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The Decoration Of Houses



Synopsis

Edith Wharton's *The Decoration of Houses* is an invaluable reference, one of the classic works on interior decoration, and a testament to the enduring style of one of America's greatest writers. Written in collaboration with celebrated American architect Ogden Codman, Jr., Wharton's first book is a comprehensive look at the history and character of turn-of-the-century interior design, moving from historical traditions to the distinctive styles of contemporary taste. Published in association with the Mount Press, this beautiful hardcover facsimile is carefully reproduced from the first edition published in 1897 and includes all 56 original plates-illustrating furniture, moldings, and interior styles of the 19th-century-and features dÃfÂ©collage edges as well as a new introduction from renowned scholar Richard Guy Wilson. The Mount is a magnificent estate Edith Wharton designed and built in 1902 as a writer's retreat in the beautiful Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts.

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Customer Reviews

Edith Wharton offers timeless design advice by Annie Groer If novelist Edith Wharton and architect Ogden Codman Jr. had published their scholarly book, "The Decoration of Houses," today rather than 110 years ago, no doubt it would be a sumptuous coffee-table tome filled with glossy colored photos. But black-and-white sufficed nicely for this influential classic about architecture and design, which has just been faithfully reproduced from the original (Rizzoli and the Mount Press, \$35). -- The Salinas Californian - Salinas Ca. May 29, 2007"Rizzoli has returned this classic 1897 work to print in a beautifully produced facsimile edition, but despite the period charm, it deserves to be read

as something more than a period piece." -- Art & Antiques Here's a trivia question: What was Edith Wharton's first book? If you said *The Decoration of Houses*, you get a gold star. Originally published in 1897, Wharton's best-selling dissertation on interior design was reproduced and re-released last month by Rizzoli. What a beautiful, if anachronistic, volume. I love Wharton's keen insights... A must for fans of Edith Wharton and Victoriana. -- Palm Beach Illustrated, June 2007 Most fans of lean, mid-century modern sofas, bark cloth draperies, and kidney-shaped coffee tables grew up with French provincial bedroom sets or baggy shabby-chic slipcovers. As soon as children know enough to loathe their parents' terrible taste, they long for something completely different... The 1897 interior design classic *The Decoration of Houses*, now available from Rizzoli as a handsome facsimile, works on the same principle. Coauthors Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman Jr. skewered the design they'd inherited with the convivial savagery of confidants talking trash about other people's taste, which indeed they were. -- Preservation March/April 2007

A stunning facsimile of the first edition of *The Decoration of Houses*, a timeless classic of interior design writing by America's greatest female novelist.

In 1997, Stoddard published *The Decoration of Houses*, her expansion of the ideas first put into print by one of her heroines, Edith Wharton, who published a book with the same title in 1897 (with co-author Ogden Codman, Jr.). In her homage to Wharton, Stoddard begins her Foreword with this superb Ralph Waldo Emerson quote: "Love of beauty is taste; the creation of beauty is art." With it she gracefully furthers her point that Wharton's book became a revolutionary bible for professional designers and architects stateside and abroad who were determined to turn the creation of beauty into an art form. I find it quite fascinating that the first book penned by a Pulitzer Prize-winning author the caliber of Edith Wharton was a decorating book, one that changed thinking about interior design for all time, no less. - See more at: <http://saxonhenry.com/harmony-and-proportion/#sthash.lfd15g7D.dpuf>

The quality of printing and of the pictures was very poor. It seemed to be a second hand photocopy of an original book.

This book is a historical jewel of the archives of the balance between architecture and interior design / decoration. The approach is dated, of course, but it still sets the parameters and rules for the arrangement of rooms and their decoration. It is still in print for a reason.

The text of this book is interesting, if antiquated in style. What would have made it far more interesting and easy to follow would have been the addition of the plates/images clearly listed in the contents. There are ZERO images in my kindle edition, and I'm confused as to why...

Interesting read but without the pictures referenced throughout in the ebook edition, you are left hanging.... That said, it is a classic review of decorating style.

I didn't realize that Edith Wharton was well-versed in architecture and decoration until visiting her home, The Mount, and learning that it was mostly all her own design. I was prompted out of curiosity to read her book. I was prepared for it to be dull, but found it to be anything but. She brings up many key decorating points that really make you think; right down to her definition of decorating, which is somewhat different than what we know it to be today. You do have to sort of translate her writing as you read along since the text comes across as highfalutin but hey, it's educated 19th-century-speak and it IS Edith Wharton. Most of her references are at a level that is mostly unknown to us today: drawing rooms, boudoirs, and such. However, her observations and comments continue to be spot-on, and every now and then she plants a zinger that truly makes you chuckle. Once you realize that Edith Wharton's decorous references are from another time and social level, you just have to pare them down a bit and you'll find that the precepts make complete sense and are still relevant to any period.

While a book about grand homes the point is made how just building bigger rooms is no better if they can't function comfortably when they are full of people - be it family or state purposes. While it contains beautiful rooms not many are in color which as one is accustomed to in today's books on interior design. So NOT an idea book. Most important if you are working with the blue bloods of your country. Clearly not for everyone dear !

great book

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