

CONTINENTAL CHARM

EMILY DEL BELLO
INTERIORS BREATHES
CONTEMPORARY
SOPHISTICATION
INTO OLD WORLD
ARCHITECTURE

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Art Of Arrival Emily Del Bello Interiors finished the entry in Taj Mahal stone, complemented by an Artistic Frame bench in Holly Hunt fabric and a Patterson Flynn runner in an oyster hue. The staircase is punctuated with Visual Comfort sconces and an Orphan Work alabaster chandelier. See *Resources*.





When the vibes are clicking, there is nothing more precious to an interior designer than a repeat client. This was exactly the case for Emily Del Bello (principal of her eponymous NYC firm) when a Miami couple tapped her to design their second home in Fairfield County. Del Bello previously worked with the homeowners for their Florida property, and it was a natural partnership. “The wife is incredibly chill,” the designer offers. “She’s a sound-bath healer and a Pilates instructor. Our energies just really hit it off.”

The clients reconnected with Del Bello when they found this opulent Connecticut estate, secluded beyond a romantic, tree-lined drive. They were contemplating building new but were turned off by the long lead times to start from scratch. Instead, they found the next best thing in this ornate house, which was

built but not truly used by the previous homeowners, who were based abroad. “It has an extremely European feel, with lots of moldings and Venetian plaster,” Del Bello notes. “There is the most stunning, gorgeous herringbone flooring. The bones of this house were truly amazing.”

After purchasing the home, the couple brought in Del Bello and her team to infuse the Old World architecture with interiors that feel young and fresh, with a slightly softer feel than their Miami abode. The tone of quiet luxury meets European sophistication begins in the entry, which Del Bello finished with Taj Mahal quartzite. A Patterson Flynn stair runner scales the spiral staircase in a tonal hue, drawing the eye to the Orphan Work chandelier overhead.

An open plan stretches beyond with the living space and dining room at either side. Del Bello created a custom circular sofa,

Great Expectations (ABOVE) The entry/great room landing area is defined by a custom circular sofa, finished in Holly Hunt’s Great Plains Westward fabric in Macadamia. **Home & Hearth** (OPPOSITE PAGE) In the living room, textural accents include a custom sofa finished in Holly Hunt velvet and chairs with Jab Anstoetz chenille; Avenue Road nesting coffee tables and Rosie Li sconces add touches of metallics; and the plaster chandelier is through Codor Design. *See Resources.*





Fine Dining (ABOVE) The dining area features an Artistic Frame table and DLV Designs chairs, while the sconces and chandelier are from Gabriel Scott. **Quiet Retreats** The primary bedroom (RIGHT) features a custom headboard and platform finished with Kravet velvet, while Visual Comfort sconces and a Homenature chair finished in Romo velvet lend sculptural touches. White oak makes a statement in the library (OPPOSITE PAGE), softened by custom sofas in Holly Hunt velvet, an Apparatus Cloud chandelier and a Lulu and Georgia coffee table. See *Resources*.





Dark 'N' Stormy The husband's office features a sofa and coffee table from RH, a bronze and suede Apparatus lighting fixture and window treatments in Holly Hunt fabric. See *Resources*.

finished in Holly Hunt's Great Plains fabric, to serve as a landing space in between. The ballroom feel extends throughout, thanks to existing Venetian plaster and crown molding. Del Bello renovated the fireplaces at both ends for a more contemporary feel, punctuated by sculptural lighting from Rosie Li, Codor Design and Gabriel Scott.

"We really wanted something super impactful in the living room, so we went all out with the floor-to-ceiling curved fireplace. When you first walk in, you see the massive circular sofa, and then you look left and, 'oh my gosh the fireplace,'" Del Bello muses. The designer notes that lighting is often a point of investment for her designs, since it is lightly touched. "The wife is creative, artistic and loves to take a design risk," she adds. "To some, massive, sculptural floral sconces might be risky, but to this homeowner, it was just fun."

While Del Bello primarily collaborated with the wife, the husband had two main requests: a dark office space and a cigar/poker lounge. "His requests were very small, but they made such a massive impact on the design of those rooms," she says.

For the office, Del Bello finished the walls in walnut cladding, stained a deep espresso. Then, the firm added floor-to-ceiling bookshelves flanking the desk and a traditional library ladder. "This room is so captivating," the designer notes. "I'm normally light and bright and had never done a black, dark office space before. This was a changeup, but it really opened up my eyes to another world. It's probably one of my favorite rooms in the house."

The darker spaces dance in conversation with the home's more feminine touches. Off the entry, the team wanted to preserve the library's white-oak construction but softened it with the furniture selection, including the custom sofas finished in Holly Hunt silk mohair fabric and Apparatus chandelier overhead. "The couple has a lot of books from their travels, and this is a lovely, cozy place to sit and read, or just relax in silence," Del Bello says. "You go from the French parlor room to a London salon, and it's like you're transported all over the world through this house."

Connected by the subdued color palette, this layered first floor leads up to an airy second floor and the romantic primary suite. Del Bello created a custom headboard and platform finished in Kravet velvet to fit into the arched inset. "It's a dressy primary bedroom, thanks to the feminine lavenders and Visual Comfort sconces and chandelier," she explains. "There's a lot of personality on the first floor, and then the second floor is more tranquil."

Fusing the Old World European architecture with contemporary touches, the final result offers a sophisticated yet peaceful respite for the couple, who split time between their two homes and travel often. "They take a massive trip to Italy every summer, and they're going to the most fabulous hotels and enjoying their life," Del Bello offers. "You can see all they've experienced through the pieces we selected together." ❀