IN WITH THE BOLD
POWER PATTERNS TO WAKE UP YOUR WALLS

Make a Statement with Your Sofa

The One Antique Every Living Room Needs
Jubilant, jewel-toned hues and wild pattern play are Brazilian designer Sig Bergamin’s calling cards. And the directive he received for a longtime client’s new, unembellished apartment? BRING IT ON.
MINIMALISM MAY HAVE A PLACE IN THE ART WORLD, BUT NOT IN THE WORLD OF SIG BERGAMIN.

For his own residences—in Manhattan, Paris, and his home base of São Paulo—the architect and designer bathes rooms in crimson, saffron, turquoise, and deep blue. Bold stripes brighten walls, as do polychromatic contemporary artworks by compatriots such as Tarsila do Amaral. Sofas upholstered in bohemian prints, and every imaginable surface, from chair backs to headboards, is yet another opportunity to display vivacious patterns and riotous hues. The designer’s new book, a compilation of his eclectic spaces around the globe, is, fittingly, titled Minimalism (Assouline).

And for a 2016 project in Miami, a vacation home for a longtime Brazilian client in a new residential tower in trendy Bal Harbour, Bergamin employed his fearless color philosophy to the nth degree. Success was pretty much guaranteed before even a swatch of Tlaric was procured. Bergamin has been designing homes for Liana Maria Carraro de Morais and her family for a quarter of a century; from her first apartment in Rio de Janeiro to an up-to-the-minute Manhattan pied-à-terre. Morais is not just a client, he explains. “We are family.”

Here in Miami, he looked to the sea for inspiration to transform her luxurious, albeit sterile, 1,500-square-foot apartment into a welcoming beach retreat with a festive, kick-off-your-sandals vibe. He lined walls with coral stone, which casts a warm glow. Aqua curtains in the master bath duplicate the color of the sea below. Bamboo slates in a sitting area recall a rustic cabana. A bed coverlet trimmed in pale blue evokes an azure sky.

For the living room alone, Bergamin unleashed some two dozen patterned fabrics, including surprisingly harmonious florals and tropical prints blooming on sofa upholstery, ottomans, wicker chaise cushions, and a profusion of pillows. “My client loves design and to be surrounded by lots of fabrics,” Bergamin says, “so we went through many changes to get the right mix.” A thickly textured beige rug underfoot, meanwhile, took a year and a half to fabricate. “The rug is like the sand,” he says. “Like when there’s little contrast between outside and inside.”

In the dining room, a bespoke tiled wall offers a graphic, glossy backdrop for a rosette-patterned banquette. Bergamin found the chandelier in a Brazilian antiques shop. Upholstery, Braquenié (banquette) and Raul Textiles (chair).
A sculptural wicker armchair by Newel brings beachy texture to the cozy family room seating. Ottoman upholstery, Pierre Frey; Blue armchair fabric, Ralph Lauren.

Lively shades of red continue into this guest room, which Bergamin wrapped in charcoal nail head wallcovering. Headboard and bed skirt fabric, John Rosselli. Rug, Nina Designs.

Bergamin is a consummate traveler and often weaves a global point of view into his spaces. Throughout this apartment, Asian influences flourish. Interior doors inspired by mashrabiya, an Islamic form of latticework, were constructed to separate rooms, but instead of traditional holes to filter light, the designer filled them with mirrors for privacy. Indian chests and chairs sparkle with inlaid mother-of-pearl and ivory. “Sig travels a lot and absorbs the beautiful things he sees all over the world,” says Moragas. “He has a very open mind, always wanting to learn about other ways to understand beauty. To be creative, you must know other cultures and understand different ways of life and tastes.”

Together, they went shopping for art, high and low, to complete the rooms. Locally procured works on paper depicting coral reefs play off the colors of the tufted dining room banquettes. A series of vintage prints anchors a living room wall, while nearby paintings by Fernando Botero set a mood that’s both serious (Botero is, after all, Colombia’s most recognizable living artist) and playful. His vibrant portraits exaggerate the size of people. “I like the funny and innocent way he expresses himself,” Moragas explains with a laugh.

She could just as well be describing her favorite designer, who always takes a larger-than-life approach to his craft. “I love colors. I love to mix everything together,” Bergamin emphatically declares. “That’s my concept: mix, mix, mix.”

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— LIANA MARIA CARRARO DE MORAES