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# Big, Easy Style: Creating Rooms You Love To Live In



## Synopsis

An enchanting space that's truly unique calls for a sense of humor, whimsy, and an open mind. From a charmed New Orleans childhood to a successful acting career on Broadway and the award-winning TV show *Mad Men* to the opening of his popular Big Easy home furnishings boutique, Hazelnut, Bryan Batt has always turned to home design as a creative outlet. To him, the best rooms are unexpected yet refined and, above all, evoke emotion. He doesn't think twice about hanging oversized decorations from a Mardi Gras float in an elegant dining room or bringing home vintage etchings of sconces when he was actually shopping for real ones. He believes that a vibrant orange wall can be a neutral backdrop for an antique writing desk and earthy accessories, and that an artist's whimsical bird's nest sculpture hung in a lavender entryway couldn't serve as a better welcome into a cozy abode. New Orleans has taught Bryan so much about how to pull together a space that's fearless and colorful with plenty of panache. With the city as his muse—its strong roots in history, its celebration of tradition, and, of course, the wild festivities of Mardi Gras—he believes that designing a fabulous, livable home that truly reflects a dweller's passions need not be intimidating. Big, Easy Style showcases rooms that make Bryan smile, with pages of rich photography featuring the work of many designers—and plenty of Crescent City interiors—framed by his own entertaining maxims on color, pattern, collecting, living areas, intimate spaces, and more. Explore rooms he's personally designed and others that inspire him; from an old-world kitchen imported straight from the heart of France to a luxurious Art Deco media room, these homes are enticing and unique, and through their surprising details, completely inviting. Decorating your home to reflect your personality and taste takes practice and patience and can be a daunting undertaking, but Bryan proposes that we not worry about making mistakes, that any decision we make is better than no decision at all. With Big, Easy Style, learn how to put aside your hesitation and surrender to the wild side of home design for a big statement that's easy to achieve. "You'll love his collection of photographs of beautiful New Orleans rooms layered with his design tips and anecdotes of his own design experiences." —*Southern Living* [Big, Easy Style] reads like a hard-copy extension of Batt's personality—elegant, gregarious, funny, showman-like. The rooms he's chosen to showcase are painstakingly designed, yet, in that enviable way, appear so easily tossed together. —Susan Langenhennig, *The Times Picayune* "With great passion and a zest for creativity, [Bryan Batt] and Katy Danos offer thoughtful tips on color, collecting, patterns and much more along the way. Kerri McCaffety captures the beauty of each room in her inviting photographs. I love Batt's unique whimsy style. How many of us would think of placing giant decorations from a Mardi Gras float in a lavish dining room? Or how about hanging an ornate crystal

chandelier in the kitchen? Or what about painting a Chippendale-style chair mellow yellow. But they all work!"

”Jeryl Brunner, Stylist.com "If you've missed Bryan Batt since he left the set of Mad Men in 2009 (he played Salvatore Romano), catch up with him in a decor ode to his hometown: New Orleans. [In Big, Easy Style], we're treated to his vision of making rooms inviting, festive and ultimately setting the foundation for entertaining, which is what this get-down town is all about."

”San Francisco Chronicle"“The book is full of Batt's tips. It's like spending an afternoon with someone who you'd like to watch decorate a home.”-- Karen Dalton-Beninato, Huffington Post Books

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The visuals, advice, and ideas in this book totally spoke to my tastes... eclectic and interesting ideas that are easy to translate and implement into one's own environment. I found it very inspiring. I find so many design books to be more of the same, with the same few ingredients "re-worked" to make a different room or so-called "look" (like ordering sushi... same ingredients, just thousands of combinations of how to put it all together). For me, this book has been great for spurring my own creative design juices - so real, and more interesting than anything else that I have seen lately. I love the advice on color, as well as the ideas for fabrics and use of furniture shapes/styles and combinations. I'm just about to make a change in my living room area as a result. It's interesting to me that inspiration from a simple source can change so much about your daily environment, and I'm looking forward to the changes. Importantly, I found the ideas for picture arrangements to be just

what I needed. I had tons of framed pieces piled up against a wall in a spare room (been gathering there for years). I grouped them, weeded some out, replaced a few frames (inexpensively) and now I have a whole new look going on with one wall. It suddenly seemed easy - such a sense of achievement!! I love this book - it's what I consider true "design" to be about - bringing together the old and the new into something that is so uniquely special, that it becomes art unto itself, while still being something that you can truly live in, and engage in, and enjoy. Environment has such a profound effect on so many things - so it's nice to have inspiration to bring everything together so that a room becomes truly unique and beautiful, not to be duplicated. This book helps you achieve that - very satisfying. And while it is very New Orleans in its inspiration, these styles and inspiration would be appreciated anywhere. This book, for me, was money very well spent.

I've just been reading and looking through this book. Bryan's style and taste is wonderful. So daring and fun!! I love the way different period pieces are combined to create such a personal and intimate space in each room. The use of color is spectacular and the ideas I'm getting from this book will last me a lifetime. The writing is very interesting and amusing as well. Basically, Bryan says show who YOU are in your home - I love that!!! And let's not forget the beautiful Katy Danos who helped Bryan with this book. She deserves applause as well!! :D

The rich Caribbean colors and curvilinear Victorian wood carvings that make New Orleans an unusually romantic setting do not get much exposure here. Antique lace and velvet are neglected for functional, modern looks that do not make the heart beat faster. It could be anywhere, USA after the 50's. As he points out, his design esthetic is masculine. If you're a guy, it may make your heart beat faster.

I love this book so much! New Orleans has a distinctive style unlike any other North American city. It's interiors are a fusion of French, Caribbean, Spanish, African and traditional Southern styles. It may be the only city in America where the cool, fun, creative people still own antiques. If you like, or have inherited, antiques but don't want your house to look like Grandma's, this is an essential book (along with Southern Cosmopolitan). Big, Easy Style is incredibly chic, but the writing is non-snobby New Orleans hospitality. Bravo.

I love this book because he really emphasizes using your own taste & style to design your home. It completely changed my whole outlook on my new place & he made me feel confident to trust my

judgment. I plan to use artwork that I've created on my own & do things that might not appeal to everyone, but will make me happy. The photos & designs are exquisite & even though the New Orleans flavor is opposite of my minimalist needs, his down to earth philosophy really spoke to me. Bryan Batt's motto is to be yourself & I have to say, I've applied this to how I dress and also to how I feel about life in general. I saw him on a PBS book show, not realizing that he was also an actor on Madmen. He was so interesting, not pretentious at all & I found that he was a truly wonderful person. I bought this book based on his interview & I was not let down. He let my mind wander & open up to new ideas & I am now thinking about using color in a whole new way. I am so excited about my place & I am more focused on exactly what I want. What a great influence!

Typically the front cover displays the best of a design book, but in this case the entire book was beautifully and tastefully photographed. One of the aspects of the book that I found most appealing was the "feel" of New Orleans in the design but with a more modern flair. The colors used were eye-catching and bold, and it is nice to see someone work with color and pattern as well as Mr. Batt. The writing was also fascinating as stories were shared about many of the items and their personal meaning to the author or the owners of the featured rooms. Will love this book for years to come!

Big, Easy Style is a guidebook for creating unique environments of every dimension. A sitting room, a tiny hallway bath, a grand salon or a hallway, Bryan takes the reader step by step to take things we love and use them to their greatest visual impact. Even better, he shows us how to use them effectively, but without looking too studied. The best lesson, and perhaps the main theme of Bryan's entire book, is to throw out the rules of decorating. Don't fear color, but embrace your favorites as neutral backdrops (even purple, orange or red) to showcase your favorite things. Your room won't decorate itself, but evolve as you start with a few key pieces and begin to build on them. When Bryan tells stories about his charmed New Orleans childhood and love of diverse architectural styles, you can see that his experiences mirror our own: visiting Grandma's formal home and drinking in its personality, hanging out in his parents' more modern place, and strolling through the ornate French Quarter, perhaps thinking "If I lived there..." Bryan has provided us with artistic photographs of rooms of many styles, and shown us how to use amazing finds like hanging Lucite bubble glass chairs, Louis XV settees and artwork of every style. The seamless but casual way he integrates everything from sumptuous antiques to attic treasures and thrift store lamps is an outstanding primer that any novice can enjoy and use to help find his or her own big, easy style.

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