



Just because supermodel and actress AMBER VALLETTA's Santa Monica abode is eco-friendly doesn't mean it has to be earth-toned and understated. Instead. it's a light-filled home infused with splashes of color and irresistible energy

BY LAURIE SANDELL PHOTOGRAPHED BY DEAN KAUFMAN STYLED BY TRACY TAYLOR

few client-designer relationships are as sim- it," she says, reflecting on that mopatico as that of Amber Valletta and her inte- ment when she was 24. Next, Valletta rior designer-cum-best friend Ross Cassidy. landed roles in What Lies Beneath and The handsome South African, who starred on Hitch: most recently she appeared on Bravo's Million Dollar Decorators, first spot- the cult TV show Revenge. This spring ted the model and actress seven years ago, she begins filming TNT's upcoming when she was working out on the Santa Mon- Legends, starring Sean Bean of Game ica steps, a pair of steep outdoor staircases of Thrones fame, a thriller that is where locals like to exercise. "I wanted to executive-produced by Howard Gorshout, 'I loved you in last month's Italian Vogue!' "he says don of 24 and Homeland. "It's going to

A few months later Cassidy happened to be riding his On a recent sunny afternoon bike down a sleepy Santa Monica street only to spot Valletta appears at the door of her Valletta hanging Halloween decorations in her front yard. three-bedroom home in a nubby This time he piped up, and the two soon realized that Val- Stella McCartney sweater. Strom letta had actually been "stalking" Cassidy's Hamptons-jeans, and Isabel Marant shoes, lookstyle cottage near the spot of their first meeting, intrigued ing ridiculously beautiful as she by the patios appointed with cushy seating, umbrellas, shows offher revamped abode. Makand lamps. She invited Cassidy in, and before long they ing the place eco-friendly was one of were chatting like old friends. A year and a half later they Valletta's key objectives (check out started talking renovation-something Valletta's 1929 sidebar for details). She's relieved to

life. When she was 15 and living in her hometown of the environment, which she views as Tulsa, Okla., a scout from Italy came through the local a lifestyle, not a trend. "I remember modeling school where her single mother, a post-office being in New York 20 years ago and worker, had enrolled the waifish blonde. "From that moment on I never stopped working," Valletta says. Seren-says, "That's just part of who I am." dipity was also at play 14 years ago, when she met her To achieve Valletta's green goals, husband, Olympic volleyball player Chip McCaw, in the Cassidy painted only with Benjamin checkout line at a Linens'n Things in Tulsa, where he also Moore's Natura line and had customgrew up. Soon after that their son, now 13, made his appearance. "Auden for sure had a plan," she says of the alternative foam. Natural fibers in a adorable, flaxen-haired teen. "He was like, 'I'm coming,'" bold palette are at every turn. "At arriving exactly on his due date. Valletta also sees her first, my husband asked, 'Are you leap into movies as another example of random good sure?" Valletta says of the hot-pink fortune, describing how, out of the blue, Steven Spielberg seagrass-covered walls in their bedrequested footage of the supermodel, who had never room. "But I've never walked in here and said, 'God, I hate tried acting before. "That was a strong sign that if I this color.' I knew it was going to be really cool." Her earth-friendly philosophy extends to the business

In the dining area a handpainted de Gournay wallpaper mural of birds and purple flowers "adds a traditional flavor to a very contemporary space," says interior designer Ross Cassidy.



t's always good to share a creative vision, but wanted to act, this was the time to do with a laugh, "but I didn't want her to think I was a weir do." be an interesting ride," she predicts.

Spanish Revival home desperately needed. see that the world has evolved for the

Fated encounters such as these are a theme in Valletta's better when it comes to considering

she runs, a retail Web site called Masterandmuse.com, which sells fashion and accessories by designer labels such as M. Patmos and Clare Vivier, Stylish looks are a top priority, even though everything is responsibly produced. "The clothes had to really feel like fashion," she





Pendant lights in the

at the L.A. store

kitchen, purchased

A Robert Indiana 1967 litho-

graph anchors the living room.

in vintage African textiles which Valletta's Chihuahua

pug mix Mumsey has "a partic ular taste for-unfortunately,

she likes to chew them.'

Vera Wang Collection dress.

The throw pillows are covered



painted design created for her meditation room by local artist Kelly Porter. A favorite spot is the kitchen, a study in Zen with its long white marble island and wooden cabinetry.

hang on the walls. A self-professed art junkie. Valletta owns various pieces from a portfolio in support of the president titled Thirteen Artists for Obama, including work by John Baldessari home were made custom by local the grid. "While it's expensive and Jasper Johns. An Annie Leibovitz shot of artisans who work with natural to install," says Cassidy, "it pays Valletta holding a young Auden graces the kitchen, and there's no shortage of images from her magazine shoots by Richard Avedon, Steven eco-friendly since it's a way to Meisel, and, in the bedroom, a nude by Irving avoid acquiring new stuff," says Penn. "I try to hide the ones that are really obvious modeling shots," Valletta says. "I

don't want it to be the 'me' show." In fact, Valletta seems far more interested in spotlighting her surroundings instead of herself. Sinking into her dining room banquette, she tucks her long legs beneath her and sighs. "When it's high noon the whole room glows," she says. "And it changes with the light, so when the sun sets, the room transforms."

There's so much she adores about her home, from the colors to the stories behind every object. "We've room (above, left) are covered 4. AN ELECTRIC CAR Her silver been so specific about what we purchased for the with a vintage embroidered fabplace, filling it with special little touches," she says, surveying the space with satisfaction. "Now it feels like a little jewel box to me." ■

Every corner of Valletta's home reflects her commitment to a small Without a doubt, the most personal touches carbon footprint. Here's how she does her part for planet Earth.

> 1. VINTAGE FURNITURE AND 2. SOLAR ENERGY A tank-less FABRICS While new couches and water heater and solar panels on upholstered pieces in Valletta's Valletta's roof fuel the house off fibers and sustainable woods, off over time." Valletta confirms: she also loves to collect antique "I haven't seen a bill in a year!" pieces. "That's a version of being

Valletta opts for chemical-

her interior designer Ross Cassidy. ing myself or my family sick." ric discovered in Paris, while a letta, and gets almost 300 miles carved wooden table in the living per charge. "As soon as I saw room (above, right) was picked it, I said to myself, 'This is the

free brands that can be found

at Whole Foods, such as 365



3. ECO-CLEANING PRODUCTS

Everyday Value, Method, and Begley's Best, a line of products from environmental activist and actor Ed Begley Jr. "Everything that goes down the drain eventually goes back into feels better, knowing that I'm



e of Polaroids of Valletta

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