

HOME TREND

colours *of* calm

Cream, caramel and palest blue – interior design's taken a soothing turn with the emergence of the New Neutrals. In this New York apartment, subtle, muted shades are used to stunning effect

Words KARA O'REILLY Photography GIORGIO POSSENTI

A stunning example of the interior design world's growing affection for pale but interesting colours – see our investigation into the New Neutrals trend on p21 – this home's soothing palette was Brazilian-born interior architect Lenka Soares's way of creating a cocoon of calm in the centre of New York. After all, life in any big city can involve seemingly constant bustle, a babble of appointments, neon lights and noise. Even on the grand streets of the Upper East Side, opposite the hallowed Metropolitan Museum of Art, where this late-19th-century, seven-storey, seven-bedroom townhouse is located, there's a need for quiet, contemplative design. 'My vision for the project was to keep it sophisticated and incorporate key pieces from the family's art collection,' says Lenka. 'The owners wanted to have a spacious and modern home that included a mix of mid-century furniture, as well as pieces from Italian and Brazilian designers.' The aim was to give the house a light and airy feel, allowing the key pieces of furniture to sing out against the sensuously soft backdrop of browns, blues and creams. It's the modern way of using muted tones – they have texture and depth, but also a tranquil quality that is completely current. ►



Living room The blue ceramic artwork is by Brazilian artist Adriana Varejão. For a sofa similar to this bespoke one by BassamFellows, try the 'Kennede' by Jean-Marie Maussaud for Poltrona Frau. The glass coffee table from Suite NY is paired with a vintage table from Maison Gerard **Stockist details on p167** ▶



TACTILE SURFACES

While the colours used throughout this tranquil home are low-key, Lenka has injected an extra feeling of warmth through her choice of materials, mixing up fabrics, textures and finishes. 'I love the cossetting feel of the living room, with its leather sofa and velvet chair, and the dining space, where I have covered an entire wall in faux leather and recovered mid-century chairs in gorgeous suede.'

TIMELESS ELEGANCE

Throughout this home, vintage pieces sourced from Europe are mixed with new commissions from American companies and Brazilian designers, although Lenka reupholstered many of her vintage finds 'to bring a contemporary feeling'. It's one of her signature interior design tricks. 'I love to mix the pieces already in the client's house with new ones. I totally believe that the energy in a space comes from memories, from travels, from pieces and details purchased throughout life... it is so important that a home doesn't look like a catalogue, without any soul.'

EFFORTLESS FLOW

The owners of this house love to entertain, so wanted a personal sanctuary that was also welcoming for guests. 'The layout is perfect for this, with all of the social spaces on the first floor,' says Lenka. Tonally, each room flows gracefully into the next - from pale cream to caramel - giving the home a seamless feel. 'The house also encourages the owners' three children to appreciate art and beauty,' adds Lenka. An abode that's enlightening and relaxing - we can all admire that.





Living room The vintage armchair was sourced from LA dealer Den Møbler and reupholstered – try The Modern Warehouse. The pendant light is a piece by Apparatus, available at SCP **Hallway** This display case was designed by Lenka Soares **Stockist details on p167** ▶