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CHIC HIDEAWAYS FROM
ASPEN TO MIAMI BEACH

ALEJANDRA
TORRES
OPENS UP HER
MIAMI CONDO





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Bon Girl

Model Alejandra Torres creates interior harmony for her rock star husband and young son in Coconut Grove.

A painting by Alejandra Torres' cousin, which was named after her, hangs above a hand-carved Tibetan credenza in the living room. **Opposite:** Her husband, Tico Torres', painting *She Waits* anchors the design of the dining room.





A pair of ankle bracelets and an opium pipe, both from Africa, enliven the entryway. **Opposite:** Tico's painting *Coco*, of fashion icon Coco Chanel, adds whimsy and fun to the family room.

“We fell in love with each other.” —Hernan Arriaga

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e had instant chemistry,” recalls Alejandra Torres fondly of the first time she met renowned interior designer Hernan Arriaga. “Actually, we didn’t really click,” Arriaga says matter-of-factly. Hit pause. In fact, rewind—about a decade. Torres was 16 when she attended her first Bon Jovi concert in her hometown of Caracas, Venezuela. More than 3,000 miles to the south, in his hometown of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Arriaga was also a fan of the New Jersey band. (“Who wasn’t?” he asks with a laugh.)

Fast forward to January 2008. Alejandra has married the group’s drummer, Hector “Tico” Tor-

res, and the couple share a home near Palm Beach with their son Hector.

Arriaga is now just 90 miles south. He’s in Miami, enjoying a meteoric rise as the creative force behind Arriaga Designs, catering to the likes of Nina Griscom and Rita Schrage. Their paths crossed when the Torreses decided to purchase a place in Miami. Tico was headed off on a nearly year-long world tour in support of Bon Jovi’s tenth studio album, *Lost Highway*. Alejandra, who describes herself as “a city person,” didn’t want to be alone with her son, 4 years old at the time, in quaint-but-quiet Palm Beach. She longed for the



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vibrancy offered by Miami’s Hispanic culture.

A broker friend helped her find the perfect home: a three-bedroom condo with water views on the tenth floor of a 25-story building in Coconut Grove. He then suggested that Torres meet his interior designer friend, Arriaga.

So, back to that little issue of chemistry. “Alejandra was nervous that I was going to give her a home that looked good but didn’t mean anything to her,” remembers Arriaga. It’s a common worry for those, like Torres, unaccustomed to working with an interior designer. After what Arriaga describes as an awkward first month, he sat his beautiful client down for a talk that risked an ugly ending.

“I said, ‘Look, this is what I do. You hired me because you need direction, but I can’t help you if you don’t trust me.’”

Trust she did, and the sad song of Alejandra and Hernan turned into a ballad. “We fell in love with each other,” Arriaga says.

Out of their mutual affection came a nine-month collaboration—“like a baby,” she jokes. The two ex-pats settled on a decidedly eclectic style, one Torres describes as “a mix of French, ‘40s and modern,” composed of new finds and antique scores.

Arriaga started the process by assigning homework to Torres. “I told her to go through magazines and pull out pages she liked. That’s the best way to relate to clients, to see what they have in their minds. Once she showed me those images, I knew the direction she wanted, and I just kept going,” he explains.

It soon became apparent what Torres wanted, and why she was drawn to that particular unit. “Alejandra wanted a white home with silver accents,” Arriaga says. “She basically bought the apartment for the white limestone floors in the



The airy living room boasts an impressive range of decor, including an 18th-century French wood-framed mirror flanked by two African feather hats, lamps fashioned from driftwood, a faux fur throw from Williams-Sonoma Home and an Artefacto coffee table (a dining table with the legs cut down).





The frame on the mirror in the entryway was created from driftwood. **Opposite:** The modernity of the white leather Raul Carrasco headboard (Torres fell in love with) is offset by the white lacquered, antique antler chandelier. The antique Venetian mirrored bedside tables work seamlessly with lamps from Williams-Sonoma Home.

Another source of inspiration for Torres was her husband's artwork; Tico painted fervently.

main rooms." (Arriaga later had the bedroom floors, undone at the time the condo was purchased, finished with a very dark wood similar to ebony.)

Another source of inspiration for Torres was her husband's artwork. Tico painted and sculpted fervently until a few years back, and his wife raided their Palm Beach home for her favorites. The painting *She Waits* anchors the dining area, while *Coco* sets a whimsical mood for the family room. "She's very happy," Arriaga says of *Coco*, a portrait

of the famed Chanel founder. "I love pieces that create a sense of fun in a room."

In the master bedroom, the point of departure was the white leather headboard by Italian designer Raul Carrasco. "I saw it and I loved it, and so we started working around that," Torres says. "It's incredible," raves Arriaga. "It's absolutely my favorite piece in the home." The modernity of the bed is offset by the antique antler chandelier, which Arriaga finished with a high-gloss, white lacquer paint. "It's amazing," Torres says of the one-of-a-kind treasure. As with the rest of her home, the bedroom is a true blend of old (Venetian mirrored bedside table, Parisian white drawers, French upholstered sitting chair) and new (bedside lamps from Williams-Sonoma Home, Frette linens, handmade rug from Odegard).

Undoubtedly the living room holds the most diversity. There's the hand-carved Tibetan credenza, the metal opium pipe from Morocco, the lamps fashioned from driftwood and the 18th-century French wood-framed mirror flanked by two African feather hats mounted to the wall. Even the brand-new coffee table from Artefacto has a story to tell: It was once a dining room table, but Arriaga cut the legs down and gave it a different assignment.

Of the two Torres men, it turns out the internationally famous rocker is by far the easier one. "I always asked Tico for his opinion, and he would tell me, 'Yeah' or 'I don't think so,' but this was really more my project, and he was fine with everything," Arriaga reports. Hector, on the other hand, proved a tough customer. "He kept asking me, 'Why are you changing my home?' and 'Why are you bringing this in?' and 'I like this' and 'I don't like that.'"

"He'd ask me questions about the color of things, and the finishes. I was like, 'Are you really just 4 years old?'"

Sounds like Arriaga Designs has found its summer intern for 2022.



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of fun in a room."*

—Hernan Arriaga