

The New York Times

Men's Style

MY SPACE | STEVEN KURUTZ

Color-Coded Habitat

A real estate developer creates a place where he is free to be himself.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT MURPHY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Above, Alan Faena in the living room of his Miami Beach home. Left, an Egyptian chair that was once a prop in an old movie.



Left, the space is layered with hundreds of crystals. Right, one of the guardians of the house, a big-cat statuette.



Alan Faena

Age 52

Occupation Founder of Faena Group; real estate developer
Location Miami Beach

His Favorite Room Mr. Faena lives in a Mediterranean-style house once owned by Robert Grey, the late Washington power player and adviser to four Republican

presidents. In one of the villa's three living areas he has densely layered the space with hundreds of crystals, a gold Buddha statue, faux animal tusks and other fantastical furnishings, and painted the room a saturated red. "I want to create an impression," he said.

I have so many questions. But first, my eyes need to adjust. It's intense. I like rich places, I

like colors, I believe in layers. The more layers you have, the deeper the place. But you know, I am not a decorator. I am a creator. I create places where I can really think and create. It's not what you would see in other places.

You carry that through to your clothes, too.

I used to have a big fashion company in Latin America that was very famous. I came from the

world of wear what you like. In my case, having my stones and my walking stick and wearing what I really like allows me to be more creative and connected with myself.

Are you a believer in the power of crystals?

I always liked crystals. Two or three years ago, a collection was being sold. This guy created a cabinet of curiosities in the 1800s

in Genoa, Italy, in a big palace. The way he put it together, mixing crystals with different stones, each one is a piece of art. His family sold it, and I was lucky enough to buy the collection. The energy of the place is really high.

The big cat looks lifelike.

It's ceramic or porcelain. It's about the fantasy of the house. I wanted to put these tigers and cheetahs. I like them. They are

my guardians of the house.

I'm told that Egyptian chair is a prop from an old movie.

I found it in L.A. walking in a beautiful antiques place. I like the mix of interesting and beautiful things, from the old to new, from colors to stones. It doesn't follow any rules, as you can see. Only my rules. Uniqueness.

Only what brings you joy. Exactly. You say it perfectly.