

Robert Couturier

12 THINGS HE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT

The French pride themselves on their modernity, but that doesn't mean all tradition has been banished. Lest you think the dandies of yesteryear—subspecies *Aestheticus opulensis*—are extinct, spend some time with New York-based decorator Robert Couturier. He may love Ambien, Rachel Zoe, and his Kindle, but he is as ancien régime as they come. He thrives on grand French restaurants, listens only to classical music, and heads to the Wrightsman Galleries at New York's Metropolitan Museum or to the Louvre in Paris for rejuvenation: "I invariably feel 'resourced' and reconciled," he explains. But his wicked, self-conscious wit and humor make his elegant habits seem refreshing—even, shocking to say, rather modern. *By David Colman*



2. Frédéric Malle fragrance and candle.



1 / THE GARDENS OF MY COUNTRY HOUSE
Some people see them as formal, but to me they are a series of rooms where I walk with my Shih Tzus, Henriette, Bess, and Hercule.

2 / FRÉDÉRIC MALLE FRAGRANCES
My old friend's Musc Ravageur is exactly how I always wanted to smell. And his Coffee Society candle is like a Proustian madeleine for me—the fragrance of old, well-kept houses.

3 / MY IPOD
It holds 30 days of classical music!

4 / LA GRENOUILLE IN MANHATTAN AND LE VOLTAIRE IN PARIS

The only restaurants in the world where I can easily get a table and the maître d's are welcoming, unlike at certain fashionable spots.

5 / MY BOOKS
All of them, on Kindle or on paper—for all I know, all I could know, and all I have forgotten.

6 / BRAVO TV
Just when you thought you had heard everything, some housewife or L.A. decorator comes up with something even more outrageous.

7 / LONDON TAILOR DOUGLAS HAYWARD
When I told one of the tailors there I needed a new suit, he replied, "Sir, you need a new suit like you need a bullet in the head." Of course, I didn't listen.

8 / LE PETIT TRIANON
The proportions of the rooms are ideal, with perfect colors and perfect windows. At the same time, it's so simple, and so well made.

9 / SLEEPING PILLS
Otherwise I become an owl.

10 / HOTEL LANCASTER IN PARIS
A reminder of a more graceful time—like staying in a more luxurious version of your own home.

11 / A SENSE OF HUMOR
Because without it, life is not worth much.

12 / SUGAR
Life is not worth much without that either.



1. The gardens at Couturier's Connecticut country house.



6. Bravo TV stars.



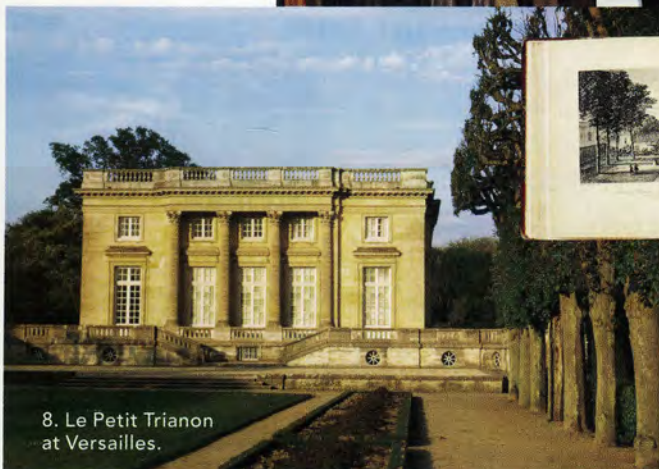
7. His suits.



4. Le Voltaire in Paris.



5. A treasured antique book.



8. Le Petit Trianon at Versailles.



12. Sugar.