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Dreamin' Decor

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Bedrooms for all tastes



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Pizzazz on The Palm

Bright, bold and ultra glam are the top notes of this apartment in The Palm Jumeirah's beautiful marina. But designer Nikki Bisiker has managed to instil warmth and comfort in its base notes. The overall essence? Funky yet homely.

Text and styling: Devjani Cox, Freelance Writer; Photos: Kishore Kumar, Senior Photographer

Set in the iconic The Palm Jumeirah is an exuberant apartment that makes a statement right from the word go. Tangy oranges and bold yellows meld with white hot furniture, and the whole effect is as zingy as a David Hockney painting. The apartment also possesses a large, curvaceous, vertiginous balcony with unabashed views of the Arabian Sea.

Designer Nikki Bisiker's unapologetic decorative style infuses the space, blurring the boundaries between high design and pop culture. Full-on glamour positively fizzes with audacious hues, and marble is juxtaposed with leather and boiled sweet-coloured accessories. The inhabitants of the home, a young upwardly mobile couple, saw Nikki's work in a relative's home, fell in love with her design ethos, and decided that this vibrant designer would be the

one to create the look for their new nest on The Palm Jumeirah.

"They have recently married and this is their first home together," Nikki explains.

"Needless to say, it was a very exciting experience for them and they wanted to have the perfect home in which to start their new life together. We met on several occasions as I normally do with clients to discuss, in full, their expectations, aspirations, lifestyle and personal tastes. Only then was the concept finally prepared."

The couple were looking for something that was sleek, contemporary and elegant, and at the same time a little funky, fun and cosy.

"They like to entertain a lot and, being of Middle Eastern origin where hospitality is paramount, these gatherings are almost



Above: Taking inspiration from the sea and sky, Nikki used several shades of blue infused with the clients' favourites, red, black and grey



always attended by many guests. So utilising the space to the maximum advantage was important," Nikki says. "The surrounding sea and blue skies were also a determining factor in the choice of interiors, not only in the colours I used, but also in the geometry of the place."

Since this was originally a two-bedroom apartment, storage space was also a concern. The clients' initial colour choices were red, black and grey to be used in varying combinations. Nikki, however, doesn't believe in a set colour palette or style. "I took their favourite colours into consideration, their likes and dislikes, and worked around a different colour scheme that would be more refreshing," she says. "Something a little different that would not only be a reflection of themselves, but also of the environment around their home. They were very open to ideas and combinations, so whilst I was not given carte blanche on the whole process, I could certainly express my ideas, most of which were readily accepted. However,

the wow factor is important to me. In the end a home should be a culmination of various ingredients which makes each house unique and personal to the owners."

Of course, any successful endeavour is a combination of diligence and motivation from both the designer and the team members. "Patience, a sense of humour, a lot of checking and double-checking, co-ordination, time and project management are important ingredients," says Nikki.

With the exception of the sofa bed, each and every furniture item in this home was either designed and executed or sourced by Nikki's own design firm, Nikki B Interiors. The dining room light fixture and some pieces of artwork, however, are the clients' own.

Like most modern apartments in the city, storage space had to come at a certain cost. Nikki tried to resolve the issue with hidden, ▶



This page: What was originally a study became a cosy dining area under the designer's touch. Rounded furniture was thrown in to take away the room's box-like shape. White lacquered wood with a wavy pattern also helps to break the monotony



built-in recesses in the furniture. The low level coffee table has two drawers that pull out on either side, perfect for stowing away any DVDs, remote controls and other such clutter. Also, a custom-designed large unit houses the television with plenty of storage incorporated within for additional items. An Ottoman in the master bedroom has been covered in a beautiful piece of fabric which complements the master bedroom's décor, and allows the Ottoman to cleverly double as storage space for bed linen.

The resulting layout and décor of this home is a complete departure from the initial layout conceptualised for the show home. "In the original show home, the living area was divided into two spaces with the main living space facing the walls nearer the kitchen," says Nikki. "We decided to swap the whole thing around and it is really much nicer now. Not just in the way that it looks but also in terms of functionality."

One of the ideas that popped into Nikki's head when she first saw the apartment was to consider the space as one large whole ▶



Above: Not wanting to see a space barely utilised, the couple decided to convert their guest room into an activities room, with books, a desk, a sound system and comfy seating



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Above: Most of the accessories in the home have been sourced by Nikki's design firm, Nikki B Interiors

rather than separate areas. This would make it possible to accommodate bigger pieces of furniture and fulfil a variety of seating requirements. In the end, it turned out to be a good plan – not only for seating more people, but the living area also feels larger and more airy too.

Another challenge was the study, which does not receive any natural light. Nikki decided that this space would be turned into an intimate dining area for six as, at the time, the only dining option in the house was a breakfast bar. A round dining table was custom-designed and built to take away some of the 'squareness' of the room and soften the lines. This was further complemented by rounded seats. A feature

wall was added in matt white wood with wavy three-dimensional lines simulating the undulating sea outside. "By evening it creates a wonderful setting with the lights turned down. The chairs were made with comfort in mind, using soft backs and arm rests, and a cosy fabric in striking tangerine. This is to ensure that guests remain seated well after dinner is over."

The guest bedroom was designed with options for seating, music, reading and working on the computer. "While there was a requirement for a guest bedroom, it seemed a waste to use this room solely for that purpose. So this bedroom reflects more of the clients' hobbies and interests," says Nikki. A sofa bed was



installed here, which was the logical option for seating and sleeping. And the interiors have a distinct club-like appeal, not surprising as the inspiration for this room came from a disco ball. Wallpaper from Omexco with silver and grey retro circles makes a stunning backdrop, while the silver and white shiny cushions add a crisp, steely contrast to the navy blue linen sofa.

The master bedroom was designed to be a calming retreat without taking away from the sleekness and elegance of the rest of the home. The feature wall is covered with white lacquered wallpaper by Philip Jefferies, and silver leaf adorns the other walls. Aturo Alvarez light fittings from Spain pick up the rich dark suede of the headboard, the blue

complemented by orange Stepevi rugs. Full-blown views of the sea are evident everywhere one looks, as Nikki intended – she wanted the sea views to be a recurring feature in the apartment (even in the kitchen where full-length mirrors were installed to reflect the water outside).

This apartment in the marina of The Palm is all bright and blue. It is most certainly an ultra glam hideaway, but in the end, with clever contrasting yet harmonious colour, and lots of little touches to add warmth to the modernity and sleekness, it has been transformed into a living, breathing family home. As the night draws in, a cocooning comfort descends, which is as spectacular as it is inviting and cosy. ■

Above: In the master bedroom, silver leaf on the walls and deep blue in the furnishings and fixtures create an environment that is calm yet cool, the additional punch provided by bright Stepevi rugs

