

# Homestyle

MAY 2001

## COLOR SPLASHES

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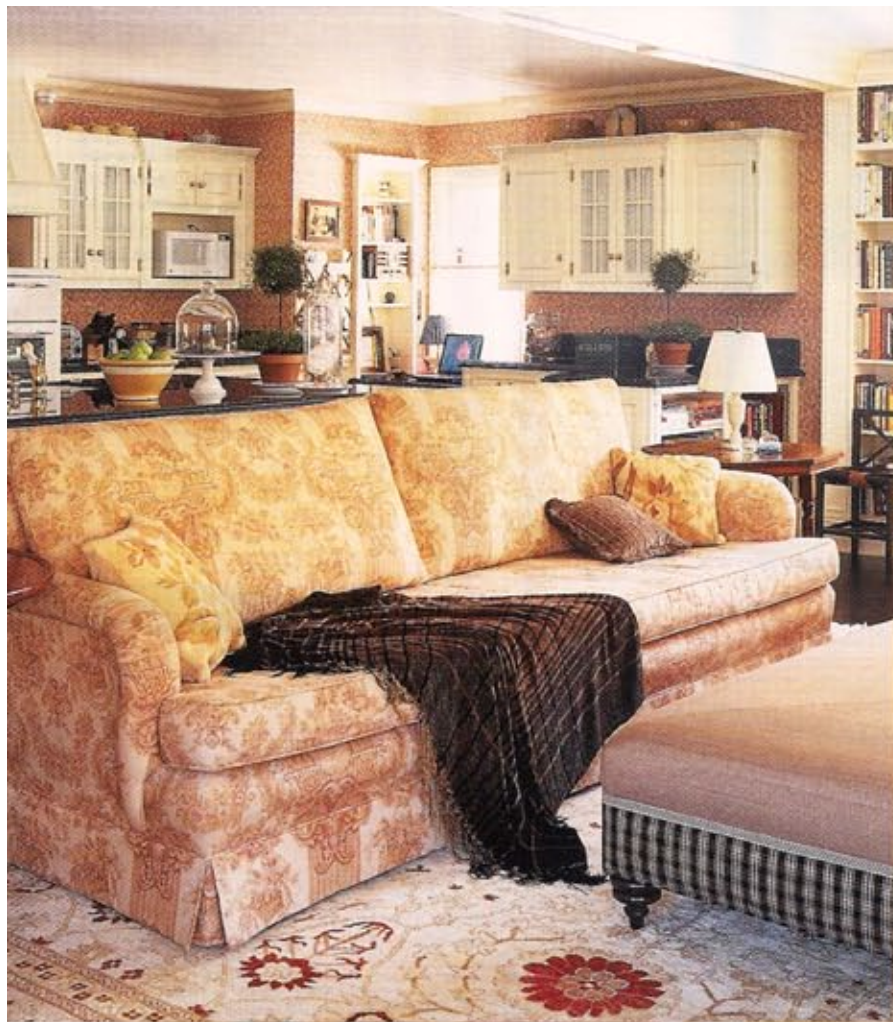
Classic rock (this page): Previous homes have favored jewel tones, but a love of light colors won out this time. OPPOSITE: Meat Loaf says "everyone is surprised" by his taste for the traditional.

AMERICAN ANTIQUES, IMPRESSIONIST ART, AND TASSELED ACCENTS:

# a class act

COULD THIS REALLY BE A ROCKER CALLED MEAT LOAF? BY LORI TOBIAS





A media room (this page): features bark walls and geometric patterns. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: An open kitchen makes entertaining easy; architectural details abound, including a pair of molded, arched doorways. Leslie, pictured with daughter Amanda; a damask-draped bed in the master bedroom.



Fans who came to know Meat Loaf as the longhaired, burly singer of '70s "Bat Out of Hell" fame might expect from the man a lifestyle with all the wild trappings befitting a rock-and-roller. They would be wrong.

"Everyone is surprised," the Grammy-winning singer says. "I have a certain style and taste that is very traditional, and I don't think people anticipate that. I've been in a lot of houses and very few are as well done as mine. I guess it's because it's my house, but I really do feel that way."

Meat Loaf is referring to the 1920s Colonial hybrid home he shares with his wife of 22 years, Leslie G. Aday, in the canyons of Los Angeles. Featuring 6,500 square feet of living space, it is filled with formal furnishings, classic and contemporary art, and antiques that have been lovingly collected over the years.

New York interior designer Darren Henault, who has designed many of the couple's homes on the East Coast, insists they prefer classic, elegant design that's decidedly pulled together. "This house was really perfect for us," Leslie says. "It felt like New England, which we love. It was the kind of house we would be in forever, where we would grow old and have our daughters visit with their husbands and children."

The interior is saturated with grayed neutrals. Walls, painted in historically correct, matte-finish shades, and high-gloss trim and wainscoting evocative of a race-car finish add light without detracting from the rest of the decor. The formal living room is dominated by Beidermeier and American Empire furnishings, and Meat Loaf's favorite American Impressionist painting, "1916 Winter Street Scene Philadelphia," by Everett Shinn. ▶





Household treasures (this page): West Highland terriers Winnie and Gussy have the run of the house. OPPOSITE: The dressing table in the master bedroom, salvaged from a barn and transformed into a beauty.



A mahogany-framed sleeper sofa was covered in a Paradise Birds Schumaker pattern, while a pair of button slipper chairs, found with springs popping and fabric worn, got a second chance draped in pale yellow wool gabardine and adorned with bouillon fringe.

The media room, a California prerequisite and Meat Loaf's domain, features carpet and upholstery in geometrically patterned shades of beige and brown, and textural walls covered in Cannon/Bullock bark wallpaper. The space houses Meat Loaf's collection of Jay Strongwater jeweled frames and the artwork he cherishes. "I have what I think is the second or third largest collection of pulp art in America," he says. "They're original oil-on-canvas magazine covers, and it's just wonderful art."

But it is the master suite that appeals to Leslie's sensibility.

"I love, love, love my bedroom," she exclaims. "It's very elegant, very spacious, and very glamorous. Darren is truly a visionary." To wit, consider the almost decadent dressing table in a corner of the room. "We found it in an old barn in Ephrata, Pennsylvania. It was covered in pigeon droppings and cobwebs and dust," Leslie says. "Darren said, 'We're going to spend more money renovating than buying it, but it's going to be exquisite. We wiped away a spot and the grain was fabulous. He was right; it's absolutely beautiful.'"

No one can say whether this New England house in the canyons of California will truly be their "forever home," but for now, Leslie says, she feels incredibly fortunate. "At the end of the day, it's about being grateful for one another, for life itself, and for the beauty that surrounds us." ■