

Empowering • Interiors

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Born in Kenya and raised and educated in Western Australia, Andrea Savage's chance visit to Singapore in 2000 launched her into a top-billing commercial and fashion-modelling career, walking for the likes of Emmanuel Ungaro and gracing countless magazine covers. In a turnaround career change, she went on to join award-winning Singapore-based interior design company Design Intervention in 2010, and hasn't looked back. Here, she tells us about her love for home interiors, her thoughts on the relationship between fashion and home décor, and more.



Andrea wears a red and white wool dress by Lanvin and a Swarovski crystal-studded chain brooch

What first drew you to the design world and to the Design Intervention team?

Design has been part of my life since I was a child, with one of my greatest influences being my mother's interest in the field. I grew up with colour and a mum who wasn't afraid to push the boundaries. We had yellow kitchens, emerald-green ceilings, black and flowery powder rooms, and currently she lives in a one-hundred-year old house with yellow hallways and a turquoise-and-black kitchen with a chinoiserie theme!

It was actually Rebecca Bisset, the editor-in-chief of Expat Living Publications, who introduced me to Nikki Hunt (who founded Design Intervention in 2004), believing it could be a great partnership. I joined in 2010 and became a partner and project director soon afterwards.

Interior design allows you the opportunity to express yourself in a creative way. It has the potential to change lives and leave a lasting impact on a home and the family who live in it. Precious memories are created in your home space, and your interior becomes intrinsically linked to them.

What is your "must-do" checklist before starting any project?

First, maintain discipline in applying a design. We see thousands of opinions in a space, but form and function need to be considered along with the way you mix history, texture and colour to create a cohesive interior.

You also need to respond to open areas and interior architectural elements, noticing any uneven rhythmic patterns or symmetrical details at work.

It's also necessary to really listen to your clients; after all, you're creating a home and a space that reflects them and their lifestyle. That said, the goal is to take a design brief and push it to the next level, and consider areas they never thought about to create a place of their dreams that will be loved for years to come.

"The goal is to take a client's design brief and push it to the next level to create a place of their dreams"

Having lived in Singapore for 14 years, would you say that interior-styling tastes have changed?

We find that, by and large, our clients are more enamoured with the idea of a beautiful space, and through their travels and being exposed to beautiful sights and new cultures want to capture elements of that in their own homes.

Singapore itself is a stunning location, with its manicured gardens and architectural splendour, so we are constantly stimulated aesthetically. After being exposed to beautiful shopping malls, hotels and restaurants, people want to introduce what they've seen into their own living space. Tastes have also become more eclectic and diversified due to our exposure to internet forums, as well as to social media sites such as Pinterest, which promote and support common passions within the field, and further fuel the sharing of ideas.

To say that the interior design industry in Asia is booming, Singapore has a vision to be a leading global city and a new design hub for all sorts of innovative and creative enterprises. We've attracted highly accredited international trade fairs such as Maison & Objet and 100% Design, with great public response.

Design Intervention is really making its mark in Singapore and also achieving global recognition. How do you feel the company has done this?

We've done it through a lot of hard work, passion and dedication. What's more, Nikki and I have an amazing team of people that we work with. In an industry like ours, where so many moving components are required to ensure a successful project, we must look to the team that we

Andrea wears a leopard print silk dress by Lanvin and a Swarovski crystal-studded necklace





Andrea wears a fitted wool dress by Victoria Beckham

work with every day to make things possible – we wouldn't be here without them!

Interior design trends are linked to the world of fashion. What do you think of the relationship between these two industries?

There's no doubt that the worlds of interior design and fashion are colliding. In the past, there always seemed to be a time lapse between the runway and the influence it had on décor; now, however, the two influence each other. For example, when florals hit the runway, they were almost instantly showcased at interior settings, too.

Take leopard print – virtually everyone wears a splash of it, and now you'll open an interior magazine and see a dining room featuring chairs upholstered with leopard print. I'll bet that same client would have a pair of leopard print shoes in her wardrobe.

Tell us about your role as a resident judge on Star World's hit television show, *The Apartment*.

This year, I joined the bench as a permanent judge alongside Jamie Durie and Lawrence Lewelyn-Bowen.

Being part of a prestigious judging panel and throwing interior design into the mix was my idea of TV heaven! The contestants were so impressive and really earned my respect – they have to achieve a lot both physically and mentally in a very short space of time.

As a show, *The Apartment* tests an individual's boundaries, sense of creativity and motivation. All involved become so passionate about interior design and how it can transform a home – and, more importantly, change lives. Witnessing their progress and

being part of mentoring them to get to that point was the greatest reward.

Can you identify a defining highlight or most memorable project in your career so far?

I learn something new from every project and client. That's the exciting thing about our profession – you can have years of experience, but each project manages to teach you something you didn't know before. People continually fascinate you with their ideas, and on a project as personal as designing someone's home you become responsible for setting the stage for their life in it, too.

What's your key source of motivation each day? Where do you draw creative inspiration?

I just love what I do; my work does not feel like work! Instead of draining me, it fuels my energy – I think that is what we all need to find in a career. It helps that I also have a fabulous family support network – in particular my husband Cameron.

What new projects are you working on?

Nikki and I are very excited to be launching a Design Intervention Signature Series, a collection that will celebrate ten years of producing furniture for some of the finest homes here in Singapore and Asia Pacific.



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For more information about Design Intervention and its projects, visit designintervention.com.sg