

# TIMELESS TASTE

*Interior designer Nicola Manganello's style shines in her home, her work, and her wardrobe*

## HAVE YOU ALWAYS HAD AN EYE FOR FASHION?

I came out of college with a BA in Fine Arts, but I really loved dressing and putting things together. When I was about 25 years old, I opened a women's clothing store in Yarmouth. It was considered high-end at the time, with a mixture of home goods and fashion. I once had a customer say to me, "I love coming to your shop—I get a little something for me,

## Nicola Manganello

a little something for my home, and a little something for my soul." Looking back on it now, it was just a natural evolution that I ended up in the interior design world because I do think they go hand in hand. There's a lot of inspiration from fashion that goes into interior design, and vice versa.

## HOW DOES YOUR WORK AS AN INTERIOR DESIGNER INFLUENCE YOUR STYLE?

I think the misconception that "a carpenter's house is never done" is the same for an interior designer's house—it's always changing. The one thing I've noticed as I've gotten older and refined my look is that I now style my house so that I don't tire of it. I've tried to get it to a place that's timeless, functional, and doesn't need changing. It's reflected in the work I do for clients, and from there it rolls into my own personal style. The way that I like to style interior design and the way that I like to dress have evolved into one and the same.



Credit: Liz Daly

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## WHAT INSPIRES YOUR STYLE?


Lots of things from the outside world. I certainly do a lot of research online and reading magazines, social media, etc. I travel. I'm discovering new things all the time and trying to incorporate them into my work. In the design industry, we're all trying to be current and unique, but I want there to be personality and compassion in my work. I want it to have a "real life" feel to it, so that it's not so precious that it can't be lived in. I think that sums up my personal style as well.

## DOES YOUR WORKWEAR DIFFER FROM YOUR EVERYDAY CLOTHES?

I try to dress classically, and that's true in my design work as well. I like to keep things simple, uncomplicated, and uncluttered. I've tried to simplify my wardrobe over the years in the same way I've tried to simplify my home. Living an uncluttered life and staying organized has helped me work more efficiently, and I see that inside my wardrobe, too. I've been simplifying my style and keeping more basic pieces so that when I get dressed in the morning, I'm able to pull things together quickly. The goal is to have it feel effortless while feeling good about myself and how I look.

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**WHAT OUTFIT ARE YOU MOST COMFORTABLE IN?**

My sweats, probably. The one thing I've always done after work is go straight home and put on the things that are the most broken in and most comfortable to me. I've had some of these pieces for more than twenty years! When I think of some of the nicer things I've invested in now that I'm a bit more successful, I realize that I take great pride in wearing them because I've worked so hard to get them. I love how those nicer items accent some of my more basic pieces—there's no need for everything to be Gucci! Again, I think it's similar to my work, like a beautiful piece of artwork in an otherwise simple room—you only need one great piece to make a space come to life. That's true in fashion as well. A simple black

dress with a giant beaded bracelet and bang, you have a total statement piece.

**WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE PLACES TO SHOP IN PORTLAND?**

I love Bliss for clothing, and Blanche and Mimi of course. Her selection of housewares is like taking a quick trip to Europe. I always leave with things I don't need, but boy is it satisfying! I also hit up the local Anthropologie store with reckless abandon. It always has affordable things that I don't feel bad about buying—items that dress up your home like pillows, candles, and blankets. Anthropologie is always a stop for me when I travel as well, because I love seeing their artful merchandising. It's inspiring.