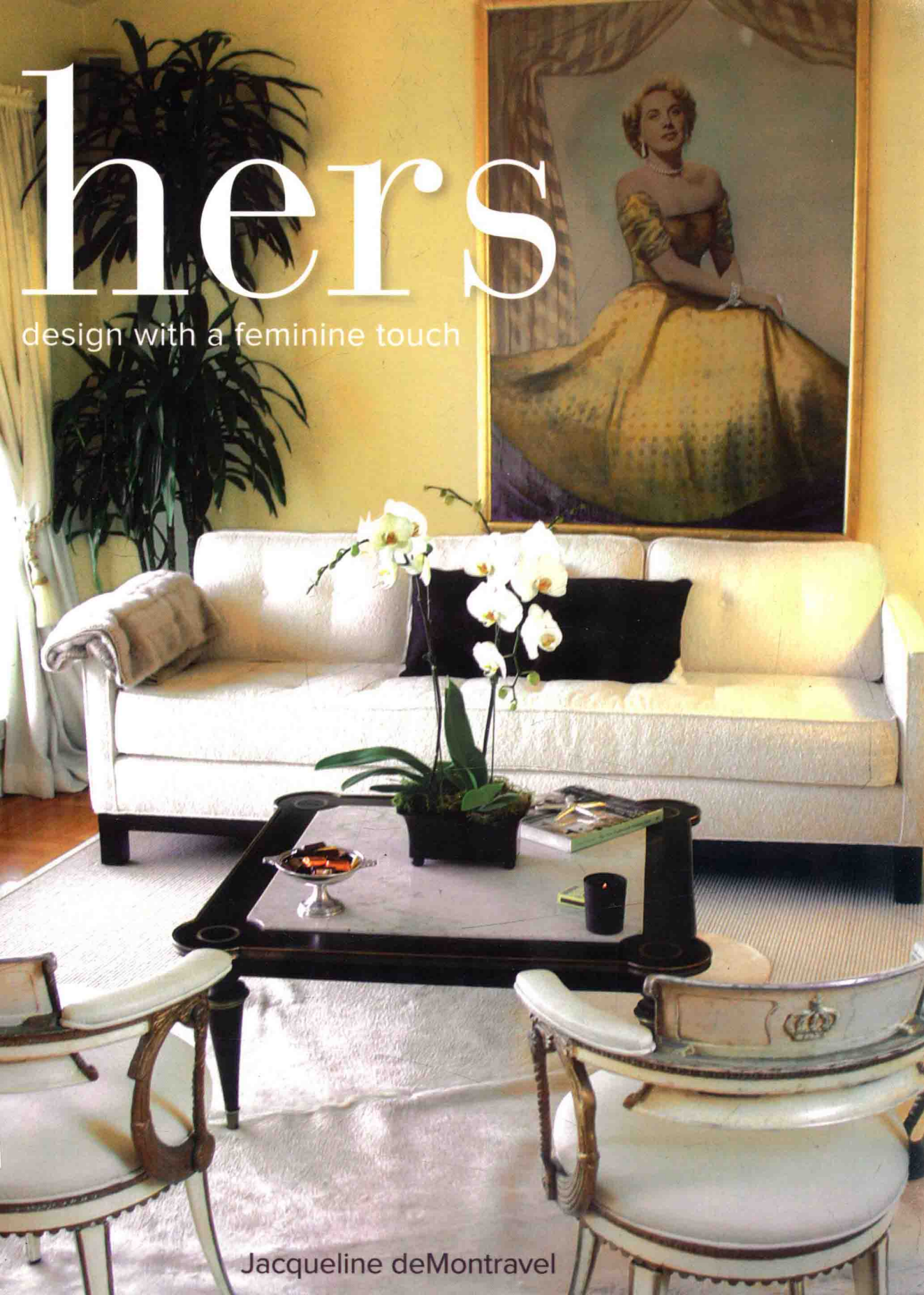


hers

design with a feminine touch



Jacqueline deMontravel



hers

design with a feminine touch




Jacqueline deMontravel

Photographs by Marisa Crawford, Jacqueline deMontravel,
Bret Gum, Jaimee Itagaki, and Mark Tanner



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First Edition



To

Adeline,
Brielle
& Olivia,

three young ladies
in the making



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Introduction

Imagine a room where you can light as many candles as you want without worrying about fire hazards, or listen to cheesy music while reading the kind of gossip magazines that are usually relegated to grocery-store lines. Whether you are single or a married mother of four, to create a room where you have no one to answer to is a mission worth accepting.

Why did we let the boudoir go the way of the butler's pantry and the parlor room? Surely a woman's private space hasn't become obsolete. After all, a common trait in the female makeup is her need for her own place where she can be surrounded by pretty things that soothe her.

The origin of the boudoir is reflected in its name. In French, *bouder* means to sulk. Thus when a woman was experiencing the onset of a meltdown she would withdraw to her boudoir to unleash her emotions. Civilized and girly, *n'est-ce pas*? It is no wonder that the first boudoirs belonged to the mistresses of Louis XIV, as these ladies were unapologetically feminine and felt at ease in a room that promoted seduction.

The boudoir evolved into a place where a woman could be fussed over, have a quiet meal, entertain special guests, bathe and dress—in short, a place to just be feminine. The modern woman still needs this luxury, in the same way that a man needs his time in the garage. In today's world, alas, extra rooms are indulgences, given that no home ever has enough space.

So how do you create your own private space, especially when your kitchen doubles as the laundry room? It takes some imagination, some rethinking of your home's layout, and a little purging, but when that room is in place it can be life-altering.

Get into the spirit of decorating your space in the same manner you would when putting together a look for a black-tie event. You want to dazzle while being comfortable enough to last through a long, memorable night. You begin with your go-to dress, one that makes you feel beautiful and sexy. You then consider jewelry, shoes, and makeup. Think of your room as the dress, the accents as your accessories, and the color as your makeup.



A lanyard of tiny, white-colored shells lends a quiet note of the sea and adds a novel element to a bed's canopy. **[above]** An overlooked corner can become a favorite nook when designed with a handsome chair and go-to accessories, such as a throw, flowers, and great art. **[opposite]**

A room should captivate while being inviting; it should not only be comfortable but also make you feel at your best. Any lady worth her glamour knows that she must feel relaxed. It's a state of mind that comes from a secure place. Function, comfort, and style are a powerful triumvirate in achieving one's optimum space.

Decide on a look that you love, such as vintage, French Provincial, mid-century modern, or any other style that turns your space into a personal retreat. Whether you live in a three-bedroom cottage or in a one-window studio, you can achieve any look and mood with the clever use of paint, textiles, and accessories. Patterns and color combinations can also create an exquisite effect without becoming overpowering or outdated.





To keep the room's modern steel-gray walls from looking too cavernous, a bedside table and a tufted headboard in a contrasting light shade soften the look. The tabletop features well-appointed accessories, while the mirror brings in more light and glamour.

Decorators from Elsie de Wolfe to Celerie Kemble have used floral and chintz for traditional looks in a woman's space, but there is also a modern interpretation to the feminine side. Rather than ruffles and lace, a British West Indies or soothing beach vibe might be just the look to make your nook feel luxurious to you. In fact, throughout this book, you'll find a wide variety of feminine styles—from the completely girly to more restrained looks for those needing to accommodate male guests or family members. These spaces still serve as luxe retreats for the lady of the house, but in case you crave more feminine fantasy, look for the “Make It About Her” boxes for hints, tricks, and details for tweaking these spaces to your fancy.

When deciding where to create your favorite space in your home, a natural place to address is the bedroom. Rather than viewing this room as

merely functional, see it as an opportunity to create an environment in which you can spend personal time napping, reading, primping, and losing yourself in those other pastimes that have become luxuries in our modern world.

As you get started, draw upon a variety of styles and inspirations to see how a bedroom can be more than a place of mad departures and much-needed sleep. Take inspiration from books, magazines, decorator show houses, travel, or the set design of an artful film to find a great look for your personal room.

A neglected space elsewhere in your home can be reinvented as your own. A sitting area that gets limited use can become your go-to spot if you cleverly rearrange what you already

“It is the personality of the mistress that the home expresses. Men are forever guests in our homes, no matter how much happiness they may find there.”

—ELSIE DE WOLFE