



LIGHTWORKS

Italian designer Paola Navone has turned her Paris apartment into a bright, spacious home that celebrates originality. Photographed by Enrico Conti. Text by Lilla Bacci



Turquoise ceramic pots, designed by the apartment's owner, Paola Navone, hold artificial Indian flowers near the entrance. Underneath, an old Chinese cupboard has been stripped back to its natural wood finish. Opposite page: the chandelier is actually an old crinoline cage, while Navone created the "Vittoria" oval mirror for design firm Casamilano.

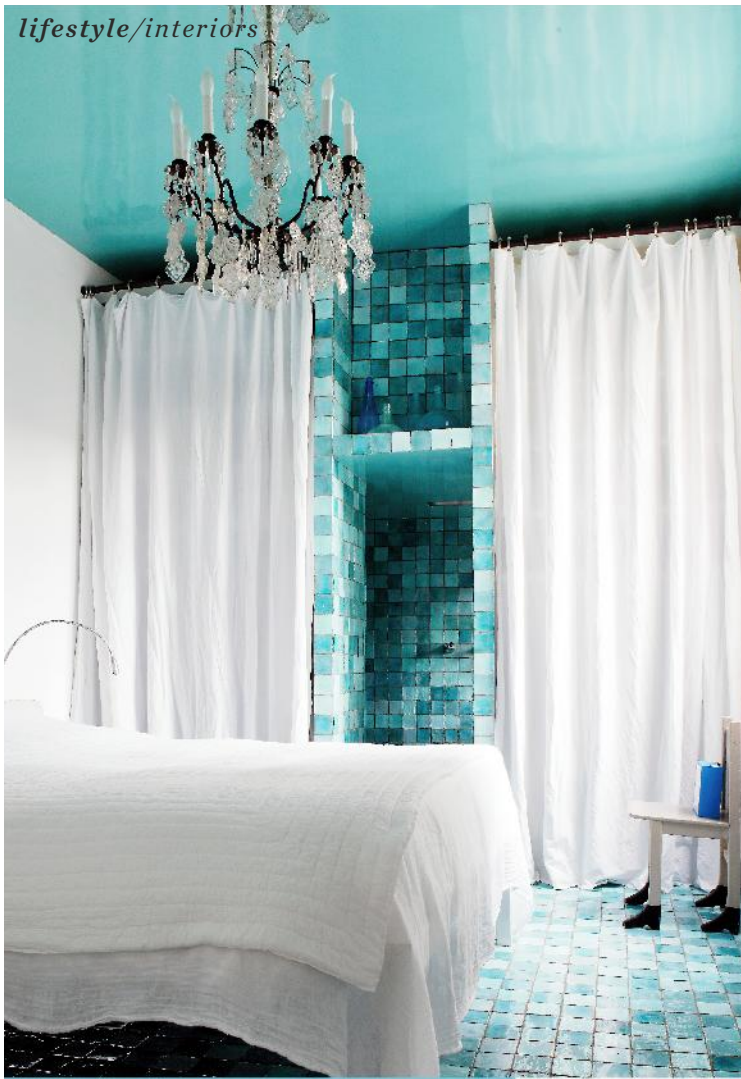




In the guest bedroom, the wall tapestry is a “reborn” carpet from Navone’s previous home in Hong Kong, while Jieldé “Loft” lamps sit atop night tables she designed. Above: a six-metre version of Navone’s “Marocco” couch for Casamilano is piled with feather pillows and cushions for luxe lounging. In keeping with the outsized theme, night-time light is provided by the monumental “Moloch Floor Lamp” by Gaetano Pesce. Meanwhile, Navone’s passion for chairs is seen in her eclectic collection of restored and revamped Asian and European pieces.



When visitors call, Navone's cluster of "Black 94" bamboo and stone coat stands (designed for Gervasoni) come into their own.



Above left and right: as if a wave of water was blending them together, the main bedroom and bathroom are tiled with exquisite aqua blue mosaics from the “Via Del Mare” (Way to the Sea) collection by Florentine ceramicist Franco Pecchioli. Below: whitewashed rough-hewn stone walls add texture and contrast to the sleek, stainless-steel units that comprise Navone’s “Pastasciutta” sectional kitchen, designed for Italian firm Ciatti A Tavola.



Above the busy Rue du Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the apartment of esteemed Italian designer Paola Navone is hidden behind an anonymous doorway from the street, through courtyards and corridors, up a worn staircase and away from the hustle of Paris’s 11th *arrondissement*.

The bones of the large, simple loft have been left the way Navone found it. “It was already done,” she maintains. Twelve huge windows bathe the industrial space in natural light, and she allowed the home to evolve rather than approach it with a set plan in mind.

Whitewashed walls – many of them rough-hewn – and bare floorboards are enhanced by her self-designed pieces, as well as works created by other designers and objects collected during her travels. The space is lively, bright and surprising. A mischievous use of scale evokes an *Alice In Wonderland* feel: the immense white couch that Navone designed for Casamilano; Gaetano Pesce’s classic “Moloch Floor Lamp” (a gigantic take on the classic anglepoise);

the long cabinet with iron doors that separates the kitchen from the rest of the living area; and the chandelier made from a crinoline cage decorated with gloriously gaudy Indian garlands.

When pieces have a normal dimension, Navone multiplies them in a search for irony, as with the “Vulcano” coffee tables she designed for Poliform (each with a unique embellishment), the multiple ceramic urns that hang in an alcove near the entrance, or the eclectic collection of mismatched chairs that encircle the round table and stand sentry throughout the home.

Beyond the cabinet and white dividing curtains lies the deconstructed, stainless-steel “Pastasciutta” kitchen that Navone designed for Ciatti A Tavola. It has a beautiful, oval-shaped sink that she loves: “To me it’s the best ever, as I can wash any amount of vegetables!”

Bedrooms are dreamy and playful – Navone’s room is awash with blue tiles that appear to have swept in from the bathroom, while the guest room is bright red and dark blue, reminiscent of the house Navone left behind in Hong Kong.

Navone says that this home “fits me in a simple, natural way”, a bit like her work: open to anybody, but still so deeply tied to her personality. ■