STYLE | THE AESTHETE

Pilar Ordovas talks personal style: Part Two

The Savile Row gallerist concludes her list of likes with her grandmother's diamond ring, Michelangelo and a sculpture park in the Swiss Alps

SHOW INFO

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My style icon is my grandmother, Maruja, as she was always timeless and elegant. Cristóbal Balenciaga was her close friend and made many of her clothes, but it wasn't so much what she wore as how she wore it. I also like the style of strong women like Bella Freud who are very individual and follow what they like rather than fashion trends.

The last meal that truly impressed me was at Saraghina in Brooklyn. I ate the best wood-fired pizza – one with roasted, spicy artichokes – that I've had outside Italy, as well as house-made cavatelli with crabmeat and simply roasted branzino. The cosy atmosphere made our group feel like we were at home and being very well looked after. I'm hoping to return for a meal in their beautiful back garden. *435 Halsey Street, New York, NY 11233 (+1718-574 0010; www.saraghinabrooklyn.com).*

The sight that inspires me is the Mediterranean Sea, as it takes me right back to my childhood. I grew up diving with my father and looking at treasures in the sea – sponges, fish, Roman ruins – before I could swim properly. The sight of the clear water and the feel of it on my skin gives me so much energy and inspiration. My dream is to have a home on the water on the island of Menorca.

An indulgence I would never forgo is good Nespresso coffee. I like the purple Arpeggio capsules as they make very strong coffee that is perfect with frothed milk. I'm going on a health retreat at The Ashram in California soon, and it's not the exercise regime or the not eating much that worry me, but the not drinking coffee. *www.theashram.com. www.nespresso.com.*

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The best gift I've given recently was to my sister Paula. I framed a drawing – a self-portrait she did with her favourite doll, Robin – that she gave me many years ago. I bought a 16th-century gilded frame when I was working at Christie's and had been waiting for a special occasion to present it to her.

And the best one I've received recently was a 1920s platinum and diamond ring given to me by my mother; it once belonged to my grandmother, Carmen. The ring was given to her for her 25th wedding anniversary, so it is very precious to me. I don't wear very much jewellery, but my mother knew I would love this piece.

If I had to limit my shopping to one neighbourhood in one city, I'd choose Las Salesas in Madrid. It's a very eclectic area and you can find everything, from my favourite flower shop, Margarita Se Llama Mi Amor, where they create the most unusual wildflower arrangements, to Pez and Mott – two stores full of clothes by emerging designers that you are unlikely to see elsewhere. After a bit of shopping, I love Dray Martina for a casual lunch of gazpacho and black cod bacalao, or Mamá Framboise for bocadillos and delicious, artisanal pastries. *Dray Martina, Calle Argensola 7 (+3491-081 0056; www.draymartina.com). Mamá Framboise, Calle Fernando VI 23 (+3491-391 4364; www.mamaframboise.com). Margarita Se Llama Mi Amor, Calle Fernando VI 9 (+3491-310 0926; www.margaritasellamamiamor.wordpress.com). Mott, Calle del Barquillo 31 (+3491-308 1280). Pez, Calle de Regueros 15 (+3491-310 6677; www.pez-pez.es).*

In my fridge you'll always find vegetables that are in season, as well as kiwis, avocados and whole milk, which I buy at Daylesford Organic. If we have friends round, then I'll have cheese on hand – Comté, Brie and organic Cheddar – from Paxton & Whitfield, as well as a rotating selection of wines that are chosen by my husband and voted on by our guests. The fridge is always full of bottled water as well. *Daylesford Organic, 44B Pimlico Road, London SW1 (020-7881 8060; www.daylesford.com). Paxton & Whitfield, 93 Jermyn Street, London SW1 (020-7930 0259; www.paxtonandwhitfield.co.uk).*

An unforgettable place I've travelled to in the past year is the Engadin Valley in the eastern Swiss Alps, where I went to visit the sculpture park of the artist Not Vital. I arrived by train from Zurich and couldn't take my eyes away from the mountainous scenery – it's rugged, remote and spectacularly beautiful. This place is like an amusement park for grown-ups – one that includes sculptures hanging from trees and a Corten-steel platform that juts out from the mountainside – I had to overcome my fear of heights very quickly. I stayed at the boutique hotel GuardaVal in Scuol, which has an incredible gourmet restaurant with breathtaking views to match. *GuardaVal, Vi 383, 7550 Scuol (+4181-861 0909; www.guardaval-scuol.ch). Not Vital Foundation,+4181-860 0837; www.fundaziun.notvital.ch.*

And the best souvenir I've brought home is a set of simple, carved wooden boxes from our honeymoon in Essaouira, Morocco; they are made of thuya wood and still have a wonderful scent. I also cherish a beautiful eagle feather that a friend found for me on a walk we took together in upstate New York. I'm fascinated by feathers and this one from Mombaccus Mountain takes me right back to that trip.

The people I rely on for personal wellbeing include Richie Kyle at Third Space, who has been my trainer for years, and the various teachers at Danceworks who take me through the weekly dance classes that I can't live without. Adrian Parkitny and Maxine Heale at Daniel Hersheson take care of everything to do with my hair. When I am in New York, Niv Zinder is my personal trainer and I love to go to Janet Sartin for refreshing facials. *Danceworks, 16 Balderton Street, London W1 (020-7629 6183; www.danceworks.net). Daniel Hersheson, 45 Conduit Street, London W1 (020-7434 1747; www.hershesons.com). Janet Sartin, 875 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022 (+1212-751 5858; www.sartin.com). Niv Zinder, www.nzfitness.net. Third Space, 67 Brewer Street, London W1 (020-7439 6333; www.thirdspace.london).*

My favourite room in my house is my bedroom in my home in Battersea. The glass ceiling is retractable and in summer I go to sleep looking at the moon and stars. The room is very serene, with lots of white surfaces and a low bed with a wooden base that almost touches the floor. It is a very calming space.

The one artist whose work I would collect if I could is Michelangelo. I particularly love his later drawings because you can see the artist's thinking process. There are two images – *Studies for the Libyan Sibyl* and a small *Sketch for a Seated Figure* – that are part of the *Unfinished* show at the Met Breuer and that I would particularly love to own. *www.metmuseum.org*.

If I didn't live in London and New York, the city I would live in is Los Angeles. I've always wanted to live by the sea and there is such a vibrant arts scene there. The Hammer, The Getty, Moca and The Broad are among my favourite museums and I'd love to be able to spend more time at all of them. The areas surrounding Venice, Santa Monica and Malibu remind me of the Mediterranean in terms of the light and atmosphere, and it was on a trip here several years ago that I discovered my love of running. LA has wonderful hotels, too, and I could happily live at Shutters on the Beach or at the Malibu Beach Inn, as they are directly on the water and have incredible views of the Pacific Ocean. For a classic with a lively scene, Chateau Marmont in Hollywood is hard to beat. It's the combination of the sea, the sun and the energy that make this city so comfortable to be in. *The Broad, 221 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles (+1213-232 6200; www.thebroad.org). Chateau Marmont, 8221 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood (+1323-656 1010; www.chateaumarmont.com). The Getty Center, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles (+1310-440 7300; www.getty.edu). Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles (+1310-443 7000; www.hammer.ucla.edu). Malibu Beach Inn, 22878 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu (+1310-651 7777; www.malibubeachinn.com). Moca, 250 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles (+1213-626 6222; www.moca.org). Shutters on the Beach, 1 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica (+1310-458 0030; www.shuttersonthebeach.com).*

If I weren't doing what I do, I would be an Egyptologist. As a child, my father constantly told me stories about Indiana Jones and I later went on to study art history and archaeology because of his tales. I have always been interested in the adventurous aspect of this profession, as well as the elements of astrology, the architecture of the pyramids and the enigmatic pharaohs that were so much a part of ancient cultures.

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