

the white book

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THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION OF STYLISH INTERIORS



THE INTERIORS BIBLE



the oyster circle

If you have ever wondered when flicking through society magazines how some well known people always seem to have fantastic houses for their holidays, then here's the secret of how they find them.

They are part of an exclusive circle, the Oyster Circle, of just 400 members who make up one of the world most exclusive clubs. The Oyster Club has 67 peerless 'holiday homes', properties which would cost anywhere between €3 and €5million for you to buy, equip and decorate.











Here we take you inside visit a fabulous villa, tucked away in that sought after destination, Lake Garda. The interior architect is Claudia Pelizzari, whose houses and hotels have featured in Architectural Digest, Elle Décor and Andrew Martin.

Her work had been described as tailor made, with the attention to detail of a fine couturier. Each project has been imbued with her unique style in creating a relaxed, calm and serene ambience. In association with her design company, Archiglam, she has a team of architects, stage designers, artisans who all help turn her concepts into realities.

Via Monte, Pandenghe sul Garda, is situated high above the south west shores of Lake Garda with panoramic views across towards the historic peninsula of Sirmione. Whilst located in a fabulous elevated and private site, it's within easy reach of the many towns and villages dotted around the lake.

The pale pink two level villa is quintessentially Italian, with pillars and arches, sloping roofs and perfect surroundings. On entering you are struck by the grandiose dimensions, the contrast of antique and modern and the amazing views beyond. There's an infinity swimming pool right outside, creating the illusion that the water spills all the way down into the lake below. The loggia, or terrace, runs along the length of the house, with separate dining areas and a barbecue, so that guests can enjoy the panoramic views while dining al fresco. The building is perfectly at home among lush gardens with mature chestnut and olive trees, palms, agaves, oleanders and roses. At night the pool is lit from within and the twinkling lights of Sirmione seem to float below on Lake Garda.





The entrance hall is a surprise with black walls, a modern zinc mirror and twin honey coloured lamp shades – a theme which is reversed in the main lounge area, where black lampshades contrast with the honey sofas.

The kitchen/diner is huge, fitted with wenge wood cabinets and simple cross back chairs. The floor is tiled in polished terracotta with a contrasting border. It has one eye-catching feature which really stands out - an enormous plaster hood, which incorporates the extractor fan and runs above the worktops on one side. Like the wooden-beamed ceiling this is painted in white, adding to the feeling of openness.

Again in a mixture of styles from different periods Claudia Pelizzari has chosen to use both antique and modern doors and furniture throughout. In the lounge she has painted the feature wall in grey, giving it the appearance of a slub fabric. It's adorned with three black and white photos of the nearby medieval castle of Padenghe. Black and grey keep recurring in her themes throughout.



The main living room, which continues to the dining room in an elbow shape, has a white polished marble floor; broken only by a black bordered off-white rug under the seating area, where a metal and untreated wood table, designed by Claudia and made by Archiglam Studios, takes centre stage. There's a fireplace in here, which has two storm lamps sitting in the opening and the chimneybreast above is fitted with widescreen technology – the entertainment hub of the villa.







Dusty pink adds another hint of contrast to the overall palette. A few scatter cushions in chocolate brown lead the eye to the dining room, where this brown has been used on the padded dining chairs and a long antique table has been painted grey. Overhead there's a large conical shaped black lampshade. Claudia has added some more mixes of style by featuring two antique French lanterns on the walls, along with several pieces of antique furniture: the lanterns have been painted white and two tables dating from the 1700s have been zinc bases.



In case the occupants have to do some work while spending a holiday in this enviable location, there's a small office/library with blonde wood bookcases and shelving units. Another more intimate retreat has the same dusty pink of the living room, only this time it's used on one of the walls - the rest are white. The sofa in this den is black and bold black and white striped cushions decorate some occasional chairs nestling beneath a circular grey table. The chairs are painted to match.







Although far away from the sea, there are certain nautical elements scattered about, in the prints of shells and rocks and coral, which feature mainly in the bedrooms.

The bedrooms are all ensuite, with state of the art bathrooms. The floors and walls are covered with 'gres' tiles and various shades of grey are combined with the wenge wood furniture. These rooms have been accessorised with chrome and glass for ultra modern effect and the sinks are geometric in style. The tones change from room to room and this is achieved mainly by varying the colours used behind the oversized fabric headboards. These range from salmon and olive green to powder blue and cappuccino with the woods in pickled white.

Prominent and innovative designers in each location have designed the homes, which are dotted around the world, and each has put his or her own stamp on the properties. They also ensure that each one is kitted out with top spec appliances, the most luxurious furnishings, the hippest kitchens and über-chic bathrooms and bedrooms. These are no ordinary holiday homes though and are never let to anyone outside this select circle. Members can choose from places as far from each other as Cape Town and New York to Marrakech and St Lucia, deciding on exactly what they want and where they want to be.

The residences span a whole gamut from those with spectacular mountain vistas, to shelving palm shaded beaches, sophisticated cityscapes and secluded rustic getaways as well as stunning ski lodges and all in a world where old fashioned personal service is the key.







Take the winding stairs to the second level and you'll be find the hallway mirrors the downstairs entrance hall, with an antique table, twin lamps and a black wall. Up here two spacious bedrooms overlook a large private terrace, through a balcony of arches. The vistas from here are spectacular views of the lake and beyond.

When it comes to enjoying life al fresco there are fewer places where it'd done nay better than in Italy. Just step outside to the terrace or take a stroll through the gardens, enjoy the heady smell of the flowers as evening descends over the lake. Once settled into your designer home - with the prosecco properly chilled, the antipasti plated up and the barbecue reddening – it's easy to see how this property could really be your oyster.

www.oystercircle.com ; www.pelizzari.com

