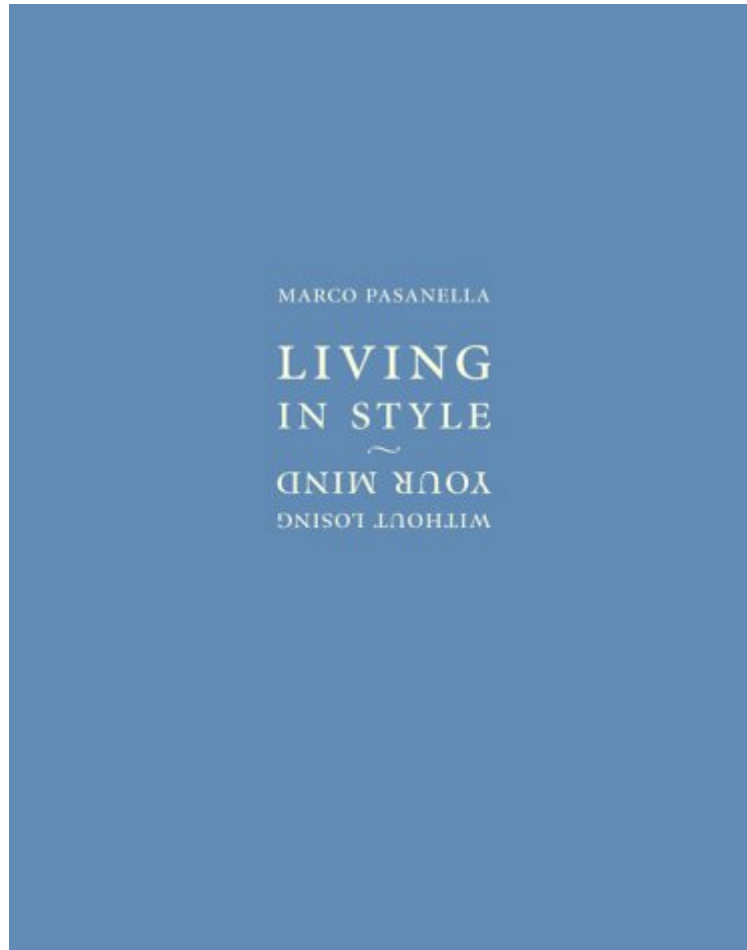


Living In Style Without Losing Your Mind

Marco Pasanella

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Marco Pasanella : Living In Style Without Losing Your Mind before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Living In Style Without Losing Your Mind:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good ReferenceBy The Purple BeeGood reference but brought from marketplace and it was not as described, doesn't have book jacket and is dirty with marks.This is not the fault of the book's author.I think should enforce the 'book description law'! It's so disappointing to receive a book you think will be like new or very good and find it to be nasty. AND you've paid for the dirty book.The book has some nice ideas and I'm thinking of buying it new.8 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Living in Style Without Losing Your MindBy A CustomerI must say I was somewhat disappointed with this book. It was a lot slimmer than I expected and it didn't impart any new knowledge or provide any practical decorating tips for someone with an ordinary house that has no special architectural features. This book, like so many other decorating books is aimed at people who live in ideal houses with some old style charm or super modern chic.7 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Common SenseBy A CustomerThis book gives you confidence to follow your own style and common sense.

This guide shows that great design is all about individual passion and an open mind. It instructs the reader on the best way to make their home look stylish without breaking the bank and illustrates how a little thought and effort can transform an impersonal house into a home.

.com Living in Style Without Losing Your Mind isn't the usual tips-and-tricks guide to decorating your home. Author Marco Pasanella attempts the nearly impossible: to define style in order to help homeowners understand the difference between the stylish and the merely trendy. It's a Herculean task, but Pasanella's approach is truer to the real meaning of style than that of many other interior design books. Pasanella eschews gimmicky style tips and doesn't believe everyone should adhere to one mode of decorating. "Style is important. A style is not." Instead, he urges homeowners to look to room functions as guides to decorating. Because spaces in the home are generally used for gathering (e.g., the living room or kitchen) or retreat (such as a bedroom or bathroom), Pasanella holds that homeowners should design a space with its underlying use or dynamic in mind to help them make wise choices. Above all, rooms must be comfortable and reflect their inhabitants. "True individuality comes from honesty, not 'creativity,'" says Pasanella. He addresses some common design mistakes--for example, falling on the wrong side of the fine line between simple and spartan or cozy and cluttered, as well as the faux pas of making everything match or trying to be cool. He discusses options for home offices and computers, relevant but routinely ignored topics in other design books. Pasanella's abstractions on style can be somewhat vague or overly didactic themselves ("To be really stylish, you need a touch of bad taste"). But overall, he does an admirable job of defining a nebulous concept and giving homeowners the confidence and skills to trust themselves when decorating their homes. --Kris Law

About the AuthorMarco Pasanella is a designer, writer, teacher, and photographer. His design work ranges from a rocking chair in the White House, housewares in the Smithsonian, and exclusive hotels and swanky interiors across the country. These and other projects have been documented widely in the national media as well as many European publications. In 1990 he founded the Pasanella Company, now the Polenta Group, a multidisciplinary design firm. Educated at Yale University, he teaches at Parsons School of Design. He lives in New York City.Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.Chapter One: A ROD NOT A FISH IN THE PEACE CORPS, THEY SAY THAT IT IS BETTER TO TEACH A MAN TO FISH THAN TO GIVE HIM ONE. TO BE INDEPENDENT, THE REASONING GOES, YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO FISH FOR YOURSELF. TO MAKE CHOICES, YOU HAVE TO GRASP THEM. UNFORTUNATELY, TOO MANY DESIGNERS' BOOKS JUST OFFER FISH. Fine, if you live how they live, where they live, with their stuff; but not so good if you want a home that reflects you. This book, on the other hand, is for people who want to understand rather than imitate. The first step is to know what you're aiming for. You may want your home to look like a magazine, but to do so may require a mountain of money and a staff of hundreds, the dexterity of Michelangelo, and a backhoe. But for that kind of cash, labor, and expertise, it better be pretty damn great (see the Piazza San Marco). Most of the time (almost all the time, in fact) great design has to be accessible to the rest of us. By definition, it has to be easy and affordable, smart and stylish. But you don't need a "look." Rather, based on a point of view, great design can be found in many styles. All design is composed, to varying degrees, of the following elements: space, form, light, color, material, scale, and symbols (or associations). Good design gets the mix right; but great design includes one more: passion. You don't appreciate great design; you love it. Great design describes inanimate things (objects, spaces) that inspire human attachment. It's personal. It resonates. It enthralls. Truly great design is what you would carry out of your house if it were burning down. In a world where everything is starting to look like everything else (think Pottery Barn, Crate Barrel, Williams-Sonoma) great design is a little off. It includes the unpolished, the unique, perhaps even the slightly nutty. To have great design, you've got to have a little something, with a little something extra. Design can be scary. It seems to involve spending a lot of money, taking a lot of time, and making a lot of seemingly arbitrary decisions. It doesn't have to. All you need to do is understand how to recognize it for yourself. To have a great home, the point is, you don't need a platinum card for a flair for fabrics. You don't need a degree. You don't even need to know how to draw. You need to know how to see. And this book will show you how. Sometimes that means looking not in a Sotheby's catalog but in places closer to home. Great design, one should keep in mind, is often so well designed as not to seem designed at all. Often it just means remembering. Everything you need to know about design you learned in freshman English, at least if you read William Strunk and E. B. White's Elements of Style as you were supposed to. On close examination, this guide to good writing gives some brilliant advice about good design. "Work from a suitable design," Strunk and White advise. Do the same at home. Decide what's important and go about it in a methodical way. "This does not mean," they sensibly point out, "that you must sit with a blueprint always in front of you, merely that you had best anticipate what you are getting into." Keep it simple, the authors continue: "A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reasons that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subject only in outline, but that every word tell." "Approach style warily," they wisely caution. Turn "resolutely away from all devices that are popularly believed to indicate

style -- all mannerisms, tricks, adornments." Remember that style is what is "distinguished and distinguishing," not a "garnish for the meat of prose, a sauce by which a dull dish can be made palatable." Once again, the same is true for interior design. Style is important. A style is not. Heed Elements of Style and you'll realize that the ability to make a home look great is neither a mystical talent nor a God-given blessing bestowed upon a lucky few. Interior design has principles, and the most fundamental of these are gathering and retreat. Copyright 2000 by Marco Pasanella