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Illustrated with photographs

Sales Rank: #3206891 in BooksOriginal language: English

• Number of items: 1

• Dimensions: 9.00" h x 6.00" w x .42" l, .56 pounds

• Binding: Paperback

Most helpful customer reviews

58 of 60 people found the following review helpful.

what a joy

By Amazon Customer

Elsie De Wolfe is acknowleged as the first woman to make a fortune as a decorator and can be called the first life style maven of the 20th century. Her opinions on home decor were eagerly seized upon by millions of aspirational women around the country. She wrote The House in Good Taste 90 years ago but it's just as fresh and suitable now as it was then.

I can't bring myself to agree with her on patchwork quilts, lace curtains or rocking chairs but she's absolutely correct in her advice on wallpaper, paint and apartments. It's amazing how much this delightful and informative book still has to teach us.

33 of 37 people found the following review helpful.

not trite

By DanR

I bought this book when it first came out. I tried reading it, was (too) quick to call it 'trite' and gave it away. Later my boyfriend gave me a copy (not knowing that I'd tried it before) so I had to slog through it. I am so very glad I did. Ms. DeWolfe has a unique style of writing that must be understood before you will truely enjoy the book. She has a wit and charm that is backed by such sincerity that few designers today could pull this level of writing off. The book will make you want to find more by or about this stylishly pragmatic decorator

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

Brass Beds, Lace Curtains, Rocking Chairs be gone!

By Sigrid Olsen

This book was a surprise. Written in 1914 it seems current. I had delayed reading this classic, to my regret. De Wolfe's wonderful book is back with an updated introduction and several additions in the note section at the back that refer to today's decoration. It also includes the reasons behind her dislike of Eastlake furniture-which is just fabulous stuff, especially when re-upholstered in a updated print (the same goes for most Victorian furniture). I agree with her on her dislike of brass beds and lace curtains...but she also disliked rocking chairs...and for that, one must consider she never had a baby...

First, a lot of what she said is relevant then, as it is today. There is a big difference though, and that is simply

put, people do not have her kind of money...so in some ways her advice has a bit of Marie Antoinette feeling to it. That shouldn't surprise as she lived across the street from Versailles.

Her writing is vibrant, and conveys the person behind the taste. She loved chinoiserie, fireplaces, leopard print, stripes, chintz and trellis. Would she fit into a Nate Berkus world...no...but decorating tastes move on and one can see a hint of Elsie here and there. Though I still prefer Sister Parish by far...Elsie is a close second.

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