SIMPLY CHIC

BROOKLYN
CHELSEA
FIFTH AVENUE
IRVINGTON
SOUTH BRONX
UPPER EAST SIDE
A Stylish Affair

The living room (this page) is furnished with a Donghia sectional, a Holly Hunt sofa, and a vintage Harvey Probber-designed armchair. The area rug is a Kelly Wearstler design for the Rug Company. In the dining room (opposite), a London chandelier from Fuse Lighting hangs above a suite of leather-upholstered J. Robert Scott chairs and a Dakota Jackson dining table. See Resources.
When a recently married young couple asked Jenny Kirschner to decorate their new townhouse in Brooklyn, they gave her what every interior designer dreams of: carte blanche. But the assignment came with two caveats: “The wife told me that she liked blues, but not browns,” recalls Kirschner, who opened her Brooklyn-based design firm, JDK Interiors, in 2007. “And then she explained that the work had to be completed before their first child arrived in four months.”

The mandate didn’t deter Kirschner from taking the job. It just meant that she’d have to get creative—fast. A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Kirschner was up for the challenge. “I’ve studied so much color theory,” says the decorator, who holds degrees in fine arts, art education, jewelry design, and interior design. “I understand the small nuances that can be achieved by using the same shade of blue in different textures or by pairing it with other colors, instead of using 10 different shades of blue. It’s a more dynamic interpretation.”

With no time to spare, she arrived at the 3,600-square-foot townhouse the following week, where a gut renovation was already under way. “It was a seriously rushed job, and there really wasn’t time to plan anything in advance,” she recalls. “We had to dive right in.” Fortuitously, she had previously worked with other members of the clients’ family, so a mutual trust had already been established.

Kirschner wanted to create a rich, sophisticated environment that would look mature, but still bear a youthful air. To achieve the right balance, she paired elegant textiles, such as alpaca and wool, with furniture designed in playful silhouettes, including a sinuous Donghia sectional clad in cashmere and striking A Balance

Decorator Jenny Kirschner designed the mirror in the dining room (opposite), one of a pair, with overlapping leather, hide, and suede tiles. The buffet’s doors are painted a custom Benjamin Moore hue. The kitchen (this page) includes Robert Mannelli-designed stools, a Rocco Rabitti Diapo dining table, and the buffet is covered in a mixture of quartz from ABC Stone. The range and hood are Viking and the faucet is Grohe. See Resources.
In Fine Form

The master bedroom (OPPOSITE) features a custom bed frame from the New Traditionalists and wall tiles from Garrett Leather. (THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE) The hand-painted wall covering and cabinet pulls in the master bedroom’s sitting area are from Holland & Sherry. The custom shelving unit in the study is backed in a Phillip Jeffries suede and the tufted chair is from Donghia. A Waterworks tub is paired with a THG tub filler in the master bath. See Resources.

wood and a Holly Hunt sofa upholstered in soft camel leather. Surprise: Each of these pieces has a warm brown hue, proof of Kirschner’s powers of persuasion and expert color sense.

Kirschner’s clients asked her to keep the walls free of artwork, so she covered the open living and dining room, kitchen, and a portion of the master bedroom in a Holland & Sherry hand-painted vinyl that has a “molded” or worn effect. “It has a burnished quality to it, and without any artwork, that became enough,” she says. To give further interest to the master bedroom, she lined a wall in icy blue Garrett Leather tiles in an alternating concave and convex pattern. “They give it wonderful depth.” Meanwhile, in the master bath, mosaic tiles in five different shades of blue cascade down the walls like rain.

Kirschner’s jewelry background often came in handy particularly when she designed the pair of mirrors that hang in the dining room; versions of which are sold at Profiles in the New York Design Center. They can be customized with different finishes and textile-clad panels that overlap and intersect—comprising a work of art in their own right. Certainly they are a testament to her clients’ willingness to experiment. “I see this place evolving with my clients as they get older,” says Kirschner. “It’s a house they can grow with and grow into.”

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