

GREG NATALE

PORTRAIT/PHOTOGRAPHY *Anson Smart*



One of Australia's premier interior designers, Greg Natale has pioneered daring choices for more than two decades. His name is equated with award-winning interiors, expertly adorned in bold patterns, glittering surfaces and luxe materials. This passion for rich materiality is extended in his collection of opulent furniture and homewares, making his globally acclaimed distinctive style available to all.

Did your family home have an impact on your work in the design industry? My connection to pattern began growing up in 70s Sydney. My parents are Italian, and our suburban home had a quintessentially European application of ornate designs from wallpaper to floor tiles. The explosion of art, music and fashion in the 70s and 80s was a thrilling time to come of age for someone as design-obsessed as I am, and where I get my appreciation for lacquer and metallic finish.

How did your decorating style evolve – was it through your early career? Before I started my own business and was still defining my style, I was much more minimal with my decorating. When the design industry shifted from minimalism towards bolder and more intricate interiors, I had just launched Greg Natale Designs and was excited to embrace an era of layered design. I combined what I appreciated about minimalism with what I loved about irreverent postmodernism and started to create interiors that, while clean and modern, were layered in patterns, prints and textures. The first project that earned me recognition was my sister Sarina's apartment. I transformed her stark bedroom by installing custom wall-to-wall wallpaper, bedlinen and art in Florence Broadhurst's 'Steps' design. The project's incredible reception, including a prestigious spot in *Belle* magazine and a *Belle* Wild Card award in 2002, cemented this as my signature approach. Some 22 years later, I am bringing that same custom 'Steps' print back with a line of bedlinen launching in 2024.

Who have been your style mentors – whether people you worked with or admired from afar? Halston and Tom Ford are fashion pioneers I admire for their style and what they put on the runway. David Nightingale Hicks for his eclectic, layered style and bold patterns. Gianni Versace, whose iconic use of pattern lives on. Plus Carlo Scarpa, Gio Ponti and the Memphis Group.

What advice can you recommend for achieving grand results on a limited budget? Be intentional and insightful with your approach. Bringing in layers of warmth and personality with simple additions can transform your interior and help you achieve a grand result without breaking the bank. Update cushions and throws to add dynamic patterns and interesting texture. Utilise your walls by hanging art. And explore op shops and vintage stores for unique accessories, lamps and small furnishings.

What are five things you would buy right now, from high to low? Starting on a personal note, I'd buy a Cartier Panthère ring as a birthday present. You only turn 50 once! Next would be a print by Andy Warhol from his 1975 'Ladies and Gentlemen' series, to complement one I have in my apartment. This series is very special to me – both Warhol and the New York City queer ballroom scene of the 70s and 80s are great personal influences. Third, an Orsay coffee table by Gae Aulenti in burgundy red for my new office. Fourth, a pair of 'Atollo' table lamps by Vico Magistretti for Oluce for my bedside tables. Last, Tom Ford pants from the latest collection by creative director Peter Hawkins, who is bringing back that iconic 90s Tom Ford aesthetic. I am hooked! @gregnatale



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1 'Panthère de Cartier' ring in non-rhodium white gold with tsavorite garnet and onyx, \$40,700, Cartier. 2 'Ladies and Gentlemen' screen-print by Andy Warhol, POA, Artsy. 3 'Orsay' coffee table by Gae Aulenti for Knoll, POA, VNTG. 4 'Atollo' lamp in Satin Gold by Vico Magistretti, \$4251/medium, Living Edge. 5 Brushed cotton-silk pleated lounge pant in Ink Blue, \$1290, Tom Ford.

Artwork by Anya Pesce (opposite page).

Sum up your signature style. Is there an aesthetic or approach that runs through all your work?

Early on, I felt it important to establish my design DNA. Pattern is part of that, as is layering. I'm a modernist who loves maximalism. I begin with clean, minimal spaces to consider an interior from a functional perspective. I start layering with a focus on bold patterns, texture and colour to create an interior that is warm, inviting and has a distinct personality. I apply layer upon layer of curated design elements to achieve a tailored look. My aim is to build an immersive, intimate home, each space working cohesively to tell a narrative unique to the owner.

LIVING A 'Despres' rug by Greg Natale for Designer Rugs brings a curvaceous sweep, accentuated by 'Julep' sofas from Stylecraft and the 'Pacha' chair from Ownworld. Lambert&Fils 'Dot 14' pendant light from Living Edge. Large artwork by Diana Miller, *Dancing with the Mystics*, 2020, from Curatorial+Co. Kate Banazi artwork, *Fortune Green*, 2021.

“My signature *design* approach is in the layering process and *where maximalist* quality comes in.”

Greg Natale

H&G GREG NATALE

What are your five essentials for ensuring a room is welcoming and hits the right note? I first define what my clients consider warm and inviting. Secondly, it is essential to work with proportion. The third thing I always do is layer an interior by starting with the large, foundational elements and working down in size, finishing with small accessories and flourishes. A fourth essential element that relates to the layering process is to include a rug. Finally, to ensure the result hits the right note, curate as you go.



Which timeless furniture pieces or homewares would you always invest in? Innovative furniture and homeware by artists, designers and architects. Pieces from limited edition capsule collections of outstanding craftsmanship can become coveted collectables; people have been looking to invest in collectable designs, not only because they are likely to appreciate in value, but also because of the personal connection you make with a piece by a designer you admire.



DINING This home is a feast of marble, featuring 28 different types of stone. In the dining area, granite graces the floor, walls and ceiling. A chandelier by Angelo Lelli crowns the space, with ambient lighting from Gio Ponti lamps atop custom side tables. Greg designed the dining table and sourced the 'Pamplona' dining chairs from Morentz, which were designed by Augusto Savini for Pozzi. An Antonia Mrljak painting continues the scheme. **KITCHEN** "Elements of Italian design throughout the ages can be identified in much of my work, from classical fluting and natural stonework to postmodern geometry and sophisticated ornamentalism," says Greg, who drew inspiration from Villa Necchi Campiglio in Milan for this project. In pure palazzo style, the home's kitchen earns itself a 'front of house' presence with its mix of stone and the vintage Italian glass and brass chandelier.

You embrace vintage and upcycle chic – what are some of your favourite pieces you have given new life to? Unique, high-end pieces are constructed from the best materials available and therefore are made to last, which is why I shop vintage for both myself and my clients. I have had my Minotti 'Hamilton' sofa for over twenty years and have it recovered each time I redo my apartment. Another spectacular vintage piece I reworked is a Romeo Rega two-toned brass and steel bedframe. I had it repaired and made taller for my bedroom.

BEDROOM Gucci 'Herron' wallpaper in Green bathes this space from floor to vaulted ceiling, answering the call for immersive art. Vintage lamps and bedsides join the custom bed. "If you invest in high-quality furniture and decor that has timeless design appeal, you can keep using them for years," says Greg of the vintage finds.

"An interior's success lies in the careful application of its layers – and where you get that intimacy and warmth." Greg Natale

Which homewares can you save on to get a luxe look for less? My best tip for saving on furniture and decor is to shop at auctions. For example, Lawsons auction house has an incredible selection of furniture, fine art and decor pieces at very reasonable prices. If material luxury is what you're after, auctions and antique stores are great places to find well-priced crystal and quality metal homewares.

HALLWAY Kelly Wearstler 'Reverie' chandeliers, AYTM Solum side table and Wiggle bench, both from Becker Minty, and brass Gubi mirror from Ownworld add metallic pops. A custom Designer Rugs runner by Greg Natale brings a patterned punch to the interior.



GREG NATALE

SHOP THE LOOK

Play with pattern and embrace bold palettes for a hotel-worthy home.



1 STUDY 'Alden' chest of drawers by Kate Spade, EJ Victor. 'Milou' swivel chair, Coco Republic. Wall sculpture by Jean Paul Mangin, Studio Gallery. 'Clausis' table lamp, Visual Comfort. 'Ponti' floor tiles by Greg Natale, Teranova. 2 'Cliff 01' lamp in Brass, \$3490, Living Edge. 3 'Amalfi' dinner plate, \$90, and 'Astoria' bread plate, \$45, both Greg Natale. 4 'Phoebe' stacked lamp in Antiqued White by Kelly Wearstler, \$1390, The Montauk Lighting Co. 5 'Tian' wallpaper in Beige, \$570/roll, Gucci. 6 'Fiore' desk chair in Tan vegan leather, \$395, Coco Republic. 7 'Electric Dreams' vase in Blush, \$240, Greg Natale. 8 'Capella' cushion, \$180/50 x 50cm, Greg Natale. 9 AYTM 'Solum' side table in Black, \$779, Trit House.