



THIS LONDON  
TOWN HOUSE HAS  
BEEN DECORATED  
IN A SIMPLE,  
LUXURIOUS  
IDIOM THAT  
IS CONSISTENTLY  
UNDERSTATED



# NEW LUXE

ALL PICTURES The L-shaped drawing room-cum-library. The curtains, Roman blinds and sofas in front of the fire are in fabrics by Nicholas Haslam: 'Delatour', 'Knightsbridge' and 'Wallace Chenille' respectively. The library sofa (below right) is covered in velvet by Mary Fox Linton. Antique furniture (above right) came from the Nicholas Haslam showroom. Many of the drawings are by Jean Cocteau

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ABOVE An oak parquet floor runs throughout the drawing room-cum-library. BELOW A magnificent Italian eighteenth-century chandelier dominates the dining room, in which Italian nineteenth-century wall sconces flank an antique pier glass (below right)



Many regular readers of interiors magazines pride themselves on having a 'way' with decoration – of being able to arrange a room in a pleasing and comfortable fashion. Yet, nifty as we may be at choosing sofa cushions or lampshades, most of us have limitations where more complex design conundrums are concerned. This is because one of the distinctions between good interior designers and the rest of us is their ability to design an area within a space in a way which provides not merely a harmonious solution, but something which is innovative and exciting. The house featured here, designed by Paolo Moschino, is a fine example of this particular talent.

Paolo once saw himself more as a designer of textiles, furniture and lighting than of interiors, but this house in Knightsbridge is the fourth that he has tackled and his touch is increasingly assured. The brief from the young owners, returning to England from the States and about to have their first child, was to make this typically narrow, London town house as light and bright as possible, with spaces that could encompass both family and a more formal life.

On the ground floor, the dining room adjoins the kitchen. Paolo's task was to make this front room work both as a family room but, occasionally, as a smart dining room. His solution pivots on the table he designed, segmented like a wooden water lily, with petals that fold out to make a much larger, circular table. To increase circulation space around this, he reduced the depth of the chimney-piece. The single window obviously needed a little help, so to add width, Paolo hung a pair of heavy, plain linen dress curtains beyond the window frame



and designed double blinds for the window itself – one pair in washable sheer linen from Nicholas Haslam, the second, Roman blinds in the ever-useful 'Eaton Check' from Colefax and Fowler; a complicated-sounding arrangement which nevertheless looks wonderfully simple. Sinuous, painted plants grow up the walls, inspired by eighteenth-century Italian frescoes. Over the table hangs a pretty eighteenth-century Italian chandelier, which has been left unwired to cast flickering candlelight over the dinner table.

Polished sliding doors lead into the galley kitchen of oak, burr elm and black granite – so chic that the effect is like standing in a very smart cigar box. At party time, the doors are left open.

Beyond the kitchen, the outer wall of the house has been replaced by a small conservatory bay. In the centre is a small, square table which, for larger parties, can be extended by attaching to it the pair of demi-lune tables which usually stand against the walls.

On the walls of the staircase leading to the first-floor drawing room, no pictures were allowed – 'too narrow, too small'. The drawing room, when Paolo first saw it, was papered in an exuberant pattern of pineapples. Drastic action was needed, so enter the builder and the cabinet-maker. It is not often you hear designer or client volunteer fulsome praise for a builder, but there is always an exception and such a one is Alec Kapinos of Aldi Construction – a man who understands what is asked of him, and then does it, perfectly. He was, says Paolo, 'always there to solve a problem'. The drawing-room problem – Paolo's desire to create a Parisian room of the Fifties – was speedily effected. In a few days, perfectly proportioned plaster panels



ABOVE LEFT The hand-painted motif on the dining-room walls was inspired by the 'Delatour' fabric in the drawing room. ABOVE The hand-made oak and walnut kitchen cabinets are by Alec Kapinos. BELOW The garden was designed by Iain MacDonald



