

CAN MIMOSA

Set in tropical gardens and encompassing a main house, the cabana and a chillout area, this contemporary six-bedroom finca comes with its own outdoor cinema, gym, ping pong and football table. There's no shortage of space or entertainment for the entire family, or the kid in all of us.



Can Mimosa is situated close to Ibiza town and the popular area of Es Torrent, with the attractive south beaches also being conveniently nearby. Ibiza Airport is also within easy reach - just a 20 minute drive away.

THE HOUSE WHISPERER

Caroline Legrand

Caroline, you started out working in fashion – what turned you on to the world of interior design?

I divorced in 2008 and took a break from work to focus on my children and the changes in our lives. After three years, I went back to work but realised I needed to maintain a level of flexibility. I purchased Oakwood Court as a property development to start with and after completing the project quite smoothly and reasonably quickly (loving every step of the way), I was encouraged to start my own interior design business. I had three passions in life as a teenager: fashion design, architecture and languages (I studied at the Interpreter University for one year in Belgium). It's great to look back and see that I have actually come full-circle, having worked in each of these fields!

What kind of relationship do you think there is between the world of fashion and that of interiors? Do you ever notice one influencing the other?

I started off working in a small but immensely creative fashion company, Anya Hindmarch – Anya is incredibly creative and was hugely inspirational on many levels. Working there for eight years in a small design studio has taught me a lot about textures, combinations, details, visualisation and planning... When you create, you need to visualise, go with your gut and trust in your vision. And stick to it! Otherwise you will never get the end product right.

I think interiors have their cycles like fashion does, but they lead their own separate lives. Fashion goes at a faster speed than interiors because it's more disposable. Fashion is an expression of oneself in the moment but I see interiors as the ultimate expression of how we want to live. And just like fashion, there are many, many ways to decorate one's home. There is no such thing as bad taste in my view, it's all about our own perceptions and ideas of style.

As someone who has designed several interiors - both in London and in warmer climates (like Ibiza), what would you say are the defining factors are between a holiday home and a permanent residence?

London is a very cosmopolitan, glamorous, eccentric, international city so there are many more styles of interior to reflect London life and its inhabitants' lifestyle. Ibiza is an island with a bohemian feel and there are only a few architectural types there: the finca, the super modern (mostly white) house and the in-between contemporary house, like my property, which is neither of those. You have to work with the environment there and as this is your place to relax and unwind it seems to me that you would want to

Known internationally for her keen eye and clever understanding of space, Caroline Legrand's work has evolved from different sources of inspiration, constant research and a love of art and design, in all its shapes and expressions. We caught up with her to learn a little more about her design process, particularly that behind her beautiful property in Ibiza, Can Mimosa...

have a less cluttered life and home interior. The climate affects houses' interiors and therefore you need to adapt to that as well. When I designed my Ibiza interior, I wanted to translate my London glamour apartment and its mid-century modern interior pieces into 'Ibiza'. I was on my way to Miami when I heard I'd secured the house. I went shopping to all the vintage stores in Miami and Palm Beach and realised that bamboo headboards and beautiful vintage cabinets would work perfectly in my Ibizan marble-clad house.

Your villa in Ibiza is truly exquisite. It is light and airy at the same time as being warm and inviting. How did you manage to strike the perfect balance?

I was lucky enough to buy a house which had been renovated simply and well a few years ago. The floors and bathroom unites were Ibiza bianco marble, while the walls were white. I added a few personal touches like the library to fill the gap in between two big pillars in the living room, and changed the door handles. But the main house was a blank canvas. I realised all the items I liked in Miami were in a palette of tan, caramel, brown or cream.

So I basically kept all the hues in that range. I added lots of texture with shaggy and alpaca rugs, bamboo, lacquered wood, textured cottons, rattan and wool fabrics. Texture is key. The guest cabana was renovated fully to accommodate two en-suite bedrooms, so I designed the bathrooms, the floors, even the windows. I kept it simple as I wanted to maintain a harmony without being boring. I wallpapered those two rooms otherwise they would have been two new built, white-wall blocks. The cork wallpaper has been a massive hit with everyone. Nobody really uses wallpaper in Ibiza so it has definitely made that room extra special.

What's the rule of thumb when dealing with island properties? What, if any, are the general design obstacles or restrictions you have to navigate around?

You have to go with the environment and the property you purchase. The previous owners of my property had massive Balinese-style pieces which were invading the house. It was suffocating and these pieces individually were nice but there was a definite disconnect between what the owners liked and what the house could accommodate. The statement pieces I picked have the capacity to blend into the house. They don't take over. They co-habit harmoniously.

So if you are buying a fancy but love super modern big pieces, this will not work. I love the mix of modern and old but the proportions must fit. Art is also a bit different. I bought an abstract oil painting in Ibiza which I find doesn't fit there. I have mainly bought photography and works on paper - those seem to fit perfectly.

When working on a project, where do you usually source your furniture from? Does this depend on the location in question?

I buy mostly vintage and mid-century modern and the best place for that is Miami / Palm Beach. I am currently doing a project in Los Angeles and even now I buy 90% in Miami. I have done projects in Los Angeles, New York, London and Ibiza and mostly all



the pieces for those came from Miami. The US is a big country so I guess there's more for me to choose from over there! I buy online as well (1st Dibs, Pamona, Chairish) and fill the gaps with London stores with whom I have good relationships like Conran, Jonathan Adler, Nicholas Haslam, Absolute Flowers & Home. There are a lot of nice interior shops in Ibiza, but again I tend to do the main buying and design abroad and then fill the gaps with local stores. We are living in an era where we buy online and all over the world. Everything can be shipped, and everyone wants to do business at the end of the day.

Personally, I enjoy this, as it's very much part of my creative process. Everything starts with the pieces I source. The rest follows. I find there is so much out there available straight away that the idea of purchasing a newly made item which will take three months to produce at a price three or five times the price of the original vintage piece, simply doesn't make sense. It also satisfies my need to be mindful of our environment and to recycle and re-use as much as I can.

How does a property's location - or even its native flora - inspire your design choices? Could you give us some examples?

My property in Ibiza has a very exotic garden with several massive palm trees which have been there for over 30 years. There is a real California feel to it. The pool has been kept as it is for 30 years. The Yves Klein blue of its tiles dictated a few blue additions in the living room overlooking that striking pool. I have many architect friends and I love how they always talk about the communication between internal spaces, outside spaces, and nature.

I also respect the fact that the garden and its trees have been living in harmony for much longer than I have owned it, so I don't want to disturb that and have only reluctantly cut down one small pine tree which was not in good health. When you have a beautiful garden, anything looks good in it. It's a canvas for you to create whatever you want; it will always look great.

If you could pick one item of furniture to feature across all of your properties, what would it be and why?

The Pierre Paulin ribbon chair which is in the living room in Ibiza. It's a collector's piece, it's iconic, it's sculptural. You can place it in any room and it will add oomph. It works well in Ibiza and would work in any LA, London, New York or St Tropez house I have designed. Pierre Paulin is my favourite furniture designer and he inspires me on so many levels. From the colours he uses, to the shapes of the furniture he's created.

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