly beautiful, with a forever fresh face and even elegant features. And she is not just lovely but brilliant as well. Her mind is sharp and clever, and she loves to banter. To top it all off, she is a doctor.

Then, you meet her husband, and he is adorably, boyishly cute, and it is just like stepping into the set of a romcom. And here’s the happy ending: they have five, yes, five children who have also hit the good looks jackpot.

But fairy tales don’t really end. The building blocks of a fulfilling happy life are not just fluff and romance. This family is a team and their home reflects that.

Open and free space

“When we were planning the kids’ rooms, I really didn’t put desks there. I wanted them to have a different space for that, so that even if they’re doing homework, they’re all together. So, I really wanted a fun family room where they could study together. And so they just head for the bedrooms when it’s bedtime.”

The home’s expansive, open feel also makes entertaining a group effort. Her husband loves grilling so they have a lot of casual dinners, and the man of the house never has to feel left out.

“We can see everything whether we are in the living room or the kitchen. I really love the feeling that when we sit in the living room, we can look out onto the garden and then have that sense of ease. From the start, we knew that we wanted a modern, homey, casual feel that comes from having an open and free space.”

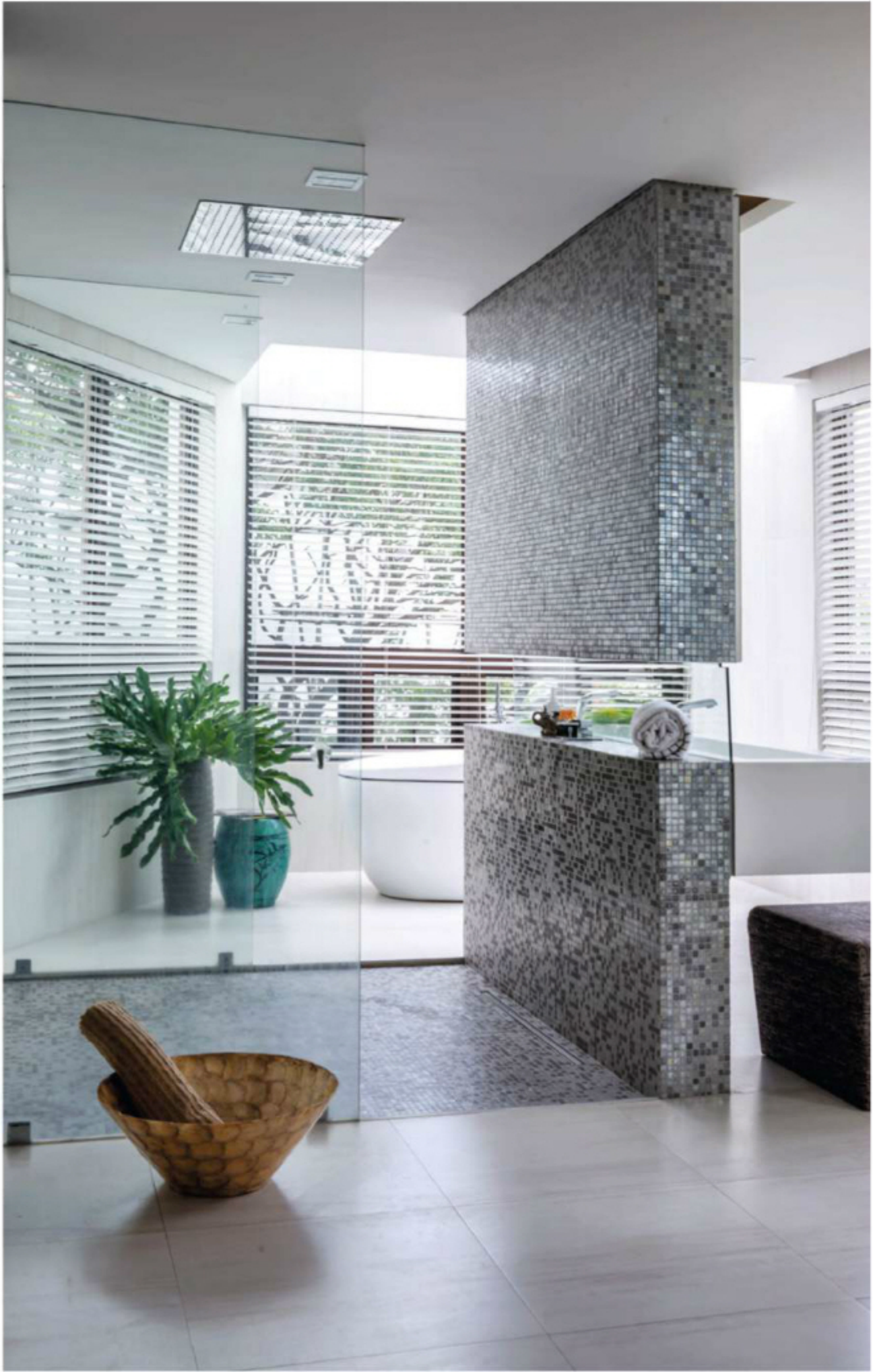


Punches of red serve as accents in this scheme. Kenneth Cobonpue’s Chiquita stool and an Eames rocking chair are the pieces that afford the space some spice.



The greens and blues of a Gus Albor painting looms over the dining area, a cool contrast to the warm tones prevalent in the room. Dining chairs by Nix Alanon.

The kitchen by Poliform is marked by seamless lines and contrast. It is framed by wood panels that extend to a peninsula. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The master bathroom is outfitted in glass mosaic tiles. Beyond, a Bravat tub enjoys views of the greenery beyond.





Ideas from living in other homes

This couple wanted to be involved in every step of building their home. They collaborated with their contractor very closely. How involved? “We chose each and every tile!” confesses the lady of the house. They knew that they wanted to blend the ease and convenience of a modern home with the comfort and warmth of a traditional home, and they felt that lots of wood would imbue their home with character and depth.

Friends rave about the lofty ceilings. The couple formed the idea of their dream home from living in other houses. They mixed customized furniture as well as ready-made pieces from Filipino stalwarts Kenneth Cobonpue and Loesin as well as younger brands such as PhoeNix Home by young designer Nix Alanon. They love their Poliform kitchen, and treasure quality time in their Bravat tub.

The best part of their day

This couple agrees that the best part of their day is coming home. “We love coming home. It’s such a reward after a busy day,” says the lady of the house. “The open plan of the house, the high ceilings, the details we chose, all these make us happy to just sit at home.”

There are many philosophies about homemaking, and there are many ways to create a beautiful home. Some families may choose to let a decorator make all the big decisions to maintain domestic harmony. But in the best cases, a family takes into account everyone’s needs and wishes, and collaborates and cooperates so that their home expresses their personalities.

Mother Teresa once wrote: “Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do but how much love we put in that action.” Every corner and every piece in this home was designed with love, and it shows. ①



The master bedroom looks out to verdant land. A glass partition for the balcony allows for uninterrupted views. Tribosa Bay Living's Vera floor lamp stands by the bed. OPPOSITE PAGE: For a brood of five children, a study area was carved out on the second floor, just outside of their rooms. Here, chalkboard paint makes a functional backsplash.

MOROCCAN ESCAPE

WALKING INTO THIS FAMILY HOME
IS LIKE BEING TRANSPORTED
TO ANOTHER EXOTIC WORLD

BY NANA CARAGAY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

FROM THE OUTSIDE, THIS TWO-STOREY HOME located in a southern suburban community looks conventional with its warm terracotta walls and well-manicured lawn. But walk in a little further, and your impression changes completely.

The high ceilings allow sunlight to flood in and hit you the moment you step inside the living room, instantly taking your breath away. The space and grandeur are the first things that catch your attention, before you inevitably turn to the many exotic, ornamental touches. Clearly, this house could not belong to just any homeowner, as the exquisite, unusual details reveal an eye for adventure, travel, and good taste.

The lady of the house decided to adapt a Moroccan theme when they began decorating the place, which has become a hideaway of sorts for her large, growing family: six children and 18 grandchildren, who all regularly congregate here to have lunch, catch up, and bond every weekend. Her first idea when the architecture team of Antonio Balde and Son began construction was something else entirely.

"What I had in mind was a country home," she relates, and her primary motivation was having a large space to accommodate her sizeable brood. But then she recalled a favorite trip she took with friends years ago, which eventually became the jump-off point for inspiration. In the middle of planning for this home, they said, "Why don't we go to Morocco?" And just like that, another trip was booked, and it was on that working vacation that they sourced and purchased many of the decorative items that are now in her home.

"Global" was the word designer Marissa Alejandro-Lopa used to describe this house she designed for a close family friend. With decor sourced predominantly from Morocco, the owner's wish to have a country home has evolved into a home of global character.



A setting for many of the family's photos, a wall is punctuated with a turquoise accent panel. An antique Moroccan door hangs on the wall.





ABOVE: Designer Marissa Alejandro-Lopa also designed the festive Christmas decorations in this home. A growing Christmas village, complete with a train station, is an annual treat to the grandchildren. BELOW: The powder room is outfitted with a Moroccan vessel that functions as a sink. The vanity was made from an antique piece.



Faded opulence

Once she had settled on the theme, everything else simply followed. It helped that her daughter is an interior designer, but since she had to relocate to the US midway through, another interior designer, Marissa Alejandro-Lopa, also came on board. A family friend who was happy to take on the project, she had traveled with them on that fateful first Moroccan trip years ago, including an unplanned detour to a souk when she'd had her fill of the tourist spots. On the visit when they were planning for this particular home, she got a feel of what they were looking for and what they would like, which she describes as "a richness that's not the usual European style. It's a faded opulence, and it's different. They like it because not many have it."

Alejandro-Lopa also managed to build up her own network of trusted contacts over the years, which proved to be a big advantage. "I've made friends in Morocco from my other trips," she says, and so she and the homeowner arrived back in the country carrying a container full of rare, precious finds. "We were able to source special objects that you can't just get, even if you travel there. Everything we bought, we used."



Plates and vessels from Morocco adorn the kitchen, making it adhere to the house's theme. Above the island, a gilded chandelier from Azcor.



The dining room exhibits bits and pieces from the owner's travels. The accent mirror was made in India. The plates are from Morocco, and the solid narra table was proudly locally sourced. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Glass shelves were installed between two large door casings. The antique door serves as a backdrop for vignettes of the owner's collection of global finds.



Morocco itself, a North African kingdom with a rich culture and heritage, was already such a fascinating source of inspiration that the work ended up becoming thoroughly enjoyable. "It's the most romantic place, very Biblical-looking. It's another world," she says.

That otherworldly effect was certainly well translated, with the Moroccan touches—silver jars, Berber doors mounted on the walls, tiles bordering the windows, intricately patterned chests and carpets, Hand of Fatima door knockers—pulling your eye toward different focal points as you wander around. They are spread out so skillfully, however, that the house still feels very much comfortably lived-in and stops short of looking like a stuffy museum or antique showcase.

"I love that this house is so 'used.' It was a matter of knowing when to put the detail in and knowing when to stop if it was just too much," Alejandro-Lopa explains. "We wanted it to function well, but at the same time, how do you put all these traditional, old stuff together? We introduced the old elements but kept it modern. I wanted it to not be out of place with regards to their lifestyle."

Take the wall by the living room, where a colorful archway is highlighted from behind by a bright turquoise panel. One can easily imagine that this once belonged in the home of royalty, a portal to another place and time. But here, it serves as the backdrop to many of their family photos. There's also a huge wooden closet between the glass doors leading to the terrace, a design element that serves a double purpose as storage. Although the closet is actually from Mexico, it blends in perfectly with the rest of the space. It was purchased from Alejandro-Lopa's home store, Nest, located along Jupiter Street in Makati, along with the two bright couches in the center.

Global sources

The close, familiar relationship enjoyed by homeowner and interior designer has allowed them to continuously work on improving and adding to the space. Alejandro-Lopa is a frequent house guest, bursting with ideas on how else they can continue to beautify the home. "What

In avocado green, the Moroccan theme continues into the bedroom. Above the beds, plates and chargers from Morocco.



A seating area was created in one of the bedrooms. Details do not shy away from the global theme of the home.

I do doesn't stop with just furnishing the place. I teach them to take care of the things and visit every once in a while." (In fact, she was also in charge of this year's Christmas decorations, as the holidays were approaching at the time of this photo shoot.)

Another key that allowed their tandem to achieve that striking, eclectic effect was that, although Morocco is the primary theme, Alejandro-Lopa wasn't limited to sourcing items from that location only. "They're global," she says. For instance, the gold mirror that hangs beside the dining table was bought in Morocco, but made in India. The long dining table is narra wood and proudly Philippine-made. So long as the item fits with the general look, it can find a space within these walls.

Alejandro-Lopa's favorite part of the entire home, though, is the powder room that can be found under the staircase. Fitted with a delicately painted door and an authentic Moroccan ceiling, it evokes a sense of awe and wonder, even for something so functional.

Home sweet home

The homeowner favors the master bedroom, though, because she likes to spend much of her day relaxing there. She also loves the decorative grills. "It's just right for the house. And the lighting, of course; at night, it's so pretty," she says. She's referring to the LED lights installed in the ceiling, a flattering way to show off the décor that allows them to save on electricity, too. The huge and airy second-floor balcony has a billiards table, ping-pong table, and a gorgeous view of the golf course. The location of the home was a plus when they moved in, since her husband, children, and grandkids are all avid golfers.

The thing that the homeowner cherishes most about this place is its ability to bring her whole family together. After all, more space to entertain is what she had in mind when they decided to have the seven-bedroom, nine-bathroom structure built.

Construction took about two years, and she visited the site daily to oversee every detail. "I was hands on. Every nail, every single thing in this house, I was really into it," she says. She would even request that things be redone if they weren't to her liking. But all of that hard work and attention to detail has paid off, because she now has a home that's even better than the one she had originally hoped for.

She says, "I thought it would be nice to have just a simple country home. Never in my mind did I think I would have something like this. When I'm here, I know that I'm safe and that things are well." ❶



ONE HAPPY PLACE

PREVIOUSLY DARK
AND GLOOMY, THE
REMODELED CONDO
BROUGHT THE
OUTDOORS IN

BY NANA NADAL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY UY



The color of pistachio, accented by salmon, was the fresh and feminine palette created by the Almaria sisters for this condo, a surprise renovation for a mother.



Lining the shelves are objects and knickknacks that speak of a penchant for New York and Paris. The walls are decked in handpainted botanical prints and a trellis motif.

“I LOVE COMING HERE,” gushes the daughter of the house. “It’s like being in The Hamptons, like we’re on vacation” she adds, her eyes dancing as she takes in the surroundings.

Designed with the objective of bringing the outdoors in, this Serendra unit exhibits a soothing green motif, its charm similar to a tiny patch of a beautifully landscaped garden. A section of the living area has walls splashed with solid pistachio while the rest of the surfaces are painted with green trellis overlay on white. Handpainted botanical artworks in silver bamboo frames complete the stress-reducing ambience.

Lining the shelves are ceramic knickknacks of white and green that reveal a penchant for New York and France. Adding cheer to the welcoming vibe are feminine accents of raspberry on the soft blinds, throw pillows and chair backrest.

Surprise, surprise!

But the place wasn’t always this pretty. “It was so dark, it looked so gloomy, and it was so depressing in here,” another daughter recalls. The transformation was achieved in collaboration with Cynthia and Ivy Almario, who were commissioned on short notice, merely three months prior to the homeowner’s scheduled arrival for her yearly Christmas visit. Her daughters wanted to surprise her and found an accomplice in Atelier Almario. “I trust the work of Cynthia and Ivy. I’ve seen them in magazines, and I like what they do,” says one daughter.

The aligned taste of client and designers made the project more manageable despite the tight schedule. “We liked the first plan right away, we were already wowed,” the clients say. “They never brought anything that we didn’t like.” And that includes the chandeliers with wooden arms hanging from the ceiling. It helped that the Almarios were given a clear inventory of requirements before they got started with the job.

Topping the list of things to consider is the homeowner’s extensive stash of things and sentimental nature. Storage was an absolute must. And this was addressed by creating cabinet space all over. A close look at the walls reveals knobs that swing open to drawers and shelves, eliminating the need for a storeroom. Everything is usable but hidden so there is no clutter, and order is easily maintained, making the place look like a model home at all times despite being lived in.



The dainty trellis detail was adapted to the kitchen island. Above it, a hanging trellis is both decorative and functional. It creates extra storage.



Open plan kitchen allows the lady of the house to cook while interacting with her family. Before the Almaria renovation, the kitchen was an enclosed galley space.

More room and openness was created by knocking down a wall. The Almario sisters also devised of clever storage ideas for the lady of the house's collection of many sentimental objects. The door panels decorated in silver-framed, handpainted botanical prints open to reveal storage compartments and shelving.



For their mom who loves flowers, a room with a centerpiece rug, commissioned and flown in from the US acts as a focal point in its avocado colored surroundings.

Spacious and breezy

The walls of the third room were torn down to give way to a cozy den that made the condominium more spacious, comfortably accommodating everyone down to the grandchildren. A change in the flooring from dark to light wood, and installation of mirrors contributed to lightening up the mood of the space and giving it a breezy illusion. "They really opened it up. When we're here, we don't feel like we're in an apartment, it feels big," an impressed daughter shares.

The lady of the house is fond of tinkering in the kitchen and now, she can cook while interacting with the rest of the family. "Before, it was like a closed galley-type kitchen, but now she can cook and be with everybody at the same time," describes a daughter. One cannot miss the dainty overhang, which is both functional and decorative, leading to the kitchen.

Except for the customized couch with trundle bed, the original set of furniture was kept but reupholstered to cover the old dull green and salmon combination, and create harmony with the rest of the re-modeled design.

Bedroom concept

A prized rug, custom-made and shipped from the States, is the center of the concept for the bedroom, with its avocado-colored and floral-painted walls. "Our mom loves flowers," explains a daughter who made sure there are several potted bouquets on tables.

While the guestroom's green-gray hue veers away from the verdant theme, it still adheres to the general relaxing and tranquil atmosphere. Aside from the white cabinets, a lone camel-colored leather armchair in a corner breaks the monotone.

"We love it, we love this whole house and everyone who comes in here is so amazed at the work and how it looks," says a daughter. Their surprise was indeed a success, and their mother, who constantly puttered around, no longer worries about fixing up her house.

"There is nothing else she can do but look around and smile and relax. Everything's done!" says a proud daughter. 🌸





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A leader in the home fragrance industry, AQUIESSE (ah-kwee-es) is distinguished by exquisite fragrances that are inspired by nature. AQUIESSE founder, Michael Joseph Horn, in collaboration with some of the world's most talented perfumers, has created a fragrance portfolio that is sophisticated and unique...fragrances that intrigue and inspire without overpowering the environment. AQUIESSE candles are poured with pure natural wax formulations derived from soybeans, coconuts and natural oils for a luxuriously clean burn and a perfectly balanced fragrance throw. *Exclusively carried by Shelter in the New Shangri-La Mall wing.*



Immaculate Flame

"Fae" is the old English word for fairy. It is also the label of Maria Crespo-Faye's candle and soap line. Made of beeswax and handpoured, these scented candles produce a clean flame, eliminating smoke. Negative ions are emitted to the air when these candles burn. Delight in three scents: Winter's Evening, which combines the scents of eucalyptus, pine and nutmeg; Wistful, a mix of coconut, peach and citrus; Riverbank, of basil, dayap and carnation; and Silvergil, composed of an almond, vanilla, amber and pomegranate scent mix. *Available in Cura V, Rockwell Power Plant Mall and Philux.*





Globetrotting chef Stephanie Brimo (right) with her younger sister Danielle, who just arrived to be with her family.

Home for Christmas... Finally

WITH PLENTY OF REASONS TO CELEBRATE, INCLUDING THE HOMECOMING OF HER SISTER FROM TORONTO, GLOBETROTTING CHEF STEPHANIE BRIMO PREPARES A FEAST OF HEARTY INDULGENCES

BY ELGA D. REYES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

SIX MONTHS AFTER HURRICANE KATRINA, Stephanie Brimo found herself in New Orleans. She was there at the first Mardi Gras after Katrina, that particular carnival that locals carried through with a twinge of trauma and a desire for hope. No, she wasn't there as a beads-bearing reveler, but as one of the many who put in long hours to see businesses recover. She was an intern working in the sauté line at the upscale but then short-staffed Restaurant August of Chef John Besh.

Eight years later, she is here in Manila, through a strange serendipity of sorts. Prior to this interview, she has just weathered another storm, albeit indirectly. Super Typhoon Yolanda, far stronger than Hurricane Katrina, wrought havoc in the Visayas. And once again, she is busy in the kitchen post-tragedy.

Stephanie is a chef now, with a degree from the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) no less, where Anthony Bourdain, Cat Cora, and John Besh are famous alums. More importantly, her younger sister Danielle, who worked for the world's largest gold producer in Canada, has just arrived home. The two haven't seen each other in months. So, merrymaking, lots of eating, and joyous family bonding are not only the holiday default, it is a mission. More than ever, family time is a sacred time, and any reason to smile is a cause to celebrate.

Christmases past

Indeed, amidst the flurry of checking on roasting potatoes and getting stock pebbles to add to the rustic winter wonderland spread on her previously empty dining table, Stephanie is a firecracker as she prepares a sumptuous spread solely for her sister and some close friends. Her eyes light up while she energetically recounts the crazy challenges she had to endure to get to this moment—as the successful new force behind the well-loved JiPan bakery in Makati and Mandaluyong.

Holiday Menu

- Roasted Cornish Game Hens
 Stuffing
- Cranberry Sauce
- Roasted Baby Potatoes
 with Pancetta
- Potato Casserole
- Salad with Candied Pecan
 Crunch and Goat Cheese
- Pineapple Carrot Cake
 with Cream Cheese Icing
- Donut Dipping Bar
- Kouign Amann



The Brimo holiday table is festooned with the season's delights, including gingerbread houses and trees from Japan.

Stephanie's famous carrot cake frosted with delectable cream cheese icing shares the dessert hole with the donut bar and flaky, buttery Kouign Amann from JiPan.



In contrast, her sister Danni, as she is fondly called, is more mild-mannered, letting out answers as if still issuing press statements as the corporate communications executive of her former firm. Once a bit relaxed, however, the similarly ram-bunctious side is evident. These two sisters, out of four siblings, are as close as they come.

Years ago, back when they were kids, Christ-mases meant self-imposed dance numbers. It was a shared joy—and a current source of mixed pride and embarrassment—with the rest of their 80-plus strong family on their mother's Magsaysay side. "Once in the early 1990s, we danced to Boom Shakalaka! We dressed up in shorts, Doc Martens, bra tops, and we went all out with a side ponytail," muses Stephanie.

Christmas Eve is always spent with the Magsaysays. The gatherings are huge, the house is packed, everyone brings in their presents and their Tito Exequiel always plays the pseudo-program host (back in the day, he was Santa), and that's the only way they know how to do Christmas, she says.

Culinary calling

The lure of one big happy family is appealing, and it does not diminish over transcontinental miles. The Brimos have been away for over a decade, simply returning to Manila for summer and holiday breaks. With the passing of time and shifting generations, Danni longs for the family events she has missed—birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and even funerals. "I think what I look forward to the most coming home is you know exactly what's going to happen. It's the predictability of it, the traditions of Christmas, like on the 24th you know you'll have the big *Noche Buena* with the Magsaysays, and the next day, it's Christmas lunch with the Brimos. You look forward to seeing the people you've missed seeing for the entire year," Danni quips.

Stephanie herself, before settling back in Manila a couple of years ago, took a long route home. Like any other adult in the making, she struggled for a while on what to do. But in the end, she went back to what she and everyone else knew. She was destined to be in the kitchen.

From her grandma, who passed down recipes that are savored every December, and on to her mom, ever the homemaker, Stephanie was meant to cook and bake. Uncanny as it sounds, even back when she was a young girl, her mom would always say, "You're going to CIA one day, and be a chef."

And she did, after busting her way through Leslie Stowe's in Vancouver, four years of studies in New York, an internship in New Orleans, three years at the Four Seasons Hotel in Toronto, and a year of training at the Ecole Ritz Escoffier in Paris. She became a chef, not in



The Brimo sisters, who haven't seen each other in months, spend the days leading to Christmas preparing for a truly memorable family time over a sumptuous feast.

her own restaurant in Manila as she intended, but by taking on a business that the Universe dropped onto her plate.

Stephanie owns and runs JiPan, the Japanese-inspired store known for its artisanal breads long before it became a fashion. It wasn't all easy, she stresses. For a while, she was "walking on eggshells." She had to adjust working with employees that have been in the company for nearly 20 years, plus a kitchen and operations that weren't up to international standards. Slowly, she turned it around, modernizing and expanding. Only a year after taking over, she recently opened a new café and bakeshop in SM Megamall.

It is the sweet smell of success. The seeming ease, she says, "is because I love it. Like when I research food for Christmas, it's not like I would be doing anything else. I'll still be looking at food, because that's what I like to do, so at least now, there's a purpose."

Labor of love

For the seasonal spread for Danni, Stephanie let her culinary creativity shine. She went for the fun and unconventional, using Cornish game hens instead of the traditional turkey. Her jovial mood also extended to the stuffing she made, a rich mix of maple breakfast sausage, Granny Smith apples, and JiPan French bread. She suggests preparing it separately from the hens, allowing the meat to cook evenly as well as having more stuffing for sharing.

The desserts is also a selection of heartwarming, supremely filling goodness, from the pineapple carrot cake and the decadent Kouign Amann to the JiPan donut-dipping bar, which is a new addition to the store's holiday offerings. This is a ready-to-serve donut fondue buffet, Stephanie explains. It makes holiday dinner parties easier, while giving it a unique touch.

In fact, as she talks about all the preparations, it can be surmised that festivities shouldn't be overly laborious. While it is best to serve freshly made dressings and the like, substituting jams for fruits for the vinaigrette base is not a sin. What is a catastrophe is forgetting the most important ingredient in any Christmas get-together—your guests.

When stumped to name one specific takeaway from her chef circumnavigation, Stephanie is reminded by Danni: "The great thing about coming home is you were able to teach yourself all these things, knowing that you have the support of so many people who love you."

And no truer words could have been spoken before Christmas Day. **11**



Easy Festive Table Trick:

Wrap a candle with a eucalyptus sprig. We brought ours from the Puentespina in the Manila Seedling Bank. This is a quick way to add texture and color to your Christmas table.



Fete de la Brimo

Chef Stephanie Brimo dishes out some quick tips on how to entertain with flair.

1. Do things ahead of time. Opt for dishes that can be assembled the night before, and then put into the oven an hour or so before guests arrive. This lessens the load—and stress—on the day itself, so you can spend time with your guests.

2. Make lists. Entertaining a large group can be a daunting task. Keep a running list of all meals to be prepared. This ensures your timing is organized, such as scheduling which dish will use the oven first. Cooking is as much a part of the fun as the partying itself.

3. Stick to tested recipes. Choose recipes that you are already comfortable making or, at the very least, practice cooking new recipes before the big day. You don't want to be at the edge of your seat worrying whether your guests like your food or not.

4. Invest in a thermometer/timer with a probe. It's foolproof and saves you from fretting over serving dry food. All you have to do is insert the probe in the meatiest part of the turkey, chicken, or roast beef, etc. Next, set the internal temperature you're looking to serve, and voilà! It will beep when it's done.

5. Have fun with it! No one likes a stressed-out host, so start early, turn up the Motown, and have a good time cooking. Remember, it's not rocket science, and everyone always appreciates the effort of a homemade meal!

Potato Casserole

(You can prepare and keep this dish in the fridge the night before a Christmas dinner. Just leave the breadcrumbs topping off until you put it into the oven for a crispy baked treat.)

- 7 1/2 cups frozen shredded hash brown cut potatoes
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 10 bacon strips, sliced thinly
- 2 cups shredded aged cheddar cheese (or substitute with your favorite melting cheeses like Monterey jack or smoked Gouda)
- 1 container sour cream (8 oz)
- 1/2 cup cream
- Salt and pepper to taste (or about 2 t salt and 1.5 t fresh cracked pepper)
- 1 1/2 cups bread crumbs (preferably Panko Japanese breadcrumbs)
- Butter, melted
- Finely sliced chives

1. In a sauté pan over medium low heat, render the fat from the bacon until the meat crisps up. Spoon the crisped bacon pieces and let drain on a paper towel. Remove about 1/2 of the fat from the pan and return to medium heat. Add onions and sauté until translucent. Set aside to cool.
2. In a bowl, mix the frozen potatoes, shredded cheese, sour cream, and cream. Add cooled bacon and onions and mix until thoroughly combined. Transfer mixture to a 3-quart shallow baking dish and pat it down so it's evenly spread.
3. Mix the Panko or your chosen breadcrumbs with enough melted butter to coat. It's easier if you put the Panko in a large Ziploc bag, drizzle the melted butter on top, seal, and shake until thoroughly combined. Sprinkle evenly on top of the potato mixture. Bake at 350 for about 45 minutes. Let this stand for about 15 to 20 minutes before serving. Garnish with finely sliced chives.

Sausage, Apple, and Walnut Stuffing

(Adapted from a stuffing recipe by Diana Rattray)

- 1 lb breakfast sausage (skins removed)
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1.5 cups diced apples (Granny Smiths)
- 1.5-2 cups chopped celery
- 10 cups cubed French bread (best to use JIPan French bread)
- 1 cup rough chopped walnuts
- 1 T poultry seasoning
- 1.5 T finely chopped fresh sage
- 2 T finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1.5 t salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1.5 cups chicken broth

1. In a large sauté pan over medium high heat, cook the sausage, stirring frequently to break it up into small pieces. When cooked, remove from the pan and drain on paper towels.
2. Pour out remaining fat from the pan and return to heat. Add butter and melt over medium heat; add onions, celery, and apples and sauté until softened. Set aside to cool.
3. In a large bowl, toss cubed French bread with the vegetables and butter, the crumbled sausage, and chopped walnuts. Mix in all fresh herbs and seasoning and stir in chicken broth until mixture is moist but not mushy.
4. Transfer mixture into a baking dish and pack evenly. Cover with foil and bake at 350 for about 25 minutes.
5. Remove foil and turn your oven to broil for about 5 minutes until the top is evenly browned.

Have Yourself a Casual Little Christmas

FUN, DYNAMIC ELEMENTS
TURN AN INFORMAL GATHERING
INTO A LIVELY FEAST

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



Casual table setting by Avi Chua of Ramen Nagi shows holiday colored placemats and a festive centerpiece.



ONE OF THE JOYS of getting together for Christmas is that even a simple gathering can be dressed up and filled with a sense of occasion. A Christmas table can be elaborate and elegant or homey and crafty. Restaurateur Avi Chua, of Ramen Nagi, prefers a more casual, informal, convivial gathering. To reflect this ethos, she used quirky plates with cheery holiday patterns, sure to make her guests smile and forget their kilometeric lists filled with the usual Christmas rush of errands. A wreath with berries, Christmas balls, and green apples brims over with symbols of abundance and hope. The napkin rings echo the classic scheme with pine cones, berries, and greens.

Design Smarts:

- Use holiday colored placemats to frame your plates. It's an easy way to visually unite the table.
- Complement your placemats with a different colored coaster, or napkins in contrasting hues, so that the table feels lively and celebratory.
- Mix and match colored or patterned plates for that festive vibe.
- Inserting sprays of pine and berries in your napkin rings will add holiday appeal.
- Your table should always have a theme—however simple or over the top, make sure all elements work together.
- Set your table in advance so you have time to prepare food. 🍴

Yuletide Brews

REVEL IN THE FLAVORS OF THE HOLIDAYS WITH THESE BEVERAGES YOU CAN MAKE AT HOME

BY ANNA M. ROSETE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Eggnog
(Yield: 8 servings)
Recipe by Pimbrera

- 3 cups milk
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 vanilla pod (peeled and seeds scraped)
- 8 egg yolks
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup rum
- 2-1/2 cups cream

1. Combine milk, cinnamon sticks and vanilla pods. Heat over medium heat to steep.
2. In a separate bowl, combine egg yolks and sugar. Whisk together.
3. Remove the vanilla pod from the milk mixture. Slowly add it to the egg yolks. Continue whisking.
4. When combined, whisk over a bain-marie until slightly thickened. Add rum and cream.
5. Remove from heat, and serve over ice and strawberries.

Spiced Wine
Recipe by Jet Acuzar

- 3 mandarin oranges
- 2 lemons
- 1 lime
- 1 bottle of Agave Syrup (use as much or as little for desired sweetness)
- 7 whole cloves
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 4 fresh bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon powdered nutmeg
- 1 vanilla pod halved lengthwise
- 3 star anise
- 2 bottles of red wine, Bordeaux or Chianti
- 1/4 cup brandy (optional)

1. Use the peel of your oranges, lemons, and lime.
2. In a large sauce pan put half a bottle of wine and place over medium heat. Add the peel of your oranges, lemon,

THE SEASON'S COOLER WINDS and chilly evenings make one long for the comfort of warmth. Whether it's a snuggle with your favorite pet, or some good me-time with a book in your favorite chair, the season just begs for some uninterrupted moments laced with affection. A good brew can always bring you these moments. That's why it's in the required list to usher in the seasonal comfort, joy and good cheer. For this, the classics are always a welcome treat. Make them at home, and definitely make them for the merriment of the whole brood. Your festive table is only a bowlful of eggnog and spiced wine away...



MAKE AHEAD
The spiced wine can be kept overnight at room temperature. Reheat before serving.

- and lime. And squeeze in the juice of the oranges.
3. Add in the nutmeg, cloves, bay leaves, the cinnamon stick, and the sections of your vanilla pod.
4. Taste the mixture and add agave syrup stirring and tasting until you reach the desired sweetness.
5. Let the mixture simmer and bring to a boil so all ingredients are merrily mixed together, producing a sweet aroma.
6. The mixture should be kept boiling for about 4-5 minutes

- to form a syrupy consistency.
7. Turn the heat down to a low flame and add the rest of the wine. If you plan to use brandy, this is the time to add it into the mixture.
8. Add in the star anise and allow to simmer for three more minutes and remove from the flame.
9. To serve, pour the mixture into a glass. You may garnish with orange slices and star anise. You can also add a cinnamon stick if you like.

Hearty Palate

A NEW CONCEPT RESTAURANT
AIMS TO REVIVE THE CULTURE
OF HOME-COOKED PINOY DISHES

BY GRACE LIBERO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG AND PAUL DEL ROSARIO



LEFT: Interiors of Pimbrera. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Pimbrera storefront is adorned with the image of the Barasoain Church, an homage to Bulacan. Festive conchinitillo. Kare-kare served with veggies on the side.

TUCKED IN A CORNER in San Antonio Plaza, Makati, a quaint hole-in-the-wall restaurant specializes in home-cooked Pinoy dishes. Pimbrera ng Barasoain opened early this year, and it has become the go-to, dine-in and take-out place of many.

Owned and managed by the Calalang family of Bulacan, the restaurant evokes a warm feeling of home with its excellent menu items that prove to be popular choices for family gatherings. Ina, the *ilaw ng tahanan*, is in charge of the business operations, while Conrad, the *padre de pamilya*, is the chef behind it.

Pimbrera is a term for the 2- to 3-tiered lunch box made up of stackable trays, often

used to carry home-cooked meals as *baon* on the go. Pimbrera, the restaurant, incorporates that definition with its concept of take-out food in microwaveable containers, making it easier for those on the go to entertain with their fare. “The idea is to bring home-cooked food to homes, especially to empty-nesters. Most condominium dwellers find relief in a Pimbrera dish, especially because it frees them from having to cook after a busy day at work. Office people also find it convenient to just microwave the Pimbrera dishes in the canteen on lunch breaks,” Vanna says.

Filipino cuisine is the core of Pimbrera. Their bestseller is the Kalitiran (oyster

blade). Other must-try dishes include Chicken Pakam and Pinatisang Manok—Vanna’s personal favorites—which are also signature Bulakeño fares.

Vanna says clients come up to them and remark how Pimbrera’s food tastes just like their mothers’ own version and how it brings back memories of their younger years. ❶

The Dress Code

THE APPROPRIATE
ATTIRE FOR THE
RIGHT OCCASION

ILLUSTRATION BY ARLENE SY



Gentle Reminders

Formal or Black Tie usually means the women are meant to come in long gowns and the men in tuxedos or a *piña barong*.

Semi-formal or Cocktail means the women can wear a dressy short outfit, and the men in a sports jacket or a business suit.

Business means both men and women are expected to be in suits, or a tailored dress if the woman prefers a dress to a suit.

Casual means a more laidback look is acceptable, but the guest is still expected to look polished and neat.

CAT: Did you get the invitation to the Have-We-MET Gala?

MS. DEMEANOUR: Yes, hasn’t everyone?

CAT: I love it when an event is clear about the dress code, and I’m glad there are events that stick to the traditional terms. All these newfangled ideas such as “festive chic” or “sporty formal” just muddle things up. There is nothing wrong with formal, cocktail, business and casual.

MS. DEMEANOUR: Well, I don’t mind a little wordplay now and then, but I do understand

what you mean. Being appropriately dressed is easier than trying to be the next Lady Gaga. There is a fine line between creative license and just plain silliness.

CAT: Do you think it is appropriate to wear a short dress when the invite says formal?

MS. DEMEANOUR: I think it has everything to do with material and style rather than length. A maxi dress is long but casual in look and fabric. But an exquisite and stylish short dress can look very formal with the right accessories.

CAT: Do you think a long gown is still the best option to wear to a gala party or a ball?

MS. DEMEANOUR: Well, nothing beats the impact of a proper ball gown.

CAT: And have you decided what you’ll be wearing to the party of the year?

MS. DEMEANOUR: Yes, I’ll be taking a page from the Kate, and wearing what I wore last year.

If there are doubts, it is still best to ask the host for clarification. ❷



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Makiisa sa pagbuo ng kwento ng pagbangon.



Through Sagip Kapamilya, we continue to help our fellow Filipinos to rise from the devastation of the different calamities that recently struck our country. Together as one nation, we shall rise from this.

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Lady of the Flowers

HER SIGNATURE TOUCH
BLOOMS INTO AMAZING
FLORAL DESIGNS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



Spruce florist and owner, Patricia Pastelero. In the foreground and right, a sampling of her holiday creations.



RENOWNED FLORIST Patricia Pastelero, the founder / owner of Spruce Floral Designs, says Barbie doll was the design influence of her childhood. Why so? Because, Patricia points out, “Barbie constantly changed with the times, had hundreds of outfits, hairstyles and shoes, a cute car, and dream house.”

Who knew then that Barbie’s fashion sense would open Patricia’s young eyes to color, texture, line and form? But perhaps it did, because these same elements are used in floral design. And yes, floral design constantly changes with the seasons.

1. WHO OR WHAT INSPIRES YOU? I find inspiration when I travel. It’s the only time that I’m able to clear my mind and not have to think of a million and one details at once. In fact, I think I’m due for a vacation. I need to regroup and think of fresh, new designs for my late 2014 and 2015 events.

2. WHEN DID YOU REALIZE YOU WERE INTERESTED IN FLORAL DESIGN? I didn’t really appreciate flowers or floral arrangements when I was younger. It was when I moved abroad in 2001 and saw the wide variety of flowers and the great flowers shops out there that I started to be interested in flowers.

That there are seasons to consider also changed my perspective and appreciation for flowers. Because of the seasons, I also noticed the constant changes in what the corner deli would have on their flowers displays...interesting and fun stuff to have at home.

My interest in floral design started out as a hobby really. I used to buy flowers from a nearby deli every week for my apartment. When I returned to Manila, people started asking me to do floral arrangements for them, for dinners, which eventually led to bigger events.

3. DESCRIBE YOUR CREATIVE STYLE IN THE WORLD OF FLORAL DESIGN. Full, lush, and textured arrangements. Sometimes, I wish I could make more arrangements that look like they’ve just been picked from a field, but given the weather in the Philippines, it’s tough to do such loose arrangements. These kinds of arrangements won’t fare too well in the heat, and I’ll end up with a lot of complaints about browning or missing petals.

4. WHAT ARE YOUR TOP THREE FAVORITE FLOWERS TO WORK WITH AND WHY? That changes all the time. Last year it was ranunculus and anemones. Right now, it’s sweet peas, garden roses, and astillbe. I love how light and delicate sweet peas are, and I’m still waiting for a bride to ask me to make her a whole bouquet of sweet peas. Garden roses are a constant favorite; they come in a variety of colors and bloom beautifully. Astillbe

adds a nice feathery quality to arrangements and bouquets.

5. IF MONEY WERE NO OBJECT, WHAT WOULD YOUR DREAM PROJECT BE AND WHY? A really lush garden reception with a trellis, ivy, twinkly lights, and potted flowers. Tables would be laden with well thought of and beautiful florals—green hydrangeas, hellebores, garden roses, sweet peas, ranunculus, and lots of herbs and foliage. To be honest, I prefer simple projects wherein more thought goes into subtle details and luxury—beautiful florals in silver mint julep cups, silver candelabra, pretty china, embroidered linens, etc.

6. WHAT IS YOUR DESIGN INDULGENCE? Collecting fabric. I graduated with a degree in textile development design and really do appreciate a beautifully laid out pattern, multicolored print, and handwoven textiles. ①