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THIS PAGE The sofa in the sitting area (above) is the 'Jetlag' by India Mahdavi; François Champsaur designed the daybeds. The bookshelves and staircase (left) are made from stained oak. **OPPOSITE** Frank Gehry's 'Cloud' pendant light, made by Belux, hangs above the dining tables (top); the collage above the bench is by Mimmo Rotella. The kitchen (bottom) is sleek and masculine, in stained oak and granite. The painting seen through the glass screen is by Valery Koshlyakov

One of designer François Champsaur's first jobs in Paris was in the office of the Italian architect Massimiliano Fuksas. 'I was the only French employee,' he recalls. He also remembers a strange way of dispatching drawings to his counterparts at the firm's Roman headquarters. 'We rolled them up and went to the Gare de Lyon, where we had to give a ticket to the train conductor so that they could be repatriated to Rome by the night train,' he says. 'It was the internet of the times.'

It is thus fitting that one of his most impressive jobs to date in the French capital has an Italian link. The owners are a couple of fervent art collectors, whose main base is Milan. The wife is also a friend of one of François's more illustrious clients, the actress Carole Bouquet. As for the apartment, it can only be described as exceptional: a 200-square-metre duplex located just a stone's throw from the Champs-Élysées, with four separate terraces. The one off the sitting room looks directly on to the neighbouring Grand Palais and its monumental glazed roof. The one on the roof offers a panorama of the Paris skyline. 'You're in another world up there,' enthuses François.



Palatial simplicity

In this duplex overlooking the Grand Palais in Paris, designer François Champsaur simplified the layout and used rich materials, exquisite detailing and bespoke pieces to make the most of the high spaces and extensive views, and to set off its owners' art collection

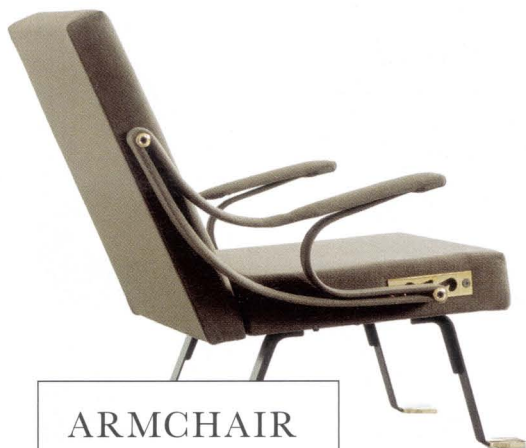
TEXT IAN PHILLIPS | PHOTOGRAPHS STEPHAN JULLIARD

In the sitting room, Bruder linen curtains frame the view of the Grand Palais. Beyond the 'Quark' marble coffee table by Emmanuel Babled, doors made from brushed and stained teak veneer lead into the media room



— the — Knowledge

*Inspired by the houses in this issue,
Emily Tobin gives directions on how to achieve similar style*



ARMCHAIR

The armchairs are the 'Digamma' model, originally designed by Ignazio Gardella in 1957 and now manufactured by Santa & Cole (00-34-938 619 100; www.santacole.com). The back of the chair reclines and the 'duck' feet are a signature Gardella feature which acquired an ironic fame. The chairs cost from €3,580 each and measure 95 x 70 x 54cm.



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STOOL

The walnut stool is an iconic design by Charles and Ray Eames, created as part of a commission from Time in 1960 to furnish three lobbies in New York's Rockefeller Center. It measures 38 x 33cm diameter and costs £929 at Skandium (020-7584 2066; www.skandium.com).



MARBLE

A soft grey Carrara marble was François Champsaur's material of choice for the bathroom. Mandarin Stone (01600-715444; www.mandarinstone.com) is a good source for marble and the 'Carrara Polished' is a close match to the one used here. It costs £62.31 per square metre.



LIGHT

A mouth-blown Murano-glass chandelier makes a bold statement in the kitchen. This is the 'Digit' model by Emmanuel Babled (00-31-20 33 16 46 2; www.babled.net). It is available in a number of different designs and colourways, with prices starting from €12,000.

