



the rich red, blue and cream carpet draws together the whole colour scheme
豐潤的紅色、藍色和忌廉色地氈匯集了寓所的整體色系



Home away from home

家外之家

DESIGNER NICOLE CROMWELL CUSTOMISES
A RENTED APARTMENT IN CENTRAL
TO MEET HER CLIENT'S NEO-CLASSICAL TASTE

設計師為客戶度身設計他租住的中環寓所，
以迎合其新古典派品味

On custom-made shelving, 19th century literature rubs covers with contemporary fiction, while a collection of classical music sits alongside popular CDs — it therefore seems fair to surmise that the tenant of this apartment is a man of eclectic discrimination, whose taste embraces both past and present.

In keeping with her client's personal preferences, interior designer Nicole Cromwell has blended time-honoured aesthetics with modern lines in this 1,800sq-ft Central apartment. "He didn't specify a particular look, but once I start working with someone, I can usually gauge what their style is," she comments.

Classical touches are most noticeable in the choice of sumptuous fabrics that carry rich colour into the apartment. Brocade silk, shot silk, velvet and chenille contribute to an atmosphere of luxury and indulgence. Bold patterns balance expanses of solid colour, such as the stylised motifs on the blue and gold bedroom blinds juxtaposed with blocks of plain gold

and blue on the silk bedcover. Similarly, floral silk cushions visually enliven the royal blue sofa, whose regal colour draws out the same shade from the vibrant antique carpet delineating the living area. The red and gold fibres of the rug are brought into relief by the cinnabar red and aged gold of the Chinese cabinet in the corner.

Although using luxurious fabrics, Cromwell has kept the lines clean, instilling a sense of contemporary style into the home. Most notably, all windows are finished with the barest of window treatments — the roman blind — with colour and patterning being dependent on the particular window. In the living area, both blinds are plain cream with vertical stripes of blue trimming the edges, which counteract the strong horizontal lines of the blinds' ribbing. Moving away from plain fabrics, Cromwell has chosen a finely detailed, geometric brocade design for the dining area.

"Even though it's an open space," she says, indicating the



the dining and living areas are partially divided by
the construction of a storage unit between pillar and wall
飯廳和起居室由欄杆和牆壁之間的貯物系統局部隔開



tiny halogen spotlights scattered around the apartment are used to accent artwork
 小型射燈在寓所內隨處可見，用來突出藝術作品

adjoining dining and living rooms, "I thought it would be nice to differentiate the two areas. The red of the dining room blind ties in with the Chinese cabinet in the living area and balances it. Besides, if all the window treatments were the same throughout, it would be too uniform — a bit too boring," she laughs.

In selecting roman blinds, the designer has eschewed fussy detailing, thus ensuring that the apartment remains unmistakably masculine. In addition, consideration has been given to the spectacular views the high-floor apartment affords.

"It's nice to stand by the window and be able to see some greenery," Cromwell remarks. To this end, she has deliberately set the blinds outside of the window alcove so as to keep the view open. "To be able to look out without any visual blockage is important — there's such a feeling of space here, which is rare in Hong Kong."

The redesign of the apartment has been, to an extent, limited by the fact that Cromwell's client is the

tenant, not the owner. This means that major changes to the layout could not be realised. The only structural change was the construction of a storage unit between a column and wall, effectively partitioning the dining area from the living area, while providing much needed space to house a discreet music system.

"Storage is a big issue in Hong Kong, I find. There are never enough places to put things; not enough wardrobe space, for example. I've tried to use the space cleverly." Drawers are instated in the bedroom wardrobes, and built-in bookshelves are installed in otherwise redundant corners to house her client's library. A vast collection of wine is cellared in a custom-made cabinet, which the resident can take with him when he moves on from Hong Kong.

Cromwell explains, "A lot of my clients are renting, but they still want their homes to look like homes, even if they're only here for two to five years."

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在那訂造的陳列架上，十九世紀文學名著與現代小說並存，一系列古典音樂唱碟旁，可見流行音樂唱碟，由此你可以猜想這間寓所租客的品味應該是古與今兼顧。

為了照顧客戶的個人愛好，室內設計師 Nicole Cromwell 在這間一千八百平方呎的中環寓所中，揉合了歷久不衰的傳統美學與現代風格。「客戶並沒有提出特別要求，但我一旦開始與某人工作，通常都能預測他屬於何種風格，」她說。

古典風格最明顯地體現在豪華布料的選擇上，它們為寓所注入鮮明色彩。錦緞絲綢，閃光絲，絲絨和雪尼爾線絨，交織成豪華和歡愉氣氛。鮮艷的圖案與單色調相輝映，例如藍色與金色睡房百葉簾上的時尚圖案，與絲質被面上的純金和藍色圖案相呼應。同時，花卉圖案墊子在視覺上令品藍色沙發倍感耀目，而沙發的帝皇色調又與間隔起居空間的鮮明古董地氈相同。小塊地氈上的紅色和金色，在角落裏一個朱紅與金色中國櫥櫃的配襯下，顯得格外矚目。

雖然選用豪華布料，但設計師卻保持線條簡潔，為寓所注入一抹時代氣息。最明顯的是所有窗子都不用窗飾，只用羅馬簾，至於顏色及款式則取決於每一扇窗。在起居室，兩幅百葉簾都是純忌廉色，配以藍色直條邊飾，與百葉簾構架上的橫線形成對比。除了單色布料之外，設計師為飯廳選了一款幾何性圖案錦緞設計。

「儘管是開放式設計，」她說，指指隔鄰的飯廳和起居室，「我認為界定兩者的空間更好。飯廳的紅色百葉簾與起居室的中國櫥配襯得宜。此外，如果所有的窗飾完全一樣，未免太一致，令人感到單調，」她笑道。

在選擇羅馬簾時，設計師摒棄了過份講究的細節裝飾，確保寓所保持明顯的陽剛氣息。同時，她還考慮到如何充份利用高層寓所擁有的無敵景觀。

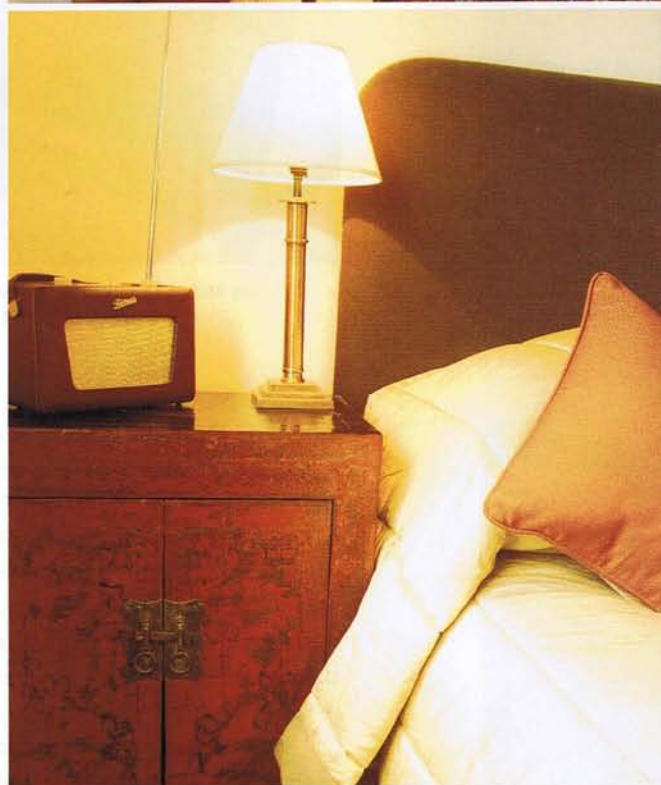
「站在窗前便可欣賞窗外青蔥景象，」設計師說。為此，她故意把百葉簾裝在窗戶凹槽外，令景色更加開揚。「窗外景色一覽無遺是很重要的——令人有空間開闊感，這在香港甚為罕有。」

寓所的重新設計在某種程度來說是受到限制的，因為這裏的主人是租客而非業主。這便意味著不可進行設計上的大變動，唯一建築結構上的變動是在一個圓柱和牆壁之間增加了一個貯物系統，有效地間隔了飯廳和起居室，同時又為一組珍愛的音樂系統提供必要的貯物空間。

「我發現貯物在香港是一個大問題。放東西的地方永遠不夠用；例如衣櫃總是不夠用。我盡量巧妙地利用空間。」睡房的衣櫃裝上抽屜，嵌入式書架安裝在不實用的角落，存放租客的圖書。一系列美酒貯放在一個訂造的酒櫃裏，當這位租客他日離開香港時，可以把酒櫃帶走。「我有許多客戶都是租客，儘管他們僅在這裏住兩至五年，但他們都希望這裏的家像真的家一樣，」設計師解釋道。

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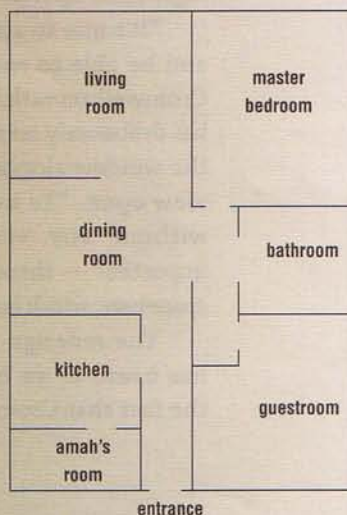


top: the dining room blind provides a rich background for an antique model ship

above: an air of sober luxury in the master bedroom

上圖：這兩盞燈只為寓所提供頭頂上的照明

下圖：主睡房散發恬靜的豪華氣派





in the guest room, gold and blue add a regal touch
客房中的金色和藍色增添一抹皇室氣派