

guardian weekend 13.02.10

divorced my
husband...
and married him
six weeks later

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fashion gets
minimalist

Impossible
perfectionist,
27, seeks

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Primary instinct

As spring approaches, cast off those neutrals and embrace technicolour. Trish Lorenz visits a Paris apartment where all is bright and beautiful. Pictures: Antoine Baralhé



Elegant Parisian apartments aren't known for their bold use of colour. So when Mathilde Baralhé - a lifelong fan of bright shades - moved into her new home, she filled it with primary-coloured furniture. But she kept the walls, floors, mouldings and panelling neutral. "I was tempted to paint the apartment in bright colours," she says, "but I was worried the combination would be too much. It is now the perfect backdrop to the furniture." The reds, yellows and blues are repeated throughout to give her home a sense of cohesion.

LIVING ROOM

Baralhé has stuck to her three-way primary colour scheme - from armchairs to coffee cups (main picture). The mock snakeskin rug is linoleum that she cut in the shape of a traditional bearskin (try Armstrong Flooring, 01642 768660, armstrong-flooring.co.uk). "Most of the furniture is pretty arty, but I didn't want the flat to look like a gallery. So

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I chose natural colours for the walls, such as greys and linens," she says. "I wanted to make a feature of the mouldings, so I picked those out in a darker shade. I also made sure some furniture was more discreet, such as a white sofa." The coffee table and lounge chair are by Italian designer Pucci de Rossi (made75.com).

HALL

The hallway is dominated by an extraordinary zebra "rug" etched into the wood floor (pictured left). "The floors in the hall were in such poor condition they couldn't be refurbished, so I asked the artist Marc-Antoine Moroy, who specialises in trompe l'oeil, to paint this for me. He used oil paint directly on to the polished floorboards, then varnished it so that it wouldn't deteriorate too quickly." Try Stephen Farnworth for similar finishes in the UK (01257 410414, decorativepaintfinishes.co.uk). The red, blue and yellow palette continues with a dozen framed prints, with walls and panelling in neutral shades. »