

SIZZLING SUMMER SPECIAL

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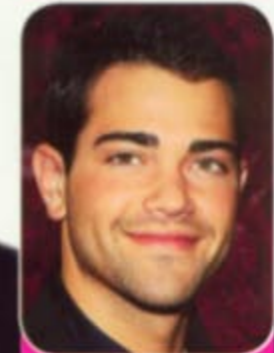
inside
TV
JULY 4-17, 2005

THE
50
SEXIEST
MEN
ON TV

PATRICK
DEMPSEY



JOHN O'HURLEY
Dancing with the Stars



JESSE METCALFE
Desperate Housewives



MATTHEW FOX
Lost



PLUS How Oprah's getting even with snooty fashion store!

Where there's a Will...

Will Truman's apartment, where most of the *Will & Grace* action takes place, is a study in whimsical chic



TUNEIN!
.....
Will & Grace
on NBC, Thursday
at 8:30 pm

Will & Grace's Will Truman is a man of sophistication and taste, with the innate ability to throw together a stylish home almost effortlessly. And it's Melinda Ritz's job to make it look like that's just what he did. The show's set decorator since its 1998 debut, Melinda explains that when she was first asked to design the successful lawyer's apartment, she knew very little about the man. Presuming a WASP-y, wealthy upbringing in his established home state of Connecticut, Melinda knew that Will would be well versed in fine art and furnishings. But "upscale" is a tough look to pull off when you're a new show with a small budget.

Initially, Melinda raided her own home for basics so she could splurge on iconic items like the living room's \$2,800 leather club chair, after the series' exacting cocreator, Max Mutchnick, decided the original Pottery Barn version simply wouldn't do. As years went by and purse strings loosened, Melinda slowly spiffed up the place with pieces like the antique Biedermeier secretary that now stands against the back wall. "It's evolved like a home would evolve in real life," she explains. "After all, Will cares a lot about that kind of thing."

Melinda notes that Will's taste has always been eclectic—a Navajo rug under an Asian table, a modern vase on



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a classic antique. The idea is "to mix up all styles" in order to flaunt Will's flair for interior design, but also "to keep the place from looking too 'decorated.'" Still, Melinda *has* generally kept a few central themes in mind. To visually distinguish the show's two dominant personalities, she stuck to a bold, masculine color scheme for Will's apartment, versus pastels for Grace. And as a reminder that the apartment belongs to a man who likes men, she's filled it with what she politely calls "male imagery": suggestively columnar vases, sconces, artwork and more. But the effect is truly subtle. "The producers never noticed any of that stuff until I pointed it out in the second year," the decorator recalls, laughing.

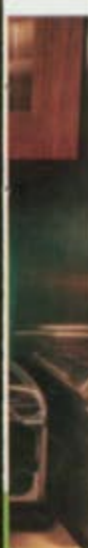
Melinda happily asserts that Will's alter ego, actor Eric McCormack, seems pleased with the fruits of her labors. Even Will's kitchen cabinets are fully stocked with condiments and spices because she knows that Eric loves to do the scenes where Will's cooking. She does note, though, that the impressive-looking stove doesn't actually work. "He's only acting," she says. "That's the magic of Hollywood." ●



"I got this ceramic dog at a little antique shop—but then it broke in half. We glued it back together and it's still there on the set."



"This painting [left] is the most asked-about piece in the apartment," says Melinda. "We get lots of e-mails about it. People think it's Will or Desi Amaz, but it's really nobody; it came out of a private collection, and we reproduced it for the show." And since "Will knows from fine furniture," she notes, "I added this antique Biedermeier secretary [right] about two years ago."



"The kitchen backsplash [left] reads as glass on camera, but it's actually Plexiglas that we back-painted," says Melinda. "The fish dish towels are nature prints, and they're colorful and graphic," she adds. "People in New York are shoppers, and they're the kind of interesting thing I imagine Will would pick up at Williams-Sonoma." The designer also loves "the fashion-y color of this FrancisFrancis! cappuccino maker."

"I got this buffet [below] at Blueprint seven or eight years ago," Melinda notes. "It's a simple Scandinavian design with a glass top and a drawer that pulls out. The minibusts, Rockefeller Center Atlas photo and plant print, she says, are simply "more examples of male images, which are all over the apartment."




"The Chairman Mao statue [above] is an 'in' joke," says the decorator, "referring to a similar item at executive producer Max Mutchnick's house."




TUNEIN!
Trading Spaces
on TLC,
weekdays at 4 pm,
and Saturdays
at 9 pm

Get Will's Look


You can create that "moneyed" feel without breaking the bank, says Carter Oosterhouse of TLC's *Trading Spaces*



Glass bowl:
momastore.
com, \$90




Espresso machine:
illyusa.com, \$800




Brass bulldog:
gumps.com,
\$345



Bookends:
wrappables.
com, \$29.95



Candlesticks:
silvergallery.
com, \$85



Chair: crateand-
barrel.com,
\$1399



Kilim rug:
sundance.com,
\$895

Cheap Chic

Indulging champagne tastes with a white-wine pocketbook is just a matter of perfecting the art of the hunt, says Carter

Know your stores Don't forget all those national chains that now offer exclusive merchandise from high-end designers. For upscale looks at lower prices, think Martha Stewart for Kmart, Isaac Mizrahi for Target, Jonathan Adler for Hold Everything or the Eva Zeisel reproductions at Crate & Barrel—all of which can easily be perused on line.

Take your time Especially for accessories, check out discount stores like HomeGoods, T.J. Maxx or Marshall's. For furniture, visit your favorite retailers' showrooms to research specific brands and models, then take a trip to the furniture marts in the High Point, North Carolina, area (or check out their websites), where the same items will be priced near wholesale.

And... You may not think that your budget allows for antiques, but don't forget the ones you already own. Put new cushions on those recently inherited dining room chairs and voilà! And when all else fails, remember that less really is often more. Go for that Calvin Klein-esque minimalist look by cutting cheaper clutter and splurging on that one-to-die-for piece.