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## DESIGN SCENE: A PLAYFULLY ELEGANT PARISIAN HÔTEL PARTICULIER BY ROBERT COUTURIER

Robert Couturier’s career got off to an auspicious start in 1987 when the then-32-year-old designer was commissioned by billionaire Sir James Goldsmith to overhaul his 20,000-acre kingdom on the Pacific Coast of Mexico, followed by his Boeing 757, his double-width Manhattan townhouse, and finally, his French chateau. While that might be a tough act to follow, Couturier has gone on to work everyone from a Hearst and a Rothschild descendant to an Azerbaijani oil tycoon in his almost 30-year career.

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The Living Room

His longevity in the industry can perhaps be credited to his charm, but can definitely be credited to his ability to create environments that seem to defy trends—rooms that exist in an expertly curated wonderland, the perfect mix of old and new. It’s quite an extension of Couturier himself, who is an avid collector of many things, including old master paintings, and “of course, things that I cannot quite afford,” but who is also always looking ahead. “I love the new contemporary furniture, Arad, Zekely, Van

DerStraeten, Loehrman,” he says. “I am enthralled by what is produced with the help of new technologies. Have you seen the furniture shown by Kreo in Paris?”

Couturier took us inside one of his latest projects, a Parisian apartment for a longstanding American client. “It is a great luxury, this apartment. I don’t think he is in it more than two or three weeks a year,” says Couturier. “So it had to have something non-formal, playful.” Even amidst 18th-century antiques and 17th-century tapestries, the space feels surprisingly comfortable. Even with all of the formality, there is little pretense. “[The client] feels at home in every single room of the house because he collects everything. We had to make sense of his collections,” says Couturier. “He creates his own kind of polite nest. That obviously made everything feel more lived in.”

**Click through for a tour of the Robert Couturier-designed Parisian apartment.**

Photo: courtesy Robert Couturier

By **Virginia VanZanten**

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