

Madonna, Kabbalah, Malawi

● Why are stars so bad at giving away money?
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Extreme Decor

Home Design / Spring '11 / By Wendy Goodman



6. IF MARIE ANTOINETTE TOOK THE A TRAIN

A
**Rockaways
retreat** where
a queen might
feel at home.



The living room features pieces that didn't work out for clients and were acquired by owner-designer Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz over the years. The couch was originally for

Lenny Krawitz, who decided it was too small; the small table for Sean Combs. The carpet from Aronson's was chosen per a sand sample to exactly match the color of the beach.

"Pink is usually for little girls. So I thought, Why don't we see if we can make it strong and powerful, for two men?" Noriega-Ortiz says. Because there's little demand for pink chandeliers in the U.S., the La Murrina fixture

had to be shipped in from Venice. To offset the pink, he chose black-and-white accents such as Tom of Finland toile pillows—which feature leather-clad men with whips. Another contrasting pop comes from his partner's cat, Lucifer.



WHEN INTERIOR DESIGNER Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz and Steven Wine of And Bob's Your Uncle Lighting sealed the deal on an oceanfront two-bedroom in the Rockaways in November, they knew they'd bought their ideal retreat. It was just an hour away from their Chelsea duplex by A train and reminiscent of the house in Luquillo, Puerto Rico, where Noriega-Ortiz summured as a child. But they needed a muse. The couple soon found her when, Googling around for inspiration, Wine came across a portrait of Marie Antoinette at age 12. Because their main residence is all white—from white shag carpeting to white acrylic fixtures—this second home brought a chance to have some fun with color and backstory. And who better to inspire such a motif? “We decided to use those colors, but also her life,” Noriega-Ortiz says of the image, which he had printed onto an acrylic frame to create a floating effect and later hung prominently in the living room. “Like, if Marie Antoinette was to find an apartment at Rockaway Park in 2011, what would she have? She wouldn't have plastic furniture. She should have velvets and furs and crystals.” To pick up on the blue-green of Marie Antoinette's gown in the portrait, as well as the ocean, Noriega-Ortiz used a Tiffany-blue scheme for that space, which also includes crystals faceted to the walls, feathered lamps, and taxidermy birds. (“We realized she turned Hameau de la Reine into a working farm, so these are the chickens and turkeys from her farm,” he adds.) An exercise in over-the-top glamour, the bedroom is saturated in the hot pink of the teen queen's cheeks in the portrait. “She commands the apartment,” Noriega-Ortiz says. “Even when we're not there, the place is not empty.”

RACHEL BAKER

➔ Noriega-Ortiz envisioned the deck as a clean yet luxurious backyard. He created the lounging station by layering a colorful Indian blanket, a “fussy” Moroccan wedding blanket, and an eclectic bunch of throw pillows from Wolf Home. The salvaged metal furniture was chosen for its French-inspired lines.

↓ Noriega-Ortiz, left, and Wine en route to their “country” house.

