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Ernest de la Torre

"This is definitely not a space intended for use by children," says Ernest de la Torre. The elegant bathroom he has fashioned for his first Showhouse appearance is a sybaritic interior, reminiscent of French Art Deco style. A luxurious selection of fabrics and finishes was chosen to enhance the glamorous ambiance. The walls are upholstered in a sumptuous, icy blue silk fabric. As a substitute for doors, de la Torre defined separate sections with floor-to-ceiling curtain partitions.

Several furniture pieces in the room are his own designs, including the Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann-inspired dressing table, an upholstered, white shearing club chair, a mahogany folding screen, and a mirror frame with nickel and shagreen inlay placed above the vanity. The reproduction Pierre Chateau wall sconce provides subdued lighting. To achieve a soft, reflective glow, gold leaf paint was faux finished onto the ceiling surface.

Raised in Lake Forest, Illinois, de la

Torre's early design curiosity was sparked by his close proximity to the classic architecture of David Adler, and the esteemed Modernist, Mies van der Rohe. At his father's urging, he studied Economics as an undergraduate. "This background has been an enormous asset to me as an interior designer," he says.

De la Torre began his design career at *Peter Marino Architects*. "Marino was impressed with my business background, and the previous experience I had buying and renovating many homes on my own," he says. Eventually, he moved to London, and continued graduate studies at *Sotheby's Fine and Decorative Arts Institute*. While there, de la Torre met English designer, David Collins, and worked with him on several overseas and New York projects, including Madonna's Central Park West apartment.

After returning to New York, he teamed with Ian Schrager to reconstruct the Library of the *Morgan Hotel*.

Before establishing his own interior design business two years ago, de la Torre was responsible for creating new furniture, lighting, tabletop and textile concepts for Ralph Lauren's Home division.

Although his successful, fledgling business is presently his major focus, de la Torre has several ambitious plans for the future. "I would love to do a hotel project, and eventually create an original collection of home furnishings products," he says. His numerous achievements will be recognized in the September issue of *House Beautiful* magazine, where he is cited as one of the top 25 new designers in the United States.



Before