

Harper's BAZAAR INTERIORS

WILD WALLS
MATTHEW WILLIAMSON'S PRIVATE EDEN

IT'S NEW! DOWNTOWN DESIGN

GARDEN PARTY
TECHNICOLOUR TIPS FROM HOLLYWOOD

PLUS
PRISCILLA PRESLEY'S MEMPHIS

PAOLA NAVONE'S HAVEN

GIZZI ERSKINE'S TREATS

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Back to our NATURE

Reconnect with the great outdoors





Philip stands at the end of a long corridor lined with wallpaper from 'Elitis' by Rubelli Sahco

PURE FREEDOM

A double penthouse on the shores of the Palm Jumeirah has been transformed into a luxury retreat that combines clean contemporary style with exceptionally intelligent detailing

*Styling by TORY WALLER
Photographs by ISIDORA BOJOVIC*

When Bazaar Interiors first set foot in this particular penthouse at the start of summer, on the occasion of a glamorous Gatsby-themed party, we followed the trail of partygoers exploring the long corridors and exclusive spaces of what is most certainly one of Dubai's most unique residences. Our interest thoroughly piqued, we set off in search of the owner, 43-year-old Philip Charles Gamett, a self-made entrepreneur from the UK. Dressed in a sharp tuxedo, he cut a figure dashing enough to invite comparisons with the literary figure himself. Philip started his business at just 23 years old, designing and manufacturing fashion apparel for women. He came to Dubai four years ago, to separate himself from the day to day management of his business in London. "I felt that I had achieved a great deal in my twenty-year career so I stepped down as managing director and now attend just a few board meetings each year. I chose Dubai because it's a luxury lifestyle destination, and being midway between Asia and Europe it's a great starting point for travelling the world."

So began the search for the perfect pad, and it appeared his timing couldn't have been better. "I had hired an agent to be on the lookout for exceptional properties, and when the two penthouses came onto the market following the property crash I was the first person given access to

view them. I bought them immediately."

The two penthouses comprise the entire top floor of the building, at almost 11,000sqft, and have been transformed into a single apartment. "I felt that having the privacy of an entire floor justified the additional expense," he says. "I was attracted to the exclusive sea-front location of the penthouse, a 2,500sqft terrace with panoramic views of the skyline and the marina below."

Buying the property shell and core, meant that the raw concrete structure was simply waiting to be moulded. "It was important that the apartment was not 'fitted out' by the building's developer. I started with a completely blank canvas."

Undaunted by the task at hand, Philip spent a month deciding how he wanted to use the space and which styles he intended to develop. The result was a floorplan and storyboard for each of the 24 spaces that would exist in the apartment. With architects and consultants hired, six months later the design was complete and ready to be realised.

"I didn't set out to design an apartment, I set out to design a lifestyle," Philip tells us. "My brief was to create a holiday home where I would entertain my guests from around the world, and which for the duration of their visit would replace normal everyday life with a world of luxury and glamour associated with the city of Dubai. I envisaged a chic residence that would be a modern day interpretation of the glamour >

WORDS BY CORINNE DELPHY



Black nickel Atlantis chandelier by Terzani, dining table handmade in France by Craman, chairs by aden Furniture



Philip wears Tom Ford tuxedo and Lanvin shoes. All furniture hand made in Dubai by aden Furniture



The Model D speakers from Steinway Lingo of Norway, have piano strings at the rear for perfect resonance



Lamp Pioche by Porta Romana. Shagreen stone tiles by Ann Sacks

of 1950's Monaco; spacious kitsch-free interiors inspired by the sea and marina, but fastidiously avoiding common clichés such as starfish, anchors and driftwood; instead using sophisticated, subtle materials, like shagreen wall panels and marine grade high-gloss teak. Most importantly I wanted the design to be entirely unique, stylish and timeless, and not look like it had been 'designed' by an interior designer."

Retaining total creative control over the construction meant that Philip could manage every element, to create a space that was entirely personal. "I was very fortunate that having effectively retired from my business I had the time and energy to dedicate to the project."

What is exceptional about this residence is the attention to detail; from the colour schemes to the technology. White Persian onyx was laid as flooring across the entire formal area, its depth, cloud formations and crystalline patterns defining the design of the living area. "All the woods, metals and fabrics were chosen to complement it," Philip says. "Down to the ivory leather furniture, brass console and polished plaster panels in the dining room."

While every room has its own identity, there is a design narrative flowing

through the open plan layout, creating a sense of infinite space and harmony. Use is dictated by families of furniture; everywhere from the kitchen and billiard room to the entertainment lounge and workstation. The spa by contrast is dark, boldly masculine with sumptuous gold accents. You feel immediately

"I didn't set out to design an apartment, I set out to design a lifestyle...a world of luxury and glamour associated with the city of Dubai"

cocooned and separated from the outside world. "I was inspired by ancient Roman baths and the Turkish hammam," Philip explains. "Once I researched the spa ritual, the design came as a natural response. The vaulted ceiling is constructed with Italian travertine columns, with a heated hammam table for wet treatments, plus a rain shower with body sprays, hot and chilled water, a

two-person infinity bath, and a steam room inside a mirrored cube."

There are three guest suites, all beautifully furnished, but the master suite reveals the most about its owner's taste. "It was an opportunity to be extravagant and unconventional," says Philip. "The bedroom is very theatrical, very art nouveau, with beautiful painted eglomise mirrors and black lacquered panels with bone inlay, and an upholstered ceiling. Most impressive is the six-meter floor-to-ceiling window facing the bed, filled by a panoramic view of the skyline." ▶

A FASHIONABLE LIFE



All appliances from Gaggenau, BCN barstools imported from Italy



Poppy pendant lamps by Emily Lloyd, shelves handmade in Dubai, red glass by Anna Torfs, furniture by aden Furniture



The spectacular view towards Dubai Marina, sun loungers by Chloe imported from Italy



Bedside tables and ceiling panels by aden Furniture, lamps by Charles Paris, eglomise mirror panels painted in England by Sterling Studios

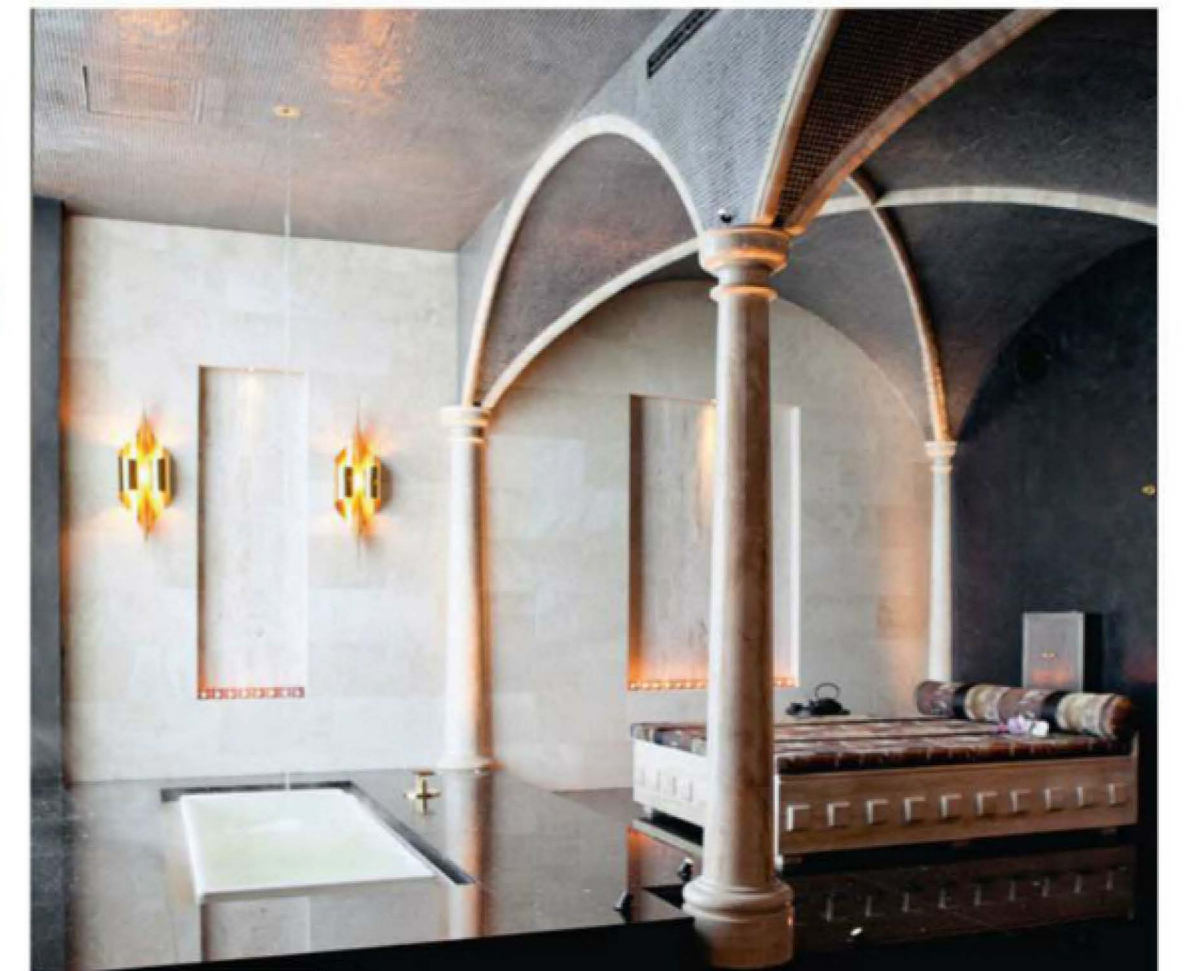
Signature scent and room accessories blend together in the walk in wardrobe



The finest tailoring and new season pieces hang in Philip's walk in wardrobe. All furniture and flooring made by aden Furniture



Philip designed all the leading elements of the hammam, which were then built by stone masons hired locally



Ceiling mosaic tiles by Sicis, lights by Charles Paris and all stone imported from Italy

PHILIP'S 5 Questions

reveal. The cocktail party in question was first time that friends had seen the finished result, and it clearly had an impact – the penthouse, with its open plan spaces, state of the art soundsystem, integrated bar and vast terrace provide a spectacular setting for celebration. “Entertaining is central to the lifestyle that the penthouse offers, both for staying guests and friends and acquaintances. It’s nice to surround oneself with people whose company you really enjoy, and it’s wonderful to be able to offer them an elevated experience when they visit.”

The vast terrace with its magnificent view, did not escape Philip’s keen eye for detail –and it has since become one of his favourite places to relax. “I use the terrace many times throughout the day. First thing in the morning it’s paradise, so peaceful and still, and at sunset it’s magical – as the lights of JBR come on and the day fades into night. So I almost always take breakfast on the terrace, and sundowners in the early evening.” Aside from the barbecues with friends, Philip loves watching a movie under the stars on his waterproof LED television that rises up out of the decking. “Watching a movie with the backdrop of the night skyline is an incredible experience!”

As for the lifestyle of the man who has built one of the city’s most exceptional residences, we wanted to know how he would describe it. “I’m careful when it comes to negotiating for services such as contracting to build an apartment, and extravagant when it comes to personal style and travel. Last December I flew to Antarctica and the South Pole in a twin propeller DC3 – true adventure. To describe my lifestyle – free. I have the freedom to do exactly what I want, when I want.” ■

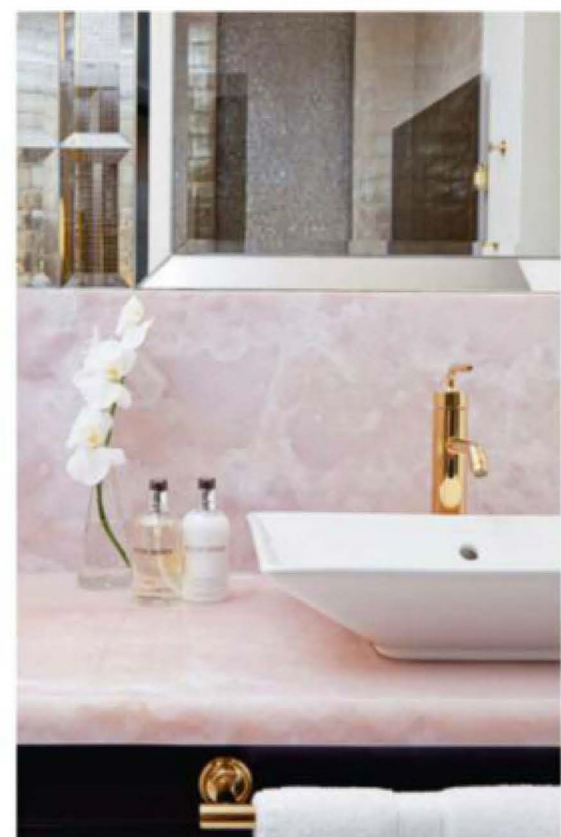
Do you have any beautiful holiday homes you can tell us about? The penthouse apartment is my holiday home and I’m on a permanent vacation.

What do you love most about Dubai? Blue skies every morning, sunshine all day every day, its beautiful buildings, and its ambition.

What do you miss most about the UK? I don’t miss the UK at all, Dubai offers me everything I want or need.

And what do you do to relax? To kick back and just take it easy I might play some pool or watch a movie, but to really relax – it’s either an hour in the infinity hot tub on the terrace or an hour in the spa.

Do you like to travel, and if so where? When I travel for pleasure I like to leave the cities behind and journey to remote and natural open landscapes, like the virgin rainforest in Borneo and the Sahara desert.



Splashback in Persian pink onyx sourced from Iran, and Kohler sanitaryware

Accessed from the bedroom by secret sliding doors is a wardrobe that most fashion conscious ladies could only dream of. “I wanted a walk in closet unlike anything I had seen before. So I specified that there would be no vertical pieces in the room - it would be entirely cantilevered, which we achieved using beautiful mapa burl wood with custom made brass hanging rods, bolted to gold-bronze polished plaster walls.”

The floor of the closet is perhaps the most distinctive. “I once watched a TV program about how ships were put together, it was riveting,” he says, with a moment of dry British humour. “I applied the same design to the floor in the walk in closet but using solid brass sheets - the result is phenomenal.”

That this is possibly one of the smartest home designs is not in question. It features an advanced intelligent system that controls all of the electronics, lighting, entertainment, air-conditioning, security... the list goes on. Each one of the systems is programmed to anticipate the needs of the person occupying the room, what temperature they like or how loud they enjoy their music. There is also video conferencing between rooms via wireless control tablets, indispensable in such a large apartment.

After considerable effort to achieve his vision, it was time for the big