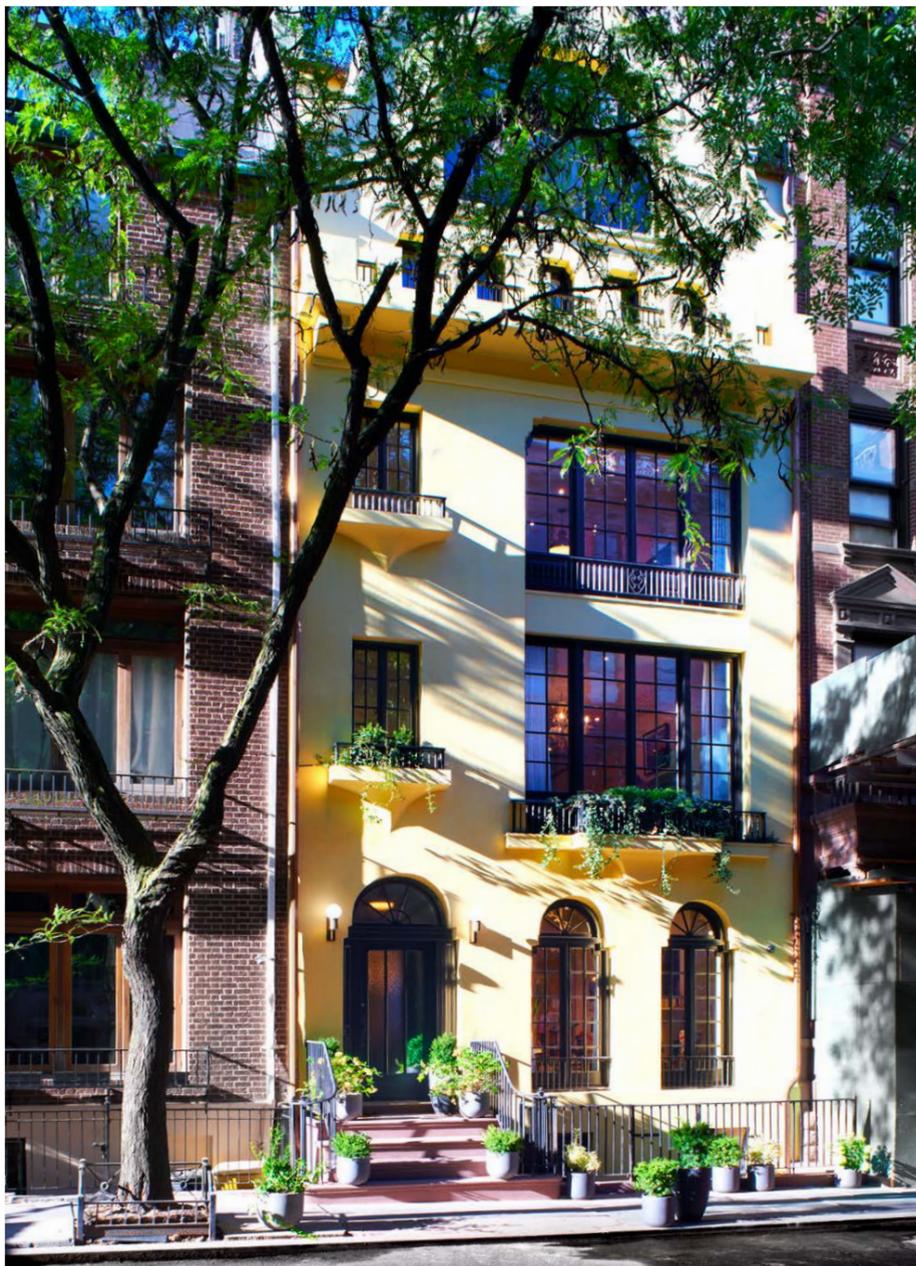


having a ballroom

If the walls of this legendary Manhattan townhouse could talk, it would thank celebrity interior designers The Novogratz for bringing a riot of creativity and fun back to each of its sprawling rooms



cheat sheet

Who stays here Celebrity interior designers Robert and Cortney Novogratz and their three school-age kids. They have seven children in total, ranging in age from 14 to 25.

Style of home A 200-year-old, five-level townhouse updated for modern family living and entertaining.

Location The heart of Greenwich Village in New York's Manhattan.

🕒 This major renovation began in mid-2020 and was completed exactly two years later.



BALLROOM A grand space deserved an impressive feature, in this case the overscaled refurbished fireplace mantel from Olde Goode Things. Owners Robert and Cortney chose a paint colour called Solar Power by Pantone for the finish. Vintage sofa, refurbished in pink Candy fabric by Clarke & Clarke. Blue armchair by Japanese designer Tokujin Yoshioka. Whimsical feathered Pluma Cubic pendant lights by Heike Buchfelder. Rug, ABC Carpet & Home. Vintage surfboard artwork, bought at an estate sale in the Hamptons.

FACADE (opposite) Previously pink, the outside of the building is now a neighbourhood-friendly, heritage-appropriate yellow ochre.



The Empire State Building. Hot dogs and yellow cabs. Carrie Bradshaw. New York City is synonymous with many things, but when you dig deeper into the individual neighbourhoods that make up the pulsing metropolis, you'll find one million more stories and icons that are no less important. Take, for instance, the historical home that celebrity interior design duo Robert and Cortney Novogratz have just spent two years renovating in the heart of Greenwich Village, a few steps away from Washington Square Park.

Greenwich Village, with its leafy streets and characterful brownstone buildings, is known for its vibrant past as a bohemian mecca for creative renegades and artistic trailblazers. When the Novogratzes purchased their 1826-built townhouse on Waverly Place in 2019, they were very aware the bubble-gum-pink dwelling was once a spot where all sorts would gather to create and party. "We love that back in the house's heyday it was a salon for a creative and colourful group of New Yorkers in the arts, and that inspired us. The cultural history of the neighbourhood also inspired us, and the grandeur of the original structure brought all these aspects together," Robert explains.

Robert and Cortney, aka The Novogratz, have strong ties to New York. It's where they raised their seven children and established their design empire 25 years ago, which now encompasses high-profile projects and TV shows, product

ranges, pop-up stores and books. After living in Los Angeles for a handful of years, the couple were excited to be back in the Big Apple with their three youngest children, making it their permanent home again.

Due to decades of neglect, the interiors of the vast, crumbling building had to be stripped back to the studs. "We found it was falling apart, and we even thought it would collapse at one point," says Robert. "This was a true gut renovation." The seasoned designers navigated Covid-related delays, material shortages, and many design and building constraints tied to the townhouse's status as a landmark building with historical, cultural, and aesthetic value.

Working closely with the city's landmark committee and a band of trusted trades, the Novogratzes have created a home that ticks the boxes for family living and easy entertaining while retaining its historical integrity. The original window frames,

SITTING AREA (top) Visitors to the Novogratzes' home are initially invited into the sitting room by the main entrance on the kitchen/dining level, where a mix of patterns and bright colour pops create an elegantly casual vibe. Two mid-century armchairs from Finch Hudson and a Nickey Kehoe 'Curved Sofa' sit on a softly hued Armadillo rug by the beautiful arched windows. They are framed by The Novogratz curtains in a Painted Check Embroidery pattern, which are available through The Shade Store. Chandelier by Paul Ferrante. The large colourful work by prolific Japanese artist Misaki Kawai on the mantelpiece is the perfect scale for the airy space.



PHOTOGRAPHY: COSTAS PICADAS

Robert and Cortney at the centre of their New York home prior to its renovation. There were structural issues to be addressed and each significant room appeared to have a strong colour on the walls, not to mention the bright pink exterior. "The bubble-gum-pink stucco meant the home was an icon in the neighbourhood for many years," says Robert. "We loved the property's storied past and gorgeous bones." These include its high ceilings and big windows.



doors and millwork details were carefully recreated, and every wall radiates with a fresh finish, which could be anything from luxe plaster to statement wallpaper.

An internal elevator ensures easy access between the home's five levels, and the new daylight-soaked kitchen on the second floor features French doors that open to balconies overlooking the newly landscaped garden. On the rooftop, entertaining spaces take in the iconic city skyline, with views capturing the Empire State Building and One World Trade Centre.

Across the townhouse, vintage furniture blends with contemporary Italian designs and the Novogratz's eclectic collection of modern art. Window dressings, rugs and bedding from their extensive eponymous homewares range add to the sense of cosy playfulness. "We love incorporating a variety of colours and textures in every room, so the whole place feels warm and inviting," says Robert.

With its original ceiling beams and epic proportions, the fifth floor has retained its status as the building's pièce de résistance. "Our favourite room has to be the grand ballroom," Robert shares. "It has 7.3-metre ceilings and a huge arched window overlooking Waverly Place. You can imagine all the grand parties and events once thrown here." The impressive scale of the space has been matched with a reclaimed fireplace mantel painted sunshine yellow and a series of feathered spherical pendants. The vintage sofa was reupholstered by the couple in a candy-pink fabric, as a nod to the townhouse's old exterior colour, which has been repainted a shade of ochre yellow selected by the landmark committee. "The pink upholstery was our way of paying tribute to the original facade," says Robert.

Now that the property has been lovingly ushered into the 21st century with a buzzy, artful splash of bold hues and



"Start with white walls as a blank canvas, and find one great piece to use as a focal point. Layer pattern – if the colours are complementary, you can mix in a style you already have in your home" ROBERT NOVGRATZ

patterns, the Novogratz are focused on maintaining the festive spirit of the storied abode. "This home was always a place for the arts and entertainment, and we want to keep that element alive in years to come," says Robert. "Our son, Breaker, and his band often play in the ballroom or on the roof deck, and we love to throw parties here for our friends when they visit New York. It truly is a magical space!" **LO**

The Novogratz projects are at thenovogratz.com or [@thenovogratz](https://www.instagram.com/thenovogratz). See the furniture and accessory ranges at shopthenovogratz.com

ENTRY (opposite) The doorframe is also painted Hale Navy by Benjamin Moore. Custom doors, H Hirschmann. Wallpaper, Gucci. Tiles, Country Tile Design. Oscar ceiling light, Roman and Williams. As for the dog sculpture: "I saw him in the window at Olde Good Things in New York and got him right away," says Robert. "It was from a home in Dallas... I've always loved Dalmatians and he was perfect." **KITCHEN** (above) The light-soaked kitchen opens to Juliet balconies that overlook the landscaped garden. The heroes of this functional and stunning space are the La Cornue range and hood, the vintage lights sourced from France, and the large artwork by Anne Siems. Cabinetry/millwork/island construction by Ideal Cabinets. Flooring, Schotten & Hansen. Stools and fabric, The Basic Stool by Thomas Hayes Studio.

good news

In true Novogratz style, the townhouse is styled with a mix of old and new. To create such a scheme successfully, Robert suggests playing around with your decor. "You don't need to have it perfect on the first day. Get the essentials, then enjoy the process – it's fun. It will evolve!"



“The ballroom has an amazing history and energy and we wanted the space to reflect that, so we painted the mantel yellow. Then we added both vintage and contemporary furnishings” ROBERT



BACKYARD (opposite, top left) Once a dirt pit, the backyard is now a plant-filled outdoor entertaining space – a rarity in New York City. “Having a private green oasis is important to us,” says Robert. “It’s the perfect place to unwind, relax and escape city life without really going away. It’s a true luxury!”
ROOFTOP (opposite, top right) Designed with parties and gatherings in mind, the interconnected rooftop spaces are fully equipped with a built-in barbecue and pizza oven and plenty of room to lounge, dine or put on a performance.
POWDER ROOM (opposite, bottom left) Flora print wallpaper by Gucci was a natural choice. Sink and hardware by The Water Monopoly.
BALLROOM (opposite, bottom right) From this angle, the blue-painted windows (in Hale Navy by Benjamin Moore) are clearly shown. The green Swedish mid-century chair was a secondhand find.
DINING AREA (top) The farmhouse table is 3.5-metres long and has been in the family for years. It’s surrounded by vintage chairs and illuminated by pendant lights from Natalie Page Studio. Bringing a sense of fun to the setting is a sculptural orange chair by Tom Dixon.
MEDIA ROOM (above) Custom green joinery contains the family’s collection of books, as well as a bar and television. Purple mid-century chairs from Finch Hudson offer a colourful counterpoint to the cabinetry.
ART TABLE (right) In a corner of the ballroom, art and design books are sprawled across a table for easy reference. Framed photography by Diego Uchitel hangs on the plastered walls behind. Their textured finish was created by surface and plaster specialist Kamp Studios.



MAIN BEDROOM (top) Robert and Cortney's space offers a retreat when they need quiet time. The Indian four-posted bed is from ABC Carpet & Home, and the bedding is The Novogratz range mixed with global textiles. Breccia marble on mantel from 1st Dibs. Artworks include a large abstract piece by Graham Gillmore and a Donald Baechler painting of a girl's silhouette. **STUDY SPACE** (right) Cortney likes to work in this corner of her room. The desk is antique and the leather chairs are vintage. Large artwork by Vik Muniz. **BEDROOM** One of the boys sleeps under skateboard art by Damien Hirst for Supreme. Bedding, The Novogratz for Bed Bath & Beyond. Curtains, The Novogratz for The Shade Store. Lamp, Finch Hudson. Ramona rug, The Novogratz. **MAIN ENSUITE** (opposite) UK firm The Water Monopoly supplied the bath. Fixtures, Waterworks. Curtains, The Novogratz for The Shade Store.

LESSONS LEARNT

“Know the era you’re buying into and prepare for compromise”

ROBERT NOVOGRATZ, OWNER/DESIGNER

“There were a lot of different issues we faced because of the building’s landmark status – very specific rules and regulations. The landmark committee even chose the ochre colour for the facade of the house.”

BACKYARD Robert and Cortney in their precious garden space. The PK1 Chairs by Poul Kjaerholm are a light addition to the marble-topped table.

GREAT FINDS



1 Flora print wallpaper, \$910 per roll, Gucci. **2** Pluma Cubic 'Kugel' pendant light, from \$10,715, ECC. **3** Octagonal giltwod Empire mirror, \$2400, The Vault Sydney. **4 & 5** Eggshell acrylic paints in Soleil and Yacht Race, \$149.70 per 4L, Porter's Paints. **6** Malayir rug in Blue Silver, POA, Hali Rugs. **7** Chateau 150 range cooker, POA, La Cornue. **8** The Water Monopoly 'Hanley' bath (1833mm x 800mm), \$16,240, The English Tapware Co. **9** Face #5 painting by Anne Siems, \$3912, Artsper. **10** Travertine chess set in Rosso, \$2495, Tigmi Trading. **11** Calacatta Viola marble, POA, CDK Stone. **12** Nougat bucket vase in Blue, \$580, Jardan. **13** Moroso 'Panna' armchair, POA, Mobilia. **14** Woven check cushion in Rust, \$200, Bonnie And Neil. **15** Artie 'Wave' dining table, \$2760, GlobeWest.

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: KATE LINCOLN