

ELLE

DECORATION

**ORIGINAL
IDEAS
FOR EASY
MODERN
LIVING**



AMM... THAT FEELS GOOD -
**LATIN AND MOHAIR
FOR THE HOME**

LATEST LOOKS
FOR SIMPLE BEDROOMS

EXPOSED!
THE BEST NEW
DESIGNERS

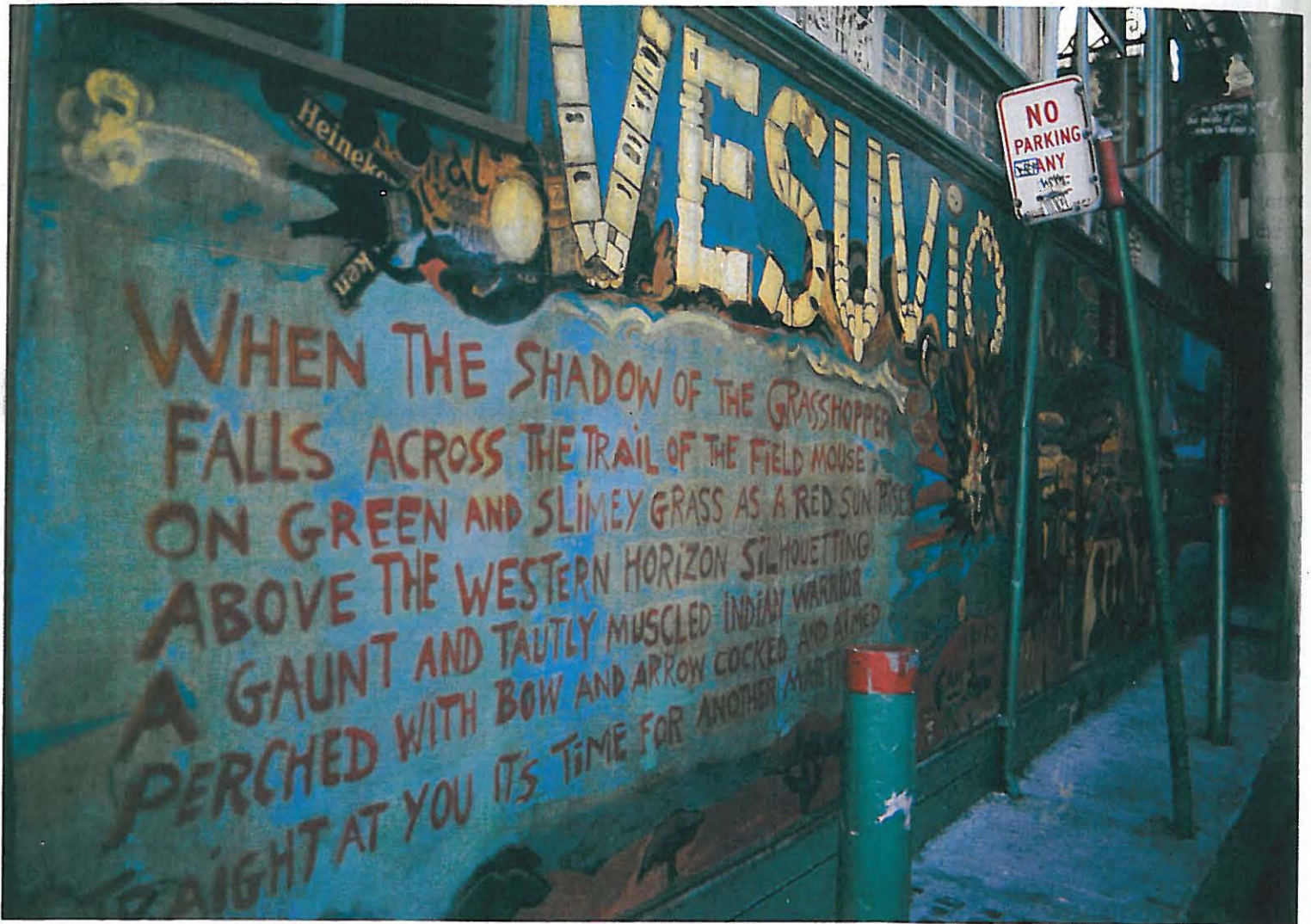
BEST BUYS
READING LIGHTS
TOP 10 SMALL TABLES
FAT SOFAS

reach out



TRAVEL SAN FRANCISCO

In the city where the hippy look was born, the beat goes on. The new-age design capital of the States, San Fran is the coolest place to shop



A mad city inhabited for the most part by perfectly insane people,' trumpeted Rudyard Kipling after visiting San Francisco in 1889. Born in a gold rush, built on a fault line, framed by the Bay where Otis Redding sat on the dock and Jack Kerouac relished the 'drum hum of lum mum afternoon nathin' to do', America's most tolerant city is also one of its greatest.

From the air it's as neat as the inside of a transistor radio: pockets of ornate Victorian housing; strips of seaside suburbia; boxed-up parks and question-mark freeways that sweep up to a reach-for-the-sky financial district, bejewelled with Art Deco skyscrapers and mirror-

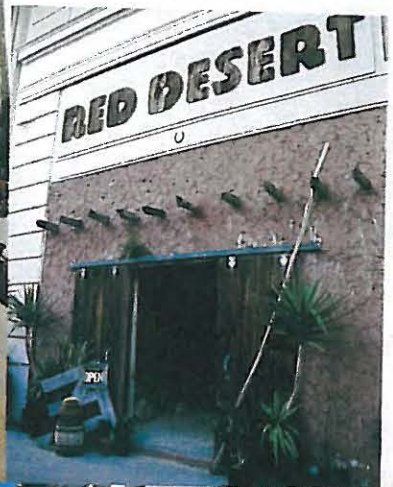
heading for San Francisco for a century and a half now, rolling in like the Pacific fog that dances so famously through the orange-red towers of Golden Gate bridge. It's an intoxicating cultural cook-up of Italian, Chinese, Hispanic, Japanese and south-east Asian neighbourhoods set in a spicy soup of diverse Californian lifestyles.

Anything goes in San Francisco, the city that gave us the Beats, hippy revolution, gay militancy and yuppies (a term first coined in the Bay area). It doesn't care where you sit on the gender rainbow; whether you like thrash or Frank Sinatra, body piercing or roller-blading; if you're here to lunch naked on the beach or take the kids to Alcatraz.

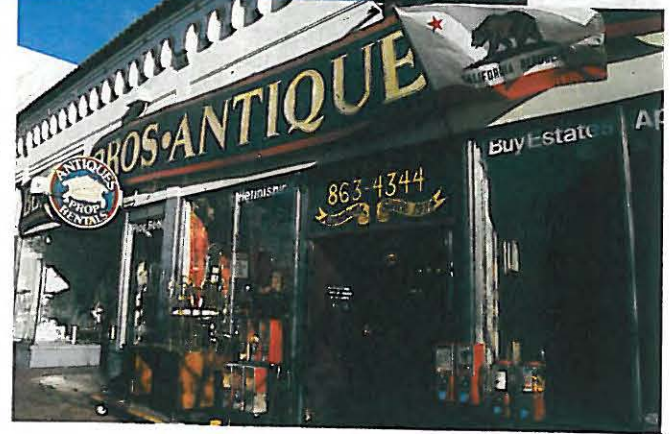
Neighbourhood watching: more Italian than Italy, North Beach is packed with bars and cafés like Vesuvio (255 Columbus), above, a famed Beat generation hang-out that still reserves a booth for lady psychiatrists. Haight-Ashbury, right, was the epicentre of the Hippy revolution and remains a wilfully counter-cultural mix of



Positively Haight Street (1157 Masonic), far left, is devoted to hippy memorabilia; Red Desert, left and below, has a scene-stealing collection of flamboyant cacti



Haseena (437 Hayes), left, has a taste for barbed-wire crucifixes, candelabra and the quietly bizarre; Beaver Bros Antiques (1637 Market Street), right, is the largest prop hire company in northern California and stocks classic Americana, imported antiques and a wealth of oddball and interesting finds



'Shops full of everything you have ever heard of and everything one has never heard of or seen'

DYLAN THOMAS

architecture, hit arty restaurants and measure out your life in coffee bars. Its designers thrive in an enviable climate of business and bohemia, openly raiding the alphabet of past, present and foreign cultures to forge their own language for the new age. With the opening last January of Mario Botta's classy Museum of Modern Art, second only to New York's MOMA in size, there's just no excuse to keep away.

HIP SHOPPING

Born out of freeways brought down in the 1989 earthquake, the Hayes Valley has become a vibrant showcase for talented young fashion and furniture designers. Just north of Market Street and west of the Civic Center, it offers an ever-changing circus of interesting shops, art galleries, and bars and

cafés, where style aficionados hatch bargain-hunting strategies over the world's most complicated coffee.

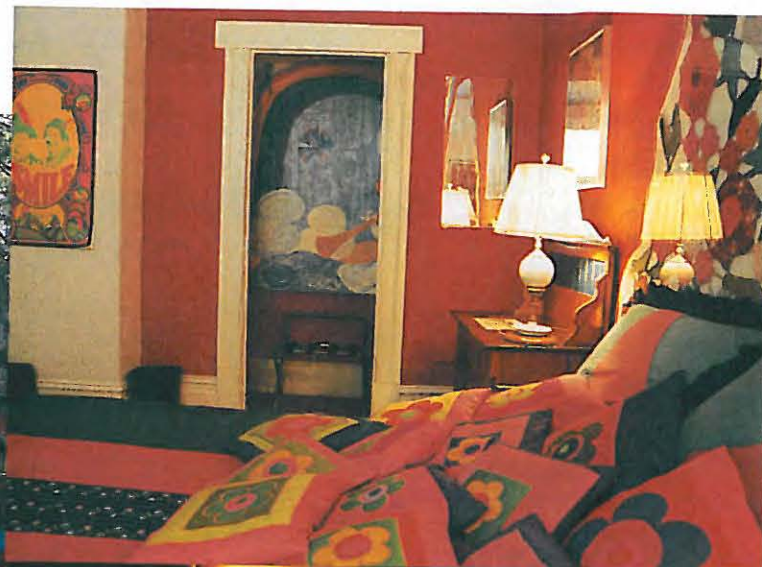
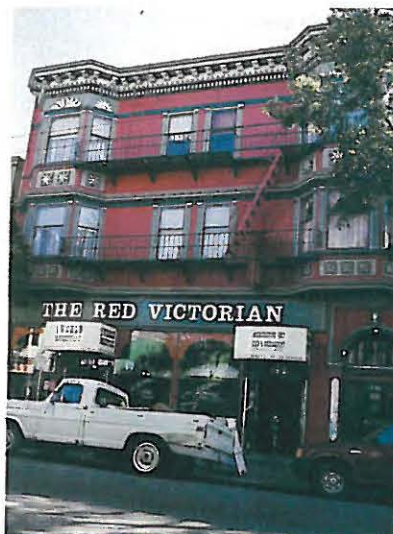
Russell Pritchard's **Zonal** (568 Hayes) set the pace in 1990 by stocking turn-of-the-century beds and wrought-iron outdoor furniture from the Midwest. Next door, Terry Stark of **Country Stark Java** (572 Hayes) started off by selling the contents of his house in Indonesia and now sells imported 1900s teak and mahogany furniture and his own Biedermeier-inspired designs.

A few blocks west, **De Vera** (384 Hayes) is mad for 50s and 60s Italian and Swedish glass with another branch (334 Gough) devoted to 20th-century decorative arts, paintings, photographs and objets trouvés. Next door, **F Dorian Inc** (388 Hayes) sells new and antique >

GETTING IT HOME:

All purchases over £136 have to be declared to British Customs and are subject to duty plus VAT - so don't forget to keep all those receipts. Call your local Customs & Excise office (it's listed in the phone book) for further intricacies. Most shops can arrange door-to-door shipping for you, through companies like Federal Express, freephone (0800) 123800 from the UK, or (1800) 238 5355 toll-free from anywhere in the United States; or World Express in London, tel (0181) 569 6959 for further details.

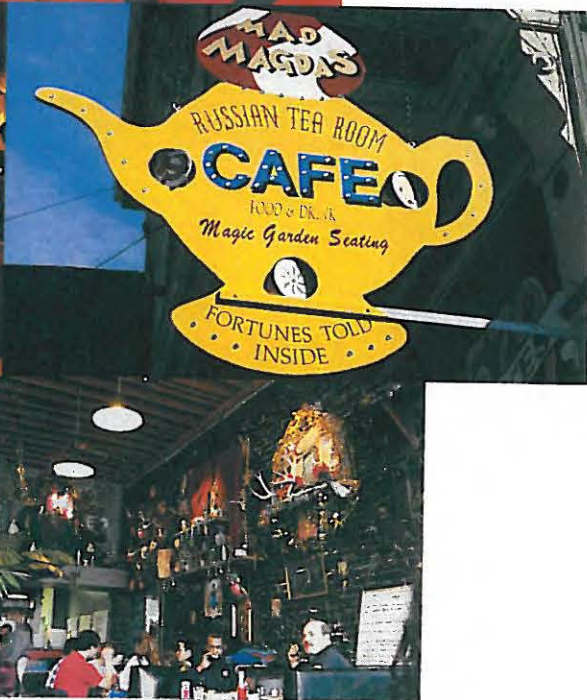
SNOOZING SAN FRANCISCO



Rooms at the hippy chic Red Victorian Inn, left and far left, come in psychedelic hues – dine Cajun-Caribbean at the nearby Cha Cha Cha restaurant (1801 Haight), bottom right, then head back to practise love-ins. Mad Magda's Russian Tea Rooms, below, offers tea and sympathetic fortune-telling in the vibrant Hayes Valley



Beautiful laundrette: enjoy café society while your washing spins at Brain Wash (1122 Folsom), above; 40s cartoons inspired the copper-clad interior of the Cypress Club (500 Jackson), right



Philippine furniture, Turkish rugs and jewellery. On the corner with Laguna, **AD/50** (601 Laguna) specialises in 50s-style beauty, including Swedish and Danish ceramics and glass, and architectural furniture by Charles Eames, the Knoll company and Alvar Aalto.

Walk south to Market Street, between Gough and Franklin, for another trendy nexus. Here, **20th-Century Furnishings** (1612 Market) has a fabulous selection of 30s, 40s and 50s modernist furniture, while **New Deal** (1632b Market) sells old and new one-of-a-kind pieces, including paintings and photographs. David Spencer displays an assortment of cacti from an inch to eight feet high on the sand-covered floor at **Red Desert** (1623 Market). **Beaver Bros Antiques** (1637 Market)

is the best-known of several warehouse emporia around the city selling European and American antiques, advertising memorabilia and San Franciscan junk.

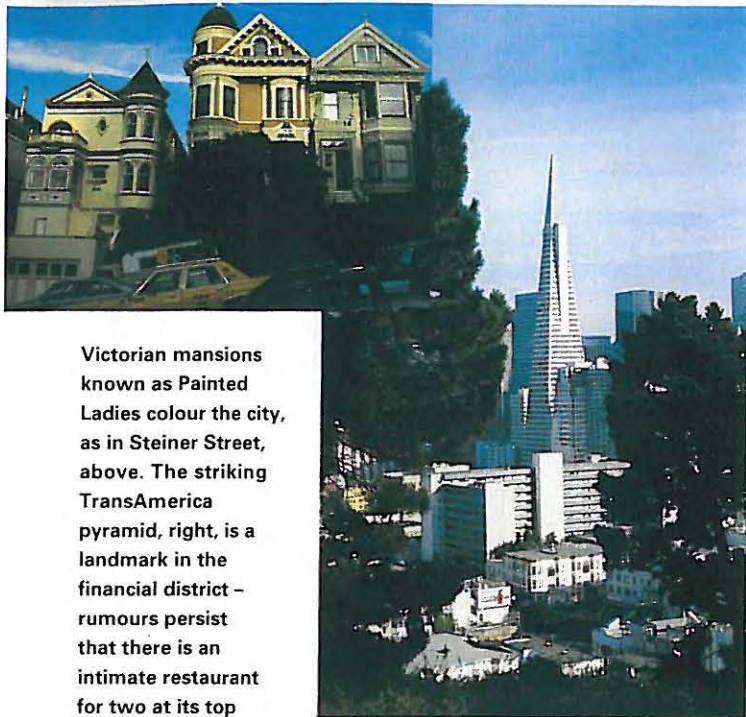
For succour, hit **Zuni Café** (1658 Market), **Caffe delle Stelle** (330 Gough), where giant cans of Italian olive oil grace the bar; or the new **Hayes and Vine** wine bar (377 Hayes). If you're dithering over that \$75 suede chest of drawers with matching bedside table, get your fortune told by the blind psychic at **Mad Magda's Russian Tea Rooms** (579 Hayes).

For round two, head north to Pacific Heights and Fillmore Street. **Lawrence Maloney** (220 Fillmore) sells modern classics by Jean-Michel Frank and John Dickinson, as well as antiques and his own designs. Household goodies at **Fillamento** (2185 Fillmore) include

Cocteau plates, twig candles, modern rugs, Philippe Starck kitchenware and Isabel Lam cutlery. **Vintage Boutique** (2116 Fillmore) has clothes, accessories and fabrics from the 20s to the 60s, while round the corner in Union Street, **Z Gallerie** (2071 Union) sells gold dishes, glassware, lamps and mosaic vases.

SNOOZING

Hottest new hotel is **Bohème** on North Beach (444 Columbus, tel (00 1 415) 433 9111), kitted out in Beat style with newspaper lampshades, black bedsteads, striped carpets and original photos by Jerry Stoll, from £62 a room. The **Red Victorian Inn** in Haight-Ashbury (1665 Haight, tel (00 1 415) 864 1978) is a hippy shack with all mod cons – rooms have names like Flower Child and are summer-of-lovingly decorated with ▷



Victorian mansions known as Painted Ladies colour the city, as in Steiner Street, above. The striking TransAmerica pyramid, right, is a landmark in the financial district – rumours persist that there is an intimate restaurant for two at its top

60s favourites like patchwork bedspreads, original Jim Morrison posters and a fish tank in the loo cistern. From around £42 per room per night.

Downtown, **Hotel Milano** (55 Fifth, tel (00 1 415) 543 8555) has rooms in contemporary Italian slick in the SoMa district, from £77 per night. (NB: add 12 per cent tax to all prices.)

BOOZING

North Beach is made for bar- and café-crawling, with opera on the juke box at **Tosca Café** (242 Columbus). Drink the spirit of old San Francisco in the Art Deco **Redwood Room**, lined with Klimt prints and Rothko-like redwood panelling, at the Four Seasons Clift Hotel (495 Geary). For twinkly nocturnal views, ascend to the 52nd-floor **Carnelian Room** (555 California) or **Victor's** at the Westin St Francis Hotel in Union Square.

EATING

Gordon Biersch, beneath the silvery Bay Bridge at 2 Harrison Street, **Lulu** (816 Folsom), and

Mooses on Washington Square are all big, wooden-floored affairs serving eclectic dishes that read like crossword clues.

Abiquiu (88 Cyril Magnin) is more restful, with inspired New Mexican cooking, but the most divine food in the city is the Californian-Asian cuisine at the hushed **Silks** (222 Sansome).

SWOTTING

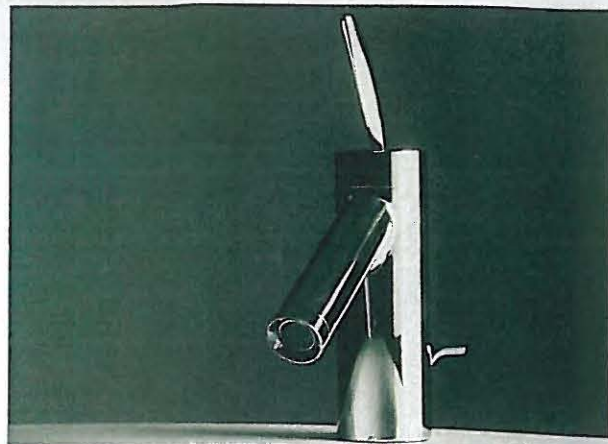
Seek inspiration in **San Francisco: A Certain Style** (Chronicle, around £15), which includes the work of Californian designer names like Charles Pfisher, John Dickinson and Michael Taylor. **SF Access** (HarperCollins, £7.99) is ideal for locating shops and restaurants, while **The Virago Woman's Travel Guide** (Virago, £9.99), and Dorling Kindersley's **Eyewitness Guide** (£12.99) are both good all-round guides. □

Text: Tessa Souter and Nigel Tisdall

Photographs: Nigel Tisdall and Georgia Glynn Smith

HOW TO GET THERE

A seven-night break with British Airways Holidays, (01 293) 617 000, costs from £744 staying at the five-star Fairmont Hotel on Nob Hill, which has superb views over the city. Prices include car rental or transfers. Flightbookers, (01 71) 757 2000, have flight-only deals from £230 return, plus up to £35 tax.



Basin Mixer by Philippe Starck

Going back to the fundamentals of the original hand pump, Philippe Starck has redefined the modern basin mixer. This and a whole range of bathroom fittings are made by **Hans Grohe** and are now available from **Alternative Plans**

alternative plans 071 228 6460

9 Hester Road, by Battersea Bridge SW11



S H A K E R

K I T C H E N S T O P A I N T Y O U R S E L F

FULHAM	071	731	3302
BRIXTON	081	671	4826
WEYBRIDGE	0932		341385
HAMPTON COURT	0932		779677
LEAMINGTON	0926		888078
TUNBRIDGE	0982		549220
PETERBOROUGH	0945		700100
WORCESTER	0905		26098