

SINGAPORE

Flatler Homes



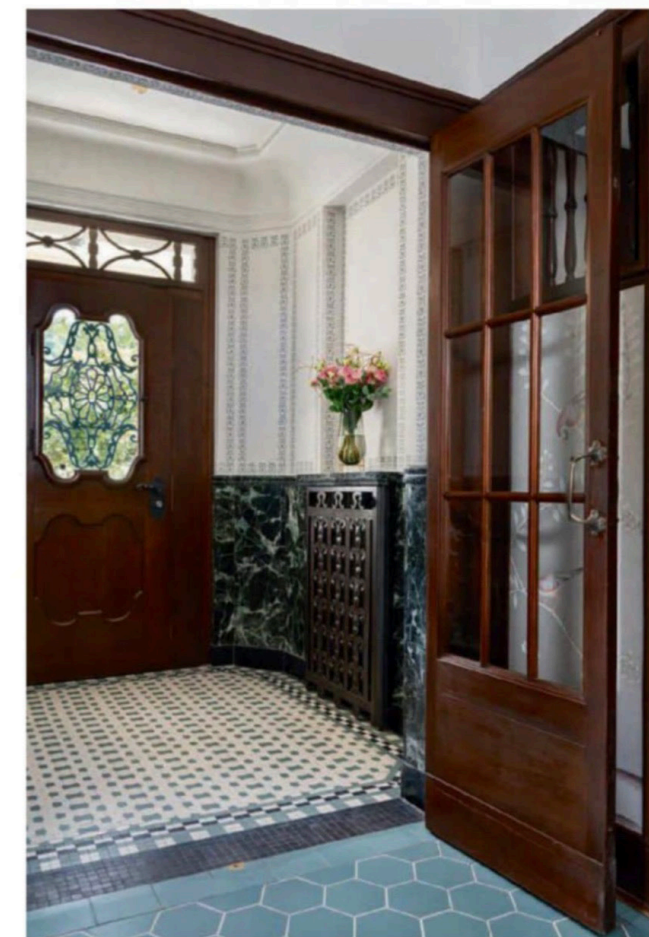
Creative Canvas

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Modern

Rebirth



A historical estate in Switzerland welcomes a new chapter through the deft hand of interior designer Ina Rinderknecht

By Kissa Castañeda.

Photography by Reto Guntli and Agi Simoes



“The choice of light wood and rattan preserves the cosy countryside feel of the home”



Every project presents a different challenge, and when a property is listed in the national historical register, expectations are undoubtedly stratospheric. But when interior designer Ina Rinderknecht was commissioned to modernise this country estate in Zurich, she couldn't say “challenge accepted” fast enough.

“The owners had seen a previous project of ours, Hotel Storchen in Zurich. After discovering that we were the team behind its interior design, they approached us via our website and from there, we started working together on this incredible estate,” says Rinderknecht.

BORN AGAIN

Spanning over 753,400sqft, the large estate is divided into two parts—the villa and chauffeur house—set in a structure replete with art nouveau features. The goal was to restore the house to its former glory, bring lightness into the interior, and adapt it to new requirements. Previously used as a single-family home, the owner wanted to expand it for private as well

Clockwise from top left: The pavilion features a Magnus Olesen table, Fredericia Pato chairs and Flexform Dragonfly armchairs; the stately dining room oozes sophistication with its mix of light-hued furnishings and dark wood fixtures; this meeting room features the same chair designs as those in the pavilion, upholstered in similar pastel hues; the stylish bar area features wallpaper from Altfield Interiors, Pedrali Babila bar stools and a custom bar counter designed by Ina Rinderknecht

Previous spread: The sunburst pattern of the Meridian Aqua carpet from The Rug Company adds dynamism to the living room, which also features the Neutra Leaf coffee tables and dining table; the original door, fireplace and flooring of the entrance hallway were carefully preserved





This page: The steam room features glass mosaic wall tiles by Bisazza and Vaia bathroom fittings from Dornbracht; this lounge in the wellness zone of the home is furnished with Marset Mercer wall lights, a custom sofa designed by Ina Rinderknecht and manufactured by Girsberger, and M05 side tables by S+ Systemmöbel

Opposite page: A minimalist Kundalini pendant lamp adds a modern touch to the kitchen, which features pale blue cabinetry with Sapientstone Calacatta Statuario marble counter tops; next to the Flos IC Lights floor lamp is a custom fireplace manufactured by Markus Rüeegg Feuer using Verde Alpi marble



as corporate use, such as hosting meetings and retreats.

Rinderknecht, with her global background and deep experience in crafting interiors for various luxury hospitality and residential clients, was well placed to bridge the old and the new with a sophisticated flourish. Born and raised in Seoul, the Milan-educated designer often marries various styles and eras in her projects. “My childhood memories often draw me back to the sights, sounds and smells I was exposed to, and this very much influences my work. It is an inherent knowledge I carry with me,” she reveals.

HISTORY MAKING

Bringing the interiors into a new century required a considerable amount of work in terms of layout, design and decoration.

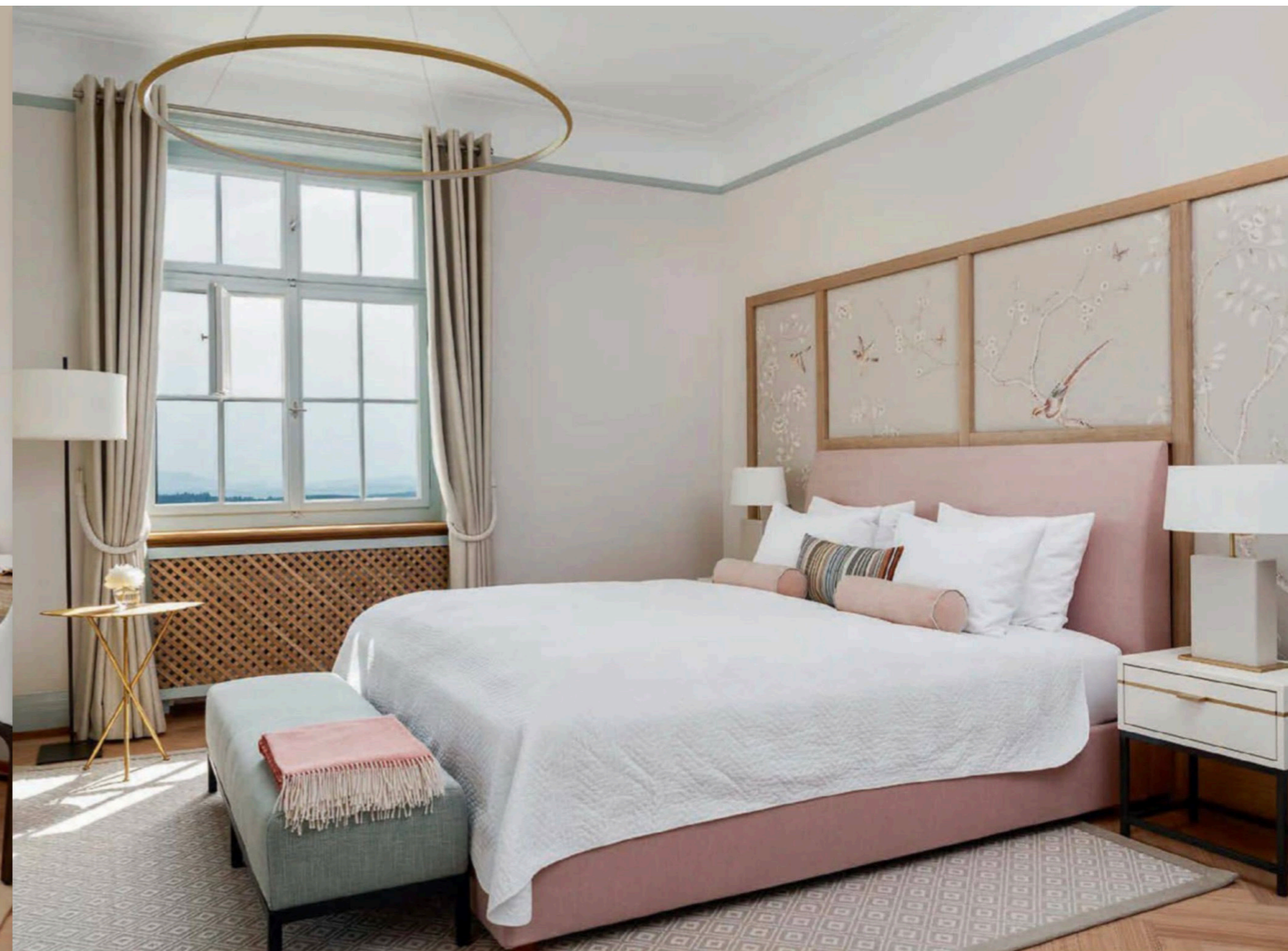
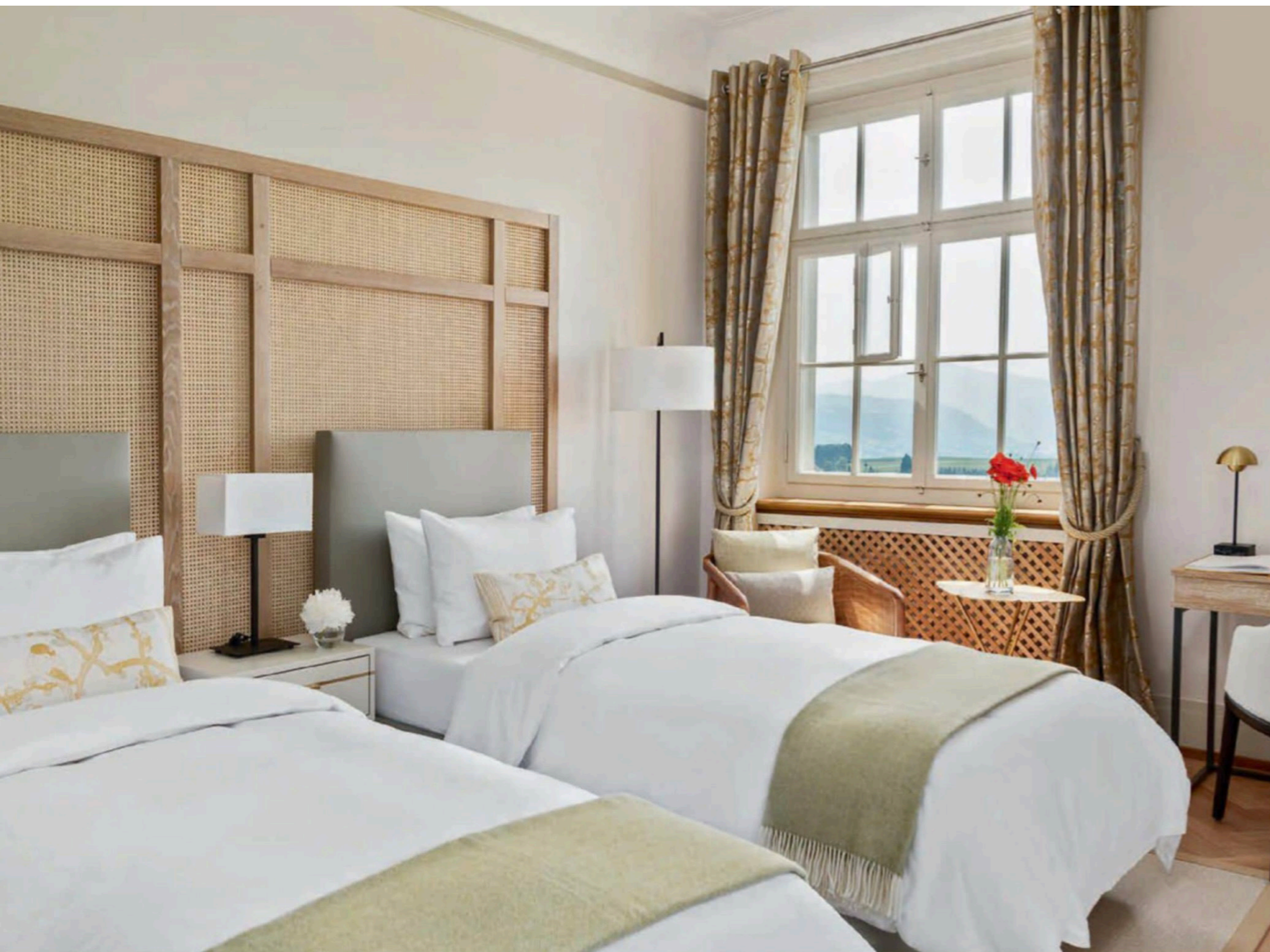
“Whilst a treasure chest for historical materials and art nouveau details, the main character of the building was dark and heavy. It felt frozen in time, and we were excited to breathe new life into the place.”

As is customary of listed buildings, the renovation had to be implemented under a strict framework. “The research process was elaborate—every room was meticulously studied by preservation experts, who created



an inventory of materials and features to be maintained,” says Rinderknecht.

The expansive period property incorporates an array of indoor and outdoor social spaces, 13 bedrooms and multiple bathrooms. It was crucial to balance a sense of dynamism and harmony throughout the estate. In order to highlight the prized features of the villa, the



designer chose to go with classic materials and neutral colours. “The choice of light wood and rattan preserves the cosy countryside feel of the home and helps to fuse the darker tones of the original features with the chosen pastel colour schemes. This creates a calm yet modern atmosphere,” she says.

Having over a dozen rooms also offered the opportunity to change things up. “It was clear we could not create a scheme that would apply to every room in the same way,” says Rinderknecht. “We needed to transfer the diversity of the original interior into the new proposal.”

The team embarked on extensive research, and were drawn to a beautiful drapery fabric from Rubelli available in different colours. “This fabric was the perfect starting point to retell the story of the house in a fresh and contemporary manner. Based on the drapery, we were able to set up three colour schemes: subtle blue, purple, and green.” These multiple colour schemes infused the heritage home with the energy it needed, resulting in

Clockwise from top left: A woven feature wall and matching radiator cover designed by Rinderknecht and manufactured by Girsberger amps up the cosy factor of this bedroom; a hand-painted linen wallcovering from De Gournay adds a delicate touch to this bedroom; this bathroom features a freestanding Agape bathtub, custom cement tiles from Mosáico that were designed by Rinderknecht, and wall sconces by Astro Lighting



different looks that still felt connected to one another.

The most challenging space to update was the dining room, given its strong historical features such as a dark wood cabinet and a tiled stove that dated back to the villa’s construction. “We designed the custom marble table in light Calacatta Borghini to create a central piece that would alleviate the heaviness and rigidity of the room. The contemporary geometric shapes and pastel tones also catch your eye without being too loud,” says Rinderknecht.

MINDEFUL APPROACH

One of the most exciting aspects of the renovation was rethinking how the rooms on the ground floor could be better suited to the estate’s renewed purpose. The team created a spectacular cocktail area complete with a freestanding bar with a marble top; they also reimagined the existing built-in cabinets and changed the wallcovering to a brush-stroke golden wallpaper from Altfield Interiors. “This room is now a glorious spot to welcome guests

This page: Furnished with Kettal Landscape deck chairs, Royal Botania Conix side tables and Glatz teakwood parasols, the pool deck is an inviting spot on warm summer days

Opposite page: The Laufen Val bathtub encourages one to indulge in a leisurely soak; recurring elements such as the custom textured feature wall and Park Lane table lamps from Astro Lighting add visual continuity to the bedrooms



and serves as a place for relaxed gatherings.”

In true 21st-century style, there is, of course, a space devoted to wellness. The basement has been transformed into a haven for well-being, complete with a spa, steam bath, relaxation areas, dressing rooms and a fitness room. With accent walls in a soft beige and Crema d’Orcia limestone from Salvatori, it’s a wonderful spot to pause and decompress.

In the end, both Rinderknecht’s team and the owner were extremely delighted with the final result. “We’re proud to be able to tackle a complex historical restoration project that not only brought the villa into the present day, but also evolved it to serve both private and corporate purposes,” she says. Her favourite part of the transformation? “It has to be the living room on the ground floor—it is light, fresh, and has a dream-like atmosphere.”

