

ALL ABOUT OSCAR THE DRESSES, THE JEWELRY, THE TALES

# InStyle

CELEBRITY+LIFESTYLE+REVEALS

## **Classic Clothes**

*The Looks You'll  
Always Love*

## **Spring Colors**

*The Best New Makeup*

**The Perfect  
Jeans for You**

# **Getting Gorgeous!**

Ashley Judd


*Stars Share Their  
Secret Tips and Tricks*

**Plus** 24 Pages of  
*Celebrity Homes*

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

APRIL 2002 INSTYLE.COM AOL KEYWORD: INSTYLE





De Rossi pauses on a ladder that leads to her atticlike office. Behind her is a painted canvas that hung in New York's Ziegfeld Theatre. Opposite: a foyer bench covered in white leather and a painting by friend Kali Sanders.

# FLIGHTS OF FANCY

When she's not hovering over Southern California in a helicopter, *Ally McBeal*'s Portia de Rossi floats over Hollywood in a 1930s penthouse filled with vibrant decoration and eccentric accents

by Nancy Griffin



## Portia de Rossi

"I love living here because I get to see so many birds," says Portia de Rossi, wiping the sleep from her eyes and gazing out her bedroom window to the Hollywood Hills. "Birds and helicopters just fly by—it's crazy. I've flown my helicopter—well, it's my brother's helicopter—50 feet outside this window, and you can see right through."

The Australian-born actress can't resist lofty places. De Rossi chose this three-story aerie on the seventh floor of a historic 1930 Hollywood building (Marilyn Monroe and Rock Hudson once lived here) as her first very own home. So blissed-out is she here that, despite the sunshine pouring onto her bed, she was sleeping when the doorman announced her visitor. Now, having thrown on a pair of black Puma track pants and an Iggy Pop T-shirt, she's nursing a coffee and sitting cross-legged on a funky seventies fur chair. Without makeup and with her blond plumage pulled back into a ponytail, she seems naturally easygoing, the opposite of her nasty *Ally McBeal* character, lawyer Nelle Porter.

She had always imagined she'd one day own "a red-brick, high-ceiling Victorian" with a garden, like those in her hometown near Melbourne. But let's face it: She's 28 years old and a star on a hit show—it's not the time in her life to be pruning roses. What she really needed was a cool zone for relaxing and entertaining. "Portia's friends are creative, artistic people," says Tim Clarke, the interior designer who pulled together the apartment's exuberant mix of industrial, traditional and modern design elements. He also supervised its reconstruction (including a new, sculptural stairway linking the two floors) to showcase her paintings and collection of ... mannequins? "I love body parts," says De Rossi, "especially hands." She used to rummage through yard sales and drive off with arms and legs sticking out of her car. "I'm not so bad now," she says. "I've calmed down a lot."

"She was different from the average kid," says older brother Michael, who runs a helicopter flight school in Long Beach. "She always had a great deal of ambition and was headstrong. She'd set her mind on something and, come hell or high water, she would get it." From a young age Portia loved being in front of a camera, and she became

