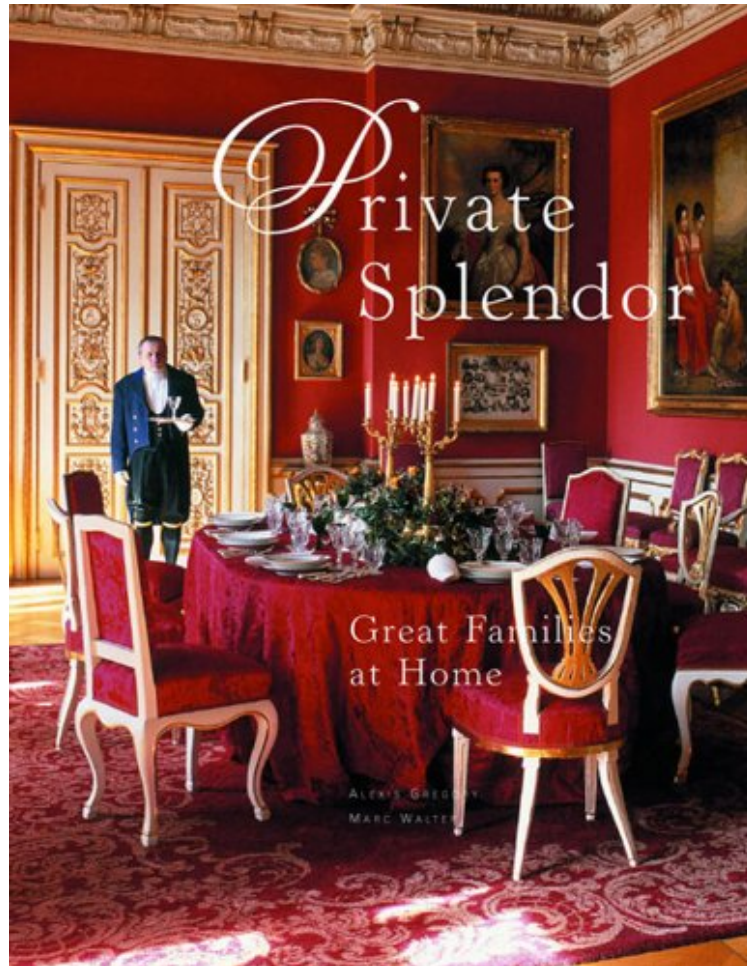


(Download pdf ebook) Private Splendor: Great Families at Home

Private Splendor: Great Families at Home

Alexis Gregory

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Alexis Gregory : Private Splendor: Great Families at Home before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Private Splendor: Great Families at Home:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The Best of Its Type By Classicdude PRIVATE SPLENDOR is by far one of the best of its type. Author Alexis Gregory and photographer Marc Walter are guests in eight great houses still inhabited by their aristocratic families. An intimate view into the lifestyle of today's owners is presented in a good blend of the scholarly and the artistic. Granted, more about the architecture, art, furnishings, family history, etc., could have been told and shown, but each palace is worthy of its own book. This is a very good book that shows life in great houses beyond the velvet rope that would restrict the casual visitor. 5 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Some stayed away By M. Seidner Beautiful objects, great architecture, photos show dark inhospitable living conditions of a time gone by. I would have liked more photos of living areas and brighter conditions 18 of 29 people found the

following review helpful. Good subjects ruined by photography

By J. Landau

The author has arranged to enter some of the oldest, most ornate historical family residences in Europe -- homes we would not otherwise be able to see or tour, in many instances -- thereby providing an opportunity to see what generations have accumulated in these grand mansions. Unfortunately, the photographer is, like so many French photographers of interiors, incompetent. Virtually all of the images have deep shadows over much of the interior, allowing very little to be seen. We see this repeatedly in French publications focused on interiors, leading us to believe that perhaps French photographers have never learned how to use any supplemental lighting at all, certainly not effectively. This is usually essential in allowing one to actually look at the detail of the decor. Only Naudin and Bardlay, among French architectural photographers, are generally able to make the "available lighting only" approach work and when their work is looked at alongside that of a Skrebneski (as in the Givenchy book), it pales by comparison. Why would the publishing house have accepted these photographs? A further, minor observation: in two of the homes, the owners are shown. Aside from Princess TNT, (and this is a bit nasty, but what the hell, these books are supposed to be fun to look at) showing the owners in these cases was not a wise editorial choice. When a Conde Nast publication shows a homeowner in an interior, you can be certain he (or far more often, she) will be highly photogenic. If, when showing a home, the resident duchess could, at best, be described as having an "unfortunate" visage, Slim Aarons could usually find a comely young housemaid going about her duties to include in the photos instead. Poor photography results in a waste of unusual access.

This beautiful volume explores eight European estates that, despite war, taxes, and the passage of time, have remained in the same families for centuries. The photographs are redolent in atmosphere and the text is revealing, due to the authors long friendships with the owners of these great houses. Offering an inside view of a highly refined way of life, *Private Splendor* reveals the secrets that kept these homes in private hands. The houses include Seville's Casa de Pilatos, owned by Spain's most illustrious grandee; Harewood House in Yorkshire, owned by a cousin of Queen Elizabeth; Germany's Schloss Regensburg, occupied by the flamboyant Princess Gloria von Thurn and Taxis; and the Palazzo Sachetti near Vatican City, whose enormous Sala dei Mapi is entirely frescoed by Francesco Salviati (1510-1563).

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About the Author

Alexis Gregory is a publisher, author, art collector, and deputy chairman of Sotheby's advisory board. He lives in New York and Paris.