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the living ro...
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concept...
but that had to be...
tiously to avoid looking too...
trendy. So I leaned more on the...
modern than the Moroccan.
How did you keep the house from...
feeling like a riad?

We used a global mix of furni-
ture from different eras, includ-
ing Anglo-Indian, Asian, and
English. We mixed French '40s-
inspired upholstery with New
England-style wicker. The couple
travel a lot and appreciate fine
things, and initially I thought
they'd prefer fancier antiques.
But they chose a bed with a head-
board that's almost tribal. They
surprised me with their fearlessness.

Did either of them have any special requests?

Rugs are an important part of
their Armenian and Romanian
traditions, and the husband
wouldn't even talk about fabrics
until we bought the rugs. They
didn't want traditional Persians;
those have too much color and
pattern to feel modern. To me,
faded rugs are more sophisticated.
In the hallways, instead of
using carpets, we inset mosaic
tiles to create runners.

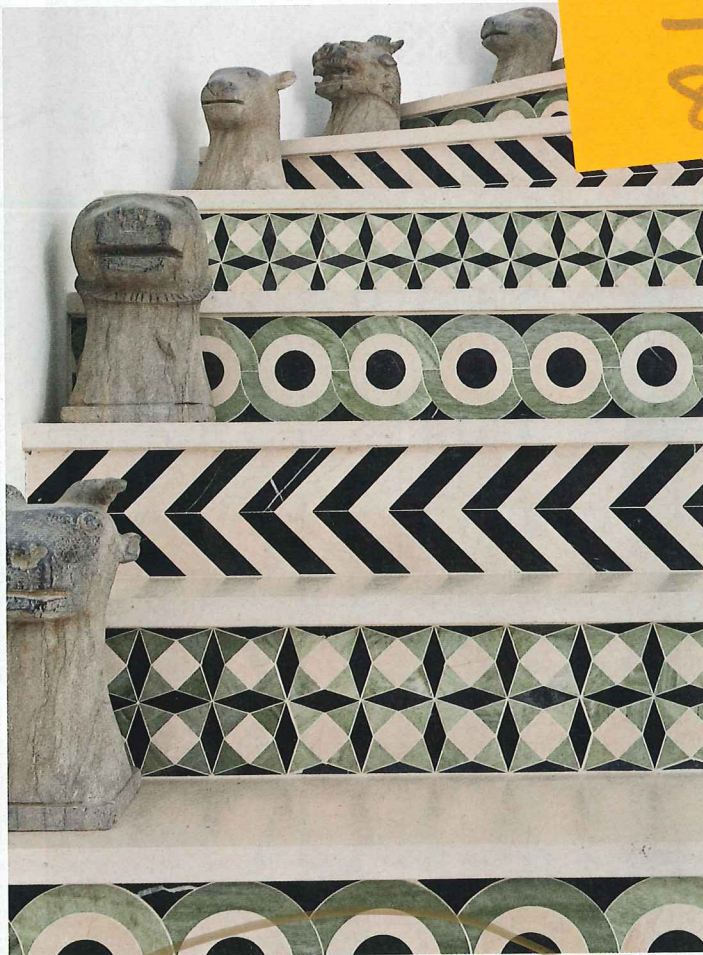
Tell me you got to do some fieldwork in Morocco for this project!

I did indeed travel to Morocco during the design phase, and I'd call them from the souk to wheel and deal for them. I was inundated with all the color and crazy tilework and embellishment there. My head was buzzing with ideas, but we wanted this house to be timeless and luxurious. That doesn't necessarily mean fancy. It's about quality materials. You need to pick and choose the grand gestures.

Those tiled steps certainly are grand—a veritable stairway to heaven. Why go where others fear to tread?

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Staircases can be so boring and quiet. Why shouldn't they start a conversation? But the classic Moroccan tiled staircase in 10 different colors and patterns isn't that...
able here. So my design partner, Max Hu...
phrey, and I limited the palette—the



ABOVE: The staircase becomes a graphic installation with patterned tiles by Country Floors.
OPPOSITE: A powder room features Ann Sacks's Maghreb 4 tiles on the wall. Arturo sconces by Paul Ferrante. Forbidden City mirror by Bunny Williams Home. Mehraab sink by Viya for Stephanie Odegard with THG's Versailles fittings.

high-contrast patterns in just three colors—for the risers. The steps are the same white limestone as the floors, so the tiles can be the stars of the show.

Speaking of which, you also used Moroccan star lanterns. What's the appeal? Stars are a Moroccan symbol. In the powder room, we paired a vintage pendant with a starburst-shaped sink, and tiles

with radiating patterns of varying scale. The room has a lot of energy. In bathrooms, you can break...

patterns?
work as neu-
the fireplace is
etched stone
e, which reads
istance. Even
chairs, which
up Fortuny
because the
colors share the same tones.

What are your new neutrals?

Versatile and natural materials: Wood, stone, iron, linen, leather, and suede are all neutrals. It can be rustic, like a house in Laurel Canyon, but it can also be a sleek Armani-style penthouse in New York. As far as color goes, I am influenced by fashion, so the classics—denim blue, army green, sweatshirt heather gray, camel, even camouflage—are also neutral colors. And let's not forget black and white.

Do you have a go-to white?

In this house, it's Benjamin Moore's White Dove. White walls are the way to go, especially if you are attracted to color, pattern, and textiles. But not that stark, cold Liquid Paper color; to be inviting, white needs to be warm. Strong whites with bold colors give a crisp and tailored look. Creamy whites with muted colors are more organic and bohemian.

Where does black come into the picture?

It's more of an accent. I love black marble and dark-stained woods. All the windows in the house are black steel, which adds drama against the white walls and stone floors. It's a clean, sharp, and elegant canvas, but for me, a house is not finished if it's all neutrals. It's just waiting to get accessorized and turned up a notch.

The guest rooms certainly dial up the color.

They're not everyday spaces, and we wanted them to stand out. In one suite, we turned a vibrant vintage wedding quilt into a headboard and paired it with yellow table lamps. The right mustard shade is cheerful in small doses. But it's not a neutral—so please, don't paint the walls yellow.

