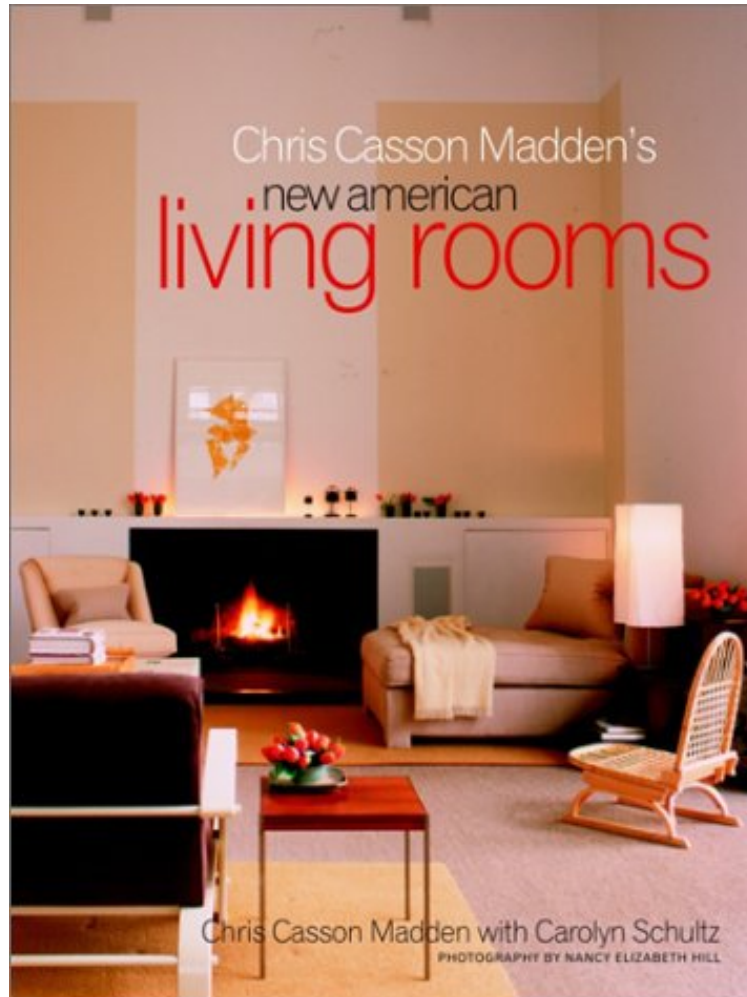


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Chris Casson Madden's New American Living Rooms

Chris Casson Madden

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Chris Casson Madden : Chris Casson Madden's New American Living Rooms before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chris Casson Madden's New American Living Rooms:

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. All smoke and mirrors
By A Customer
Anyone hoping to find innovative design ideas here is going to be disappointed. The cover photo is very appealing but unfortunately that is where the interest ends. One certainly "cannot tell [this] book by its cover." Once open the authors do not provide anything "new" as the title suggests. Instead they have only compiled other designers' work (they have not designed any of the rooms) and have not even bothered to add any original thought or decorating ideas to the text. Why did they "write" this book? Ms. Madden and her co-writer, Ms. Hill have underestimated how transparent their lack of effort and content are and are foolish to think that readers will not see through their deception.
10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. What's new about these?
By A Customer
I admit I don't know who Chris Maddon is but I

liked the idea of this book so I bought it. I've gone back and forth through it but have never determined yet what exactly is new about these rooms. It looks like a simple collection of living rooms without rhyme or reason. I expect a lot more from a book than that and a lot more obvious effort on the part of the author in making me understand the point of the book and what ideas are in it for me. 9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A disappointment. By J.B. Sloan I got my copy. I love the cover living room. I was disappointed in the book, however. It's a nice collection of pretty pictures, but that's about it. I expect more than that from a book. There does not appear to be much thought in how the book is slapped together. The writing isn't very informative. I'd give this one a C-.

Usually the first room to greet guests, the living room is not only the most public area of any home, but also its most multifunctional. This essential room fills a variety of roles from entertainment center to study area, children's play zone to library, not to mention serving as the family's gathering space, complete with couch and coffee table. Now Chris Casson Madden, nationally renowned design expert and author of *Bedrooms*, *Getaways*, and *A Room of Her Own*, imparts a wealth of decorating expertise in her new book, *Chris Casson Maddens New American Living Rooms*. Showcasing a dazzling array of some of the most beautiful rooms across the country, Madden proves that living rooms can be at once practical, inviting, and inspiring. Living rooms often present unique design challenges: they can range from great rooms with fifteen-foot-high ceilings that stretch across half the house to small spaces that relate awkwardly to the rest of the home. In addition, the multifunctional character of these areas makes them all the more complex. Yet Madden highlights a myriad of design solutions that can make decorating this room painless, even pleasurable. She offers options and ideas to suit many tastes whether you favor sleek, modern styling or old-world elegance, Asian-inspired elements or classical influences. With homes from California to Connecticut, New Mexico to Maine, the book features nearly two dozen extraordinary living rooms. For large, open spaces, Madden offers creative ways to integrate all the activities of a living room, dining room, family room, library, bar, and study. She examines spaces that open onto gardens, pools, kitchens, or play areas and others that are centered around musical instruments, entertainment units, art, or books. She offers terrific ideas for handling storage and equipment problems and shows how the same room can be used for quiet time, family time, and entertaining. Ultimately, Madden presents living rooms that are gorgeous, at times even luxurious, while remaining comfortable, nurturing, and appropriate for the families who use them. A difficult balance to strike, but it's what makes *Chris Casson Maddens New American Living Rooms* the essential guide to decorating these rooms for real life.

From the Inside Flap Usually the first room to greet guests, the living room is not only the most public area of any home, but also its most multifunctional. This essential room fills a variety of roles from entertainment center to study area, children's play zone to library, not to mention serving as the family's gathering space, complete with couch and coffee table. Now Chris Casson Madden, nationally renowned design expert and author of *Bedrooms*, *Getaways*, and *A Room of Her Own*, imparts a wealth of decorating expertise in her new book, *Chris Casson Madden's New American Living Rooms*. Showcasing a dazzling array of some of the most beautiful rooms across the country, Madden proves that living rooms can be at once practical, inviting, and inspiring. Living rooms often present unique design challenges: they can range from great rooms with fifteen-foot-high ceilings that stretch across half the house to small spaces that relate awkwardly to the rest of the home. In addition, the multifunctional character of these areas makes them all the more complex. Yet Madden highlights a myriad of design solutions that can make decorating this room painless, even pleasurable. She offers options and ideas to suit many tastes whether you favor sleek, modern styling or old-world elegance, Asian-inspired elements or classical influences. With homes from California to Connecticut, New Mexico to Maine, the book features nearly two dozen extraordinary living rooms. For large, open spaces, Madden offers creative ways to integrate all the activities of a living room, dining room, family room, library, bar, and study. She examines spaces that open onto gardens, pools, kitchens, or play areas and others that are centered around musical instruments, entertainment units, art, or books. She offers terrific ideas for handling storage and equipment problems and shows how the same room can be used for quiet time, family time, and entertaining. Ultimately, Madden presents living rooms that are gorgeous, at times even luxurious, while remaining comfortable, nurturing, and appropriate for the families who use them. A difficult balance to strike, but it's what makes *Chris Casson Madden's New American Living Rooms* the essential guide to decorating these rooms for real life.

About the Author CHRIS CASSON MADDEN is the author of the bestselling *A Room of Her Own: Womens Personal Spaces*, *Kitchens*, *Bathrooms*, *Chris Maddens Guide to Personalizing Your Home*, *Getaways*, and, most recently, *Bedrooms*. The host of HGTV's *Interiors by Design*, she has also been a regular contributor to the *Today* show and has served as design correspondent for *The Oprah Show* and *Later Today*. She writes a syndicated design column that appears in more than 380 newspapers nationwide and has designed a line of home furnishings the *Chris Madden Collection* reflecting her design mantra of home as haven for Bassett Furniture and Mohawk Home, among others. Chris lives in Westchester County, New York, with her husband, two sons, and two West Highland terriers.

Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Some people love old barns and outbuildings the way others are fascinated by old trains, roadside diners, or autos. Beyond the aesthetic appeal lies the urge to lay claim-to

rebuild and restore these artifacts of the American past. Oftentimes, it is not to their original purpose that restoration plans beckon. Rather, it is to showcase them so that others might share the appreciation and respect felt by their owners. "We found this early-nineteenth-century barn in New Hampshire that was going to be torn down. I knew I had to have it and that I would find a place for it somewhere," says the homeowner who now lives elegantly in that barn. "It was disassembled and placed in storage and remained there for several years. It was only after we bought our current home that I knew what I was going to do with the barn." After attempts to reconcile her decidedly traditional country style with the modern Japanese-influenced home she had recently purchased in a community thirty-five minutes north of New York City, the homeowner decided to tear down a portion of the new acquisition and reconstruct the barn in its midsection. Drive by the newly renovated home and the barn might not be immediately apparent. The barn's siding was replaced in the front of the house by an indigenous stone facade, architecturally rendered in the Federalist style. But step through the front door and the magnificent framework of the barn is dramatically apparent in a room 45 feet long with ceilings 31 feet high, warmed by large stone fireplaces at either end. The siding at the back of the living room has been replaced by huge expanses of mullioned, floor-to-ceiling windows and a pair of doors that open onto a rear courtyard, a scenic wooded lot, and the requisite babbling brook. The oversized great room draws the family to congregate in the communal center of the house, leaving to its perimeter the kitchen, bedrooms, baths, and personal spaces. A huge chandelier is proportional to the space and reinforces the Federalist style of the exterior. The entry table serves as a divider for the different areas of the room. On one side is an enormous dining table set in front of the hearth with a collection of early American and English chairs, eighteen in all, gathered around. A smaller nineteenth-century card table set for four offers a more intimate dining spot next to the door to the kitchen. On the other side of the entrance is a seating area that relates to another fireplace and a television cleverly tucked into the bookshelf. A cozy conversation grouping is arranged in front of more bookshelves, suggesting this might be a quiet reading spot as well. A more formal, salon-type seating arrangement is placed behind the entrance table, situated in front of the large windows overlooking the garden. In this area, fluid drapery stands in for architectural detailing, arranged as it is over the rough-hewn support columns of the barn. The sofas, armchairs, benches, and antique pieces in the seating areas create a separate look for each grouping, but matching white denim slipcovers accented by vintage blue-and-white ticking fabric tie them all together. Multiple area rugs—antique Orientals and well-worn kilims—also connect the various groupings in the room while giving those areas definition. The rich colors of the rugs are the perfect layering over eighteenth-century floorboards that were rescued from a winnowing room in Pennsylvania. Extensive collections of books, art, English blue-and-white ironstone, tortoise-shell boxes, tea caddies, and found objects warm the space with personality. There is much to love about a barn—its humble origins, history, hand-hewn character, rustic simplicity, and grand scale. Reconfiguring it in a newer home gave this homeowner the satisfaction of preserving the best of America's architectural past and blending that heritage with modern life.

bel air beauty
The Kaplan home in Bel Air, a posh neighborhood in the hills of Los Angeles, was designed by one of the city's premier architects, Paul Williams. Williams sat on the first Los Angeles planning commission in 1920; built homes for movie stars, moguls, and financiers; renovated and reworked the Beverly Hills Hotel with its trademark pink and green exterior; and contributed to the futuristic Theme Building at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). He designed and built churches, banks, offices, and civic centers throughout the United States and the world, but he was best known for the stunning simplicity of his residential designs and his mastery of elegant traditionalism. He was also African-American, the first black man elected to the distinguished American Institute of Architects (AIA) College of Fellows.

Honoring the home's historic pedigree, L.A. designer Lynn Von Kersting has crafted a living room that remains true to its original aesthetic but yet is fresh, open, and eclectic—infused with European, Middle Eastern, and Old Hollywood decorating influences. Recalls owner Tracy Kaplan, "What is so wonderful about the house is the location, the views, and the property. We overlook the Bel Air Country Club and have incredible views of the Westwoods and Lower Bel Air. At night we sit in our living room and watch the lights sparkle over the landscape and the planes coming into and out of LAX. It is a great vista of sky and air. However, when I met Lynn and saw her work I realized what was missing here was her style. She gave us her signature look with the living room." The living room opens grandly just beyond the two-story entrance hall and dominates the first floor of the Kaplan house. "Our children think of it as our 'talking room,'" says Kaplan. "We have children in bedroom wings on either side of the living room and we can hear if a child is up at night. They are all within earshot, so my husband and I relax in here in the evenings, knowing the children are fine." Walls upholstered in a cheery red toile punctuate honey-hued floors, painted woodwork, and painted panels. Shaped like a T, the wide, central part of the room is divided into two seating areas. One is in front of a fireplace with the other in a sunny nook surrounded by a bay of windows. The furniture in these seating areas is an eclectic mix of sofas, slipper and arm chairs upholstered in nineteenth-century French fabrics combined with Moorish and Indian side tables, Chinese trunks, and pillows, floor cushions, and lamp shades covered in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fabric. At the top of the T, a door leads into a bedroom wing of the house. An ivory baby grand stands ready for the youngest members of the household, children not yet five, to start taking piano lessons. On the other side of the doorway is a fabric-draped table laden with family photographs, mementos, and treasured souvenirs, including a nineteenth-century French model of the Eiffel Tower. It stands next to what appears to

be a closet behind a paneled enclosure until the panel is raised and a wet bar is revealed."The wet bar is one of our favorite features of the room. It is original to the house and came fully equipped with granite counters, copper sink, and hanging cupboards for glassware. The house was built during Prohibition so the bar had to be concealed. The panels are motorized: with one push of a button you can open or close the panels, depending on which guests you've invited that night. We use it now as a place to serve drinks before our Friday dinners when our parents, nieces, and nephews come over for Family Night," explains Kaplan. At the other end of the room, tall bookcases flank the door leading into the entrance hall. On one side, French doors next to the bookcase open onto an outdoor seating area and the fragrant rose gardens beyond. "We had the bookcases already in place," says Kaplan. "They were sitting there, nearly empty, with a few knickknacks. Lynn took off the top doors, painted them, and, in her inimitable style, brought them back to life." Tracy could not be more pleased with the collaboration that took place, albeit decades apart, between architect and designer. "I love being in this living room," says Kaplan. "It takes me back to my childhood when I would visit my family in England. The size and grandeur of the room is brought into human scale with the multiple seating areas and the layering and richness of the fabrics, prints, paintings, furniture, and personal treasures. Just sitting in here becomes an experience."

Adirondack pleasures

At the turn of the twentieth century, privileged families were retreating to great camps in the Adirondack Park region of upstate New York, a wilderness of rugged mountains and picturesque lakes. High society flourished in the area until about mid-century, when many of the well-heeled found that "The Park" had lost some of its glamour and appeal. At the turn of the twenty-first century, new families are drawn to the Adirondack region for its lack of glamour and pretension. They seek to maintain the traditional aspects of Adirondack living, appreciating the area's regional vernacular, the comfortable society of casual get-togethers, and the four-season recreational pursuits. Scott and Molly Ford are a young couple seeking to establish a great camp of their own in Lake Placid, New York, for their children and the generations to come. They hired local architect Michael Bird and his firm, Adirondack Design Associates, to create a home that is a modern rendition of the classic camp. Bird designed for them a cluster of large, rustic buildings including a boathouse on Lake Placid, a main house, a guest house, and a barn. These are all rendered in the style of the region: the structures, with multiple pitched-peak roofs, use indigenous wood, stone, and decorative touches of peeled bark, twigs, and branches. Bird has a particularly strong sense of history, having grown up in the Adirondacks. He is interested in not only preserving the local ...