



windsor's world

Interior designer Windsor Smith has been stealthily glossing pedigreed houses with modern-day sheen. But with her new line of furniture (and soon fabrics and rugs), her unstudied classic style is about to go big-time public. Her L.A. home is a riveting tutorial.

photographs by MIGUEL FLORES-VIANNA text by ERICA BEENEY

When she first drove past the Monterey colonial tucked in one of L.A.'s storied canyons, Smith was delighted by its old-world grandeur. But even before she decided to buy, her mind began to race with visions of how she could update it. "I love that European sensibility where the kids move into an ancestral home and inject it with their modern lifestyle," she says. Indeed, this mash-up of past and present is Smith's calling card. She has reworked a seashore retreat originally designed by Sister Parish and renovated the illustrious Howard Hawks estate. Her process is intuitive—and steeped in the personalities of her world-class clientele. "It's really about listening to how they aspire to live," she says. That individualistic approach led her to launch a line of custom furnishings, and she's partnering with Kravet for an eponymous collection of rugs, which will debut this fall, and fabrics for next summer (available through its showrooms). Many of her designs found their way into her home—perhaps the best example of her time-bandit style. In just a year, Smith turned old-fashioned, dark interiors into bright and breezy havens, changing the very way the rooms functioned. Even the porches off her sons' bedrooms, which once offered shade for ladies-who-lunch, have a new lease. "The boys hang out up there with their guitars," she says. "Pretty soon, they'll be pulling girls up on the railing."





Smith hangs out in the backyard with husband Anthony, dog Zora and pet duck Camille; her teenage sons, Oliver and Trinity, chill on the second-story porch.

FROM THE NEW WINDSOR SMITH HOME COLLECTION opposite page: CRAFT Tufted "Harlow" from \$1,800, windsor-smithhome.com for information

this page: CANOPY CHAIRS (similar to shown) Palm Beach Collection "Sun Lounger" \$2,079 each, and OTTOMANS \$770 each, laneventure.com for stores ARMCHAIRS (similar to shown) Rattan "Beachside Modern" \$2,850 each, Ralph Lauren Home (888) 475-7674 for stores opposite page: OTTOMAN (similar to shown) Nail-head storage \$439 ballarddesigns.com SOFA (similar to shown) Leather \$2,554.90 horchow.com PATTERNED PILLOW FABRIC Kravet "Decade" in Mink about \$397/yard, e-mail designpro@dbuilding.com BASKET Rush \$295 mecoxgardens.com for stores

Smith takes the preciousness out of wedding china, rescuing it from storage and displaying it in a country-kitchen-style dish rack.



LET THERE BE LIFE

Smith bases her decorating on the way families use rooms today, regardless of their intended purpose. She sacrificed a maid's room to form a big, open kitchen, as that's where she and her crew like to gather. The airy, beach-house vibe of the all-white palette and the checkerboard floors undercuts the potential formality of the extra-long dining table and the Chippendale-inspired chairs. An armchair and industrial lamps overhead further defy expectations. Eating in the kitchen meant the dining room could be reinvented as a place for the family to play cards and casually entertain. "Dining rooms are normally the least used spaces in a house," Smith says. Hers gets an inviting injection from a spontaneous-feeling mix of seating—all her own designs—that sets a laid-back tone: a pair of Directoire chairs, a Chippendale-detailed bench and a Regency settee.

FROM THE NEW WINDSOR SMITH HOME COLLECTION

this page: **CHAIR** Hand-carved from \$3,200, **BENCH** Lacquered "Chippendale" \$1,400, **SETTEE** Hand-carved "Regency" from \$6,500, **WHITE SECRETARY** "Brittany" \$12,000 and **CURTAIN HARDWARE** Price and product available Fall 2007 opposite page: **WINGBACK CHAIR** From \$2,490, **TABLE** Carrera marble and **CHAIRS** Bamboo, prices and products available Fall 2007, all at windsor-smith-home.com for information

this page: **TABLE** (similar to shown) 72" x 40" x 31" "Marsala" \$1,599 roomandboard.com **PILLOW FABRIC** Kelly Wearstler embroidery on linen "Gordon Weave" about \$376/yard, F. Schumacher & Co. (800) 332-3384 **WALLPAPER** Custom hand-painted "Askew" \$850/3' x 6' panel, de Gournay (212) 564-9750 **BUST** (similar to shown) City resin "Diana" \$150 Jayson Home & Garden (773) 248-9180 **CURTAIN FABRIC** Silk "Cipriani" in Seafoam about \$116/yard, niemannweeks.com for information **RUG** Stark Carpet jute "Tibet" about \$97/square yard, e-mail designpro@ddbldg.com

opposite page: **CEILING LAMPS** Polished-nickel #130-2212 PN \$674 each, brownandgoldlighting.com **WALL AND CEILING PAINT** Picket Fence White #WW57, nphlaurenehome.com for stores **FLOORING** (similar to shown) 12" "Laos" A&L and "Crema Luna" tiles, artistictile.com for information





The casually propped oversize mirror virtually doubles the space, while its molding emphasizes the architecture of the door frame.

GETTING OFF THE GRID

In the living area, Smith bypassed the standard fireplace-as-focal-point in favor of an arrangement that maximizes the space's long, rectangular dimensions and that doesn't leave dead areas around the edges. She bisected the room with a double-sided sofa from her line, in effect creating two seating areas instead of one formal salon. Each demi-lounge is oriented toward French doors that are always left open, and the result is a sense of permanent vacation. "I like to feel like I'm at some fabulous resort at home," she says. That sentiment is underscored by the bohemian bazaar of furnishings, from a high-style antique chandelier to Moroccan inlaid chairs. Again, Smith achieves undecorated decorating: The classic sofa is loosened up by the heap of throw pillows, and mirrors and paintings lean against the walls, as opposed to being properly hung. The Smith-designed velvet ottoman is often used for impromptu dining.

FROM THE NEW WINDSOR SMITH HOME COLLECTION

opposite page: SOFA Double-sided "Windsor" from \$10,900 and OTTOMAN Moroccan-style from \$1,800 windsor-smithhome.com for information

this page: STRIPED-PILLOW FABRIC Travers hand-printed linen about \$114/yard, e-mail designpro@ddbbuilding.com MIRROR Custom 8' x 10' about \$4,000 Bountiful (310) 450-3620 CHANDELIER (similar to shown, in mirror reflection) "Paris Flea Market" \$1,470 circularlighting.com CHINESE STOOLS \$729 each, roomsandgardens.com for stores WALL PAINT Romantic Pink #2004-70, benjaminmoore.com for stores



Light is multiplied and diffused by many reflective surfaces: abundant mirrors, sparkly fixtures and luminous Benjamin Moore Romantic Pink paint.



SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING BLUE

Uniting elements that are seemingly in opposition is another Smith hallmark. The master suite makes use of that most traditional masculine fabric—seersucker—in refreshingly feminine ways. Carrying it from the walls through the pleating of the canopy and bed skirt brings out the inherent delicacy of the puckered blue-and-white stripe. The boys'-club paisley bedspread and imposing dark-wood armoire lighten up when juxtaposed with off-white upholstery and bedding and a collection of pillows in a range of batiks. Most importantly, the room reflects Smith's personality. "I'm a closet preppy/earth mama," she confesses.

Smith doesn't worry about putting everything away; luggage stored above the armoire serves as display and draws the eye to the high ceiling.



Oliver (left) and Trinity have jam sessions in this room; the conga drums inspired the African bedding.



FROM THE NEW WINDSOR SMITH HOME COLLECTION

this page: FABRIC FOR CANOPY, HEADBOARD AND BED SKIRT and SEERSUCKER WALL COVERING Prices and products available Fall 2007, go to windsor-smith.com for information

this page: BENCH (similar to shown) "Bench of Ribbon" from \$969 drexelheritage.com for stores PAISLEY QUILT (similar to shown) Handmade cotton "Royale" \$500/full-queen, lesindianes.com for stores PILLOW FABRIC (on bed, left) Kathryn Ireland "Diamond Batik" about \$164/yard, e-mail designpro@ddbuilding.com ARTWORK Assorted vintage posters, ebay.com for similar works opposite page: FRAMES 1" wood from \$100 each, greggooseframing.com for information

the end



The cut-tin Moroccan lamp lends international flair to the all-American carved spindles of the banister.

LOOSE NARRATIVE DEVICES

The stairwell assemblage of retro-beachy photographs, including Jacques-Henri Lartigue's massive candid glamour shot (found at a flea market) of the French Riviera's golden age, abets Smith's fantasy of a year-round vacation. Taking advantage of unconventionally shaped walls can be tricky; within the narrow confines of the stairwell, a single piece might get lost, while too many could feel cluttered. Smith solved the problem by anchoring a large central photo at eye level and surrounding it with smaller pieces of different sizes in a salon-style formation—rather than a “just so” arrangement. Matching white frames unify and update the collection. In her son Oliver's bedroom, the theme is rock 'n' roll. Smith recalls her son's plea: “He said, ‘Mom, you're not going to put in wallpaper, are you?’” Instead, she pulled together his collection of vintage rock posters with simple black and white frames. The overall effect is coordinated without being contrived.