

## Greg Natale

Interior designer, magazine addict and gold-lover

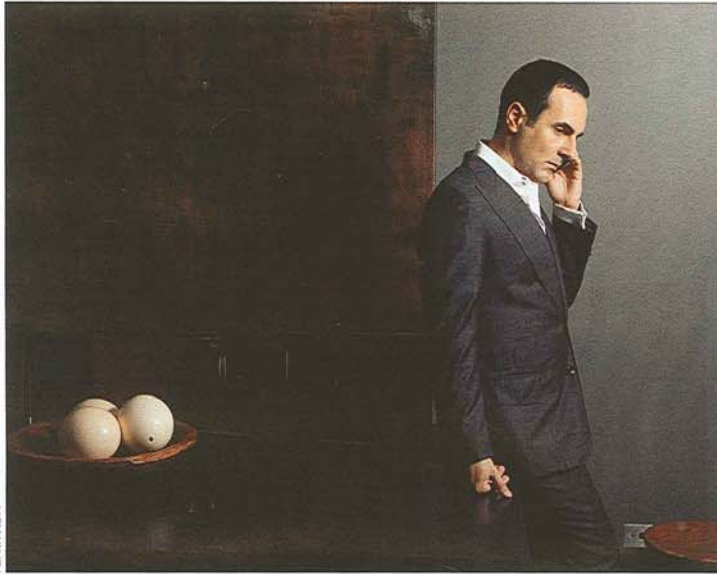
I CHOSE this apartment for lots of reasons but I really like the way people walk in and go, "Oh, wow!" It's a loft apartment in a very modern Burley Katon Halliday building but the contrast and drama of the darkness and the grey when you're inside the apartment is huge. Darlinghurst is a fantastic place to be. You can walk to everything. I like China Doll and Mario's, and Phamish is the best Vietnamese in Sydney. On weekends I like to chill out and cook. I'm not a big recipe follower and I don't have a library of cookbooks – let's say I'm more of an intuitive cook. It's roasts and pasta for me!

My downtime in the apartment is often about collapsing in front of the TV; it helps me to relax. I know the bench press is the best for stress and I make sure I go to the gym every morning before work, but I need to watch TV. Documentaries and a bit of trash ... *Gossip Girl*, *The Young and the Restless* and *Prisoner* reruns. I have clients obsessed by their TVs and home theatres but I refuse to have one in my bedroom. If I'm not watching TV I will be surfing the net. I start out returning work emails and then I go straight to desiretoinspire.net, then whatisjameswearing.com, then iloveny.com. I have a Ground Zero obsession where I need to know the progress on any new buildings in the area. I also love Facebook; I've just become Facebook friends with Zaha Hadid, Renzo Piano and Kelly Wearstler. I love magazines and design books, I seriously love amazon.com. I think with my work I really have to be up to date with pop culture. If you're not, you're a dinosaur. I have lots of subscriptions, *Belle*, *Artichoke*, *InsideOut* and a list of architectural titles including *German Architectural Digest*, which is amazing, the best magazine in the world.

**Family seat** My baroque chair is a gift from my parents, who are Italian immigrants. They built their dream home in Punchbowl in Sydney in about 1982 and this is part of a kitschy baroque setting from that house. As a kid, I absolutely hated it. I thought it was completely tacky. I tried to sell the whole setting through *The Trading Post* as a kid but Mum wouldn't let me. When I started doing this apartment it was important to me that it was very personal and original. I decided to reference my own personal experiences – and I know no one else had that chair! I now embrace it and love it. I love reinventing kitsch in our work, I like making ugly beautiful and sophisticated. It's interesting to give a piece a whole new perception.

**Tom Ford** I am a huge fan. I've always admired him and his look. I bought myself this grey three-piece suit, which is so classic and so well-made that when I put it on I just feel fantastic. I love his commitment to make clothes that last, using craftsmanship and good design. I wear this suit whenever I can – meetings, functions, wherever. I ended up buying the Tom Ford book in the States and keep that in the office with me.

**Pop art** I love Andy Warhol. His appeal is in the way he's on the razor's edge of avant-garde and mainstream. If you can do that, you will be really successful. I also just love the whole Marilyn look – she is so beautiful and I do really like to create beauty in my work. It's



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01 Greg Natale at home in his favourite Tom Ford suit.

02 The "family seat", once despised now revered.

03 A much-loved Rodolfo Dordoni for Minotti table.

04 Part of Natale's collection of boxes.



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quintessential and iconic and I bought it for myself six years ago from the Conny Dietzschold Gallery. I needed something to really make the apartment pop.

**Burattini tables** In Year 10 I did work experience with the architect Dino Burattini. I read in the newspaper that he had passed away and his estate was being auctioned. Of course I went along and I bought these coffee tables. I wish I had bought more, he had all of this incredibly hot '80s stuff but at that stage I was really poor. The concept for this apartment started with those tables.

**Blooming marvellous** I love beautiful flowers. Every now and again I throw in a pink or two, it works in the apartment because it's an accent colour that goes with grey and black. I love sculptural orchids.

**Glint of gold** My Rodolfo Dordoni for Minotti side table is really glam. I like a bit of gold. I've always liked the look of circles and interesting shapes – and it really works in my place. I also really admire the designer of this piece.

**Contrasts in coral** I bought the white coral from Mao & More in Surry Hills. It works beautifully because it's so sculptural and white objects contrast so well.

**Boxes of tricks** I have a beautiful rosewood box from LA, a crystal box from Mum and Dad's, a blue Bistozi box and a big watch-box from my partner ... it's a way to keep everything tidy. I like everything super-neat; if you have a beautiful home you take pride in it. I like order so I can think clearly and breathe. I need to be organised with no clutter in my life. But as a child I wasn't at all neat. I doubt I ever even made my bed.

**Accidental heirloom** My gold Rolex is a special occasion watch. I bought it at an auction and got a bit overwhelmed; I really wasn't planning to buy it. I love Rolex, they remain beautiful forever. I also have a Chanel J12 and a Rolex GMT Master II. Watches are a man's way of wearing jewellery.

**Murano chandelier** When I was young, my uncle put these amazing Murano chandeliers in his Federation home – a ridiculous context at the time, but I grew to love them. I ordered mine from Venice via the internet.

**Personal touch** I have a great painting by my friend Scott Petrie. We use a lot of Scott's work. He was working on this piece just as I was doing my apartment and I really liked it – so he gave it to me, which was sweet of him. 