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molto mossimo

A fashion designer and an actress update a brick mansion in Bel Air

Mossimo Giannulli and Lori Laughlin in the loggia of their house in Bel Air, which was decorated by Michael Smith. The hexagonal lantern is by Charles Edwards. Facing page: Architect Oscar Shamamian designed the curved banister. See Resources.

text by DAVID KEEPS

photography by HENRY BOURNE

produced by MARGARET RUSSELL

A circa-1800 Japanese cupboard, curtains of Kopla silk from the Silk Trading Co., a George III fauteuil, and an oil on canvas by Conrad Marca-Relli in the living room. See Resources.

Pre-renovation, the house was "very Zsa Zsa Gabor"

The pony-skin club chairs, electric guitars, and vintage BMW R69S motorcycle parked in the otherwise sedate, pine-paneled study say it all. Fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli and his wife, actress Lori Laughlin, may not have been to the manor born, but when they bought a 1920s Bel Air brick mansion attributed to Greystone architect Gordon Kaufmann, they were determined not to move to the manor bored.

For Giannulli, whose signature Mossimo line combines the street vibe of New York, London, and Tokyo with the casual cool of California sportswear, the challenge was to bring da funk tastefully to a grand European-style house in one of the most stuffed-shirt pockets of Los Angeles. But when the couple first laid eyes on the interior, it was like getting a close-up of a Beverly Hills matron who'd had one too many face-lifts.

"It was all white, with mirrors and track lighting everywhere," recalls Laughlin, with just a hint of the deadpan delivery she perfected on the sitcom *Full House*. "Very Zsa Zsa Gabor." After two long years rebuilding interior spaces and restoring original details with New York architects Oscar Shamamian and Joseph Singer, plus poring over antiques, fabric swatches, and paint chips with decorator Michael Smith, the thirtysomething couple finally began to see the house much differently. "It's got an old soul," Giannulli muses, "with a great intellect, a random sense of humor, and a real artistic quality. It's a warm, happy, family home."

A good thing, since Laughlin was pregnant with their first

This page: The sitting-room walls are covered in parchment paper and the sofa is upholstered in a Clarence House fabric. Facing page: An English walnut desk chair, a Regency-style mahogany hall chair, and framed prints by Charles Garnier. See Resources.

Facing page: The tub in Laughlin's bathroom is by the Water Monopoly in London. This page, left to right: A 19th-century bronze light fixture in Giannulli's dressing room. Laughlin in the kitchen with daughter Isabella; the stools are by Ann-Morris Antiques. See Resources.

"It's a warm, happy, family home, with a real artistic quality"

daughter before the renovations were finished. Accordingly, their first order of business was transforming a kitchen, pantry, and servants' quarters into a more spacious kitchen and family room connected by tall arches. The new kitchen, which has a period feel with white cabinetry, retro nickel hardware, and chrome-and-glass light fixtures, is painted a light pistachio. The windows are curtained with a sky-blue gingham check that matches the sofas in the adjoining TV room. Above the table, an antique wood-and-glass Chinese lantern strikes a note of whimsy. "I wanted surprises," says Giannulli. "Michael Smith can be very elegant, yet hip, so he was instrumental in helping things come together."

"Mossimo's imagination was very much taken with the romance of this house," says Smith. "He and Lori are a young couple who wanted traditional pieces without turning the place into a series of bad Merchant Ivory theme rooms." Giannulli compares the decorating process to designing a line of clothing. "It starts with the space, then you look at shapes, color, texture, and pattern," he says. "It can't be forced; it has to evolve naturally. You're constantly dialing things in."

To balance the formal (a stately dining room) and the fanciful (a floral settee, tufted banquette, and coral-pink leather Georgian chair in a blue-and-green living room), Smith channeled esteemed London decorator David Hicks, who mixed antiques, shocking colors, bold patterns, and

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resources

433-1200). **Styling** by *John Ryman* (631-324-6411). **Pool** by *J. Tortorella Swimming Pools* (631-283-7373). **Landscape design and planting** by *David Seeler* of *The Bayberry* (15 Montauk Hwy., Amagansett, NY 11930; 631-267-3000).

Pages 150–51: Teak Capri Loungers by *Barlow Tyrie* (for stores: 800-451-7467). **Planters** from *Mecox Gardens* (257 County Rd. 39A, Southampton, NY 11968; 631-287-5015).

Pages 152–53: Sofas and hand-tufted rug custom made by *Salon Moderne* (281 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; 212-219-3439). **Lucite Waterfall cocktail tables** from *Troy* (138 Greene St., New York, NY 10012; 212-941-4777).

Page 154: The Bigfoot dining table from *Troy* (138 Greene St., New York, NY 10012; 212-941-4777). **Slipcovered Turné chairs** from *Salon Moderne* (281 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; 212-219-3439).

Page 155: Chinese lacquered chair from *Homenature* (255 Main St., P.O. Box 1364, Amagansett, NY 11930; 631-267-6647).

Page 156: In master bedroom, **table lamp** by *Christopher Spitzmiller* from *Mecox Gardens* (257 County Rd. 39A, Southampton, NY 11968; 631-287-5015) and to the trade from *Christopher Spitzmiller* (336 W. 37th St., New York, NY 10018; 212-563-1144). **Bed linens** from *Fine Linens* (1193 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10028; 212-737-0520). In master bathroom, **Ladena undercounter sinks and Triton faucet sets** by *Kohler Co.* (for information: 800-4-KOHLER). **Town Series wall sconces** from *Urban Archaeology* (143 Franklin St., New York, NY 10013; 212-431-4646).

Page 157: Bed linens from *Fine Linens* (1193 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10028; 212-737-0520).

Molto Mossimo

Pages 158–67: Interior design by *Michael Smith* of *Michael S Smith Inc.* (1646 19th St., Santa Monica, CA 90404; 310-315-3018). **Architecture** by *Oscar Shamamian* of *Ferguson Shamamian & Ratner* (270 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; 212-941-3033). **General contracting** by *Fort Hill Construction* (323-656-7425).

Page 158: Hexagonal lantern, in nickel, from *Charles Edwards Antiques, Ltd.* (582 Kings Rd., London SW6 2DY, England; 011-44-207-736 8490). **Moroccan side table** from *Maison Midi* at *American Rag* (148 S. La Brea Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036; 323-935-3157).

Page 159: Tablecloth made of **Putti wool fabric,** #93402-16, to the trade from *Rogers & Goffigon* (for showrooms: 203-532-3063). **Antique leather-covered screen** from *J. F. Chen Antiques* (8414 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069; 323-655-6310).

Page 160: Curtains made from **olive Kopla silk taffeta fabric,** lined in **blue Kopla silk taffeta fabric,** from the *Silk Trading Company* (360 S. La Brea Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036; 323-954-9230 and 1616-A 16th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; 415-282-5574). Banquette upholstered in **Rigoletto Stripe fabric,** #30012, to the trade from *Scalamandré* (for showrooms: 212-980-3888). **Antique Japanese export black lacquer cupboard on stand** from *Therien & Co.* (716 N. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069; 310-657-4615). Wing chair upholstered in **Velluto Svorza fabric,** #33109-3, to the trade from *Clarence House* (for showrooms: 800-632-0076 or 212-752-2890).

Page 161: Sofa upholstered in **Vicenza green silk-and-linen damask fabric,** #5122-3, by *Rose Cumming,* to the trade from *John Rosselli* (979 Third Ave., Suite 701, New York, NY 10021; 212-593-2060). George III settee upholstered in **Lilac cotton fabric,** #1094-04, to the trade from *Courtan & Tout* (for showrooms: 212-647-6900). **Antique Korean lacquered cocktail table** with tortoiseshell and mother-of-pearl inlay, from *J. F. Chen Antiques* (8414 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069; 323-655-6310).

Page 162: Sofa upholstered in **Velours Gascogne fabric,** in orge, to the trade from *Clarence House* (for showrooms: 800-632-0076 or 212-752-2890).

Page 164: Bathtub from *The Water Monopoly* (16-18 Lonsdale Rd., London NW6 6RD, England; 011-44-207-624 2636). **Regent sconce,** in polished nickel, to the trade from *Ann-Morris Antiques* (239 E. 60th St., New York, NY 10022; 212-755-3308).

Page 165: In the kitchen, **Flushmount lighting fixtures,** in nickel, from *Urban Archaeology* (143 Franklin St., New York, NY 10013; 212-431-4646). **Kitchen stools,** to the trade from *Ann-Morris Antiques* (239 E. 60th St., New York, NY 10022; 212-755-3308).

Page 166: In stairwell, **reproduction French Tole lantern** by *Michael Smith* (for showrooms: 310-315-3018). In bedroom, **bed linens** from *Nancy Koltes Fine Linens* (31 Spring St., New York, NY 10012; 212-219-2271). **Mehab silk shawl** by *Anichini* from *Anichini La Collezione* (466 N. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048; 310-657-4292). For other stores, contact *Anichini* (800-553-5309).

Page 167: Woven-rattan cocktail table from *Maison Midi* at *American Rag* (148 S. La Brea Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036; 323-935-3157).

Divine Duplex

Page 168: Bibendum Chair, #P/421, from *Palazzetti* (515 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022; 212-832-1199). **Photographs** by *Christopher Beane* (for information: 212-362-0240).

Page 170: Artwork (left) by *Alexander Vethers* from *Staley-Wise Gallery* (560 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; 212-966-6223). **Artwork** (right) by *Michael Vollbracht* from *Dimson Homma* (20 E. 67th St., New York, NY 10021; 212-439-7950). **Czeresko Massive Cylinder vase** from *L'Olivier* (19 E. 76th St., New York, NY 10021; 212-774-7676).

Page 171: In living room, **Charles sofa,** designed by *Antonio Citterio,* from *B&B Italia* (150 E. 58th St., New York, NY 10155; 800-872-1697or 212-758-4046). **Antique Camaroon Chief Stool cocktail table** from *Dimson Homma* (20 E. 67th St., New York, NY 10021; 212-439-7950). In dining area, **Saarinen dining table,** with verde alpi marble top, by *Knoll* (for information: 800-445-5045). **Czeresko Frost vase** from *L'Olivier* (19 E. 76th St., New York, NY 10021; 212-774-7676).

Page 172: Antique Shanxi folding campaign bench from *Dimson Homma* (20 E. 67th St., New York, NY 10021;