A modern living room with a large window overlooking the ocean. The room features a white sofa, a coffee table, and a rug. The text "Your Favorite World" is overlaid on the image in white, with each word enclosed in a white circle.

Your Favorite World



Lieblingswelt designs not just living quarters, but lifestyles

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Before Uli Petzold begins a design project for his company Lieblingswelt, he has what he calls a “very personal” meeting with the client. He asks questions that might seem more appropriate for a dating service than a residential design firm: What is your favorite food? What is your favorite soap? Do you spend most of your time in your master bedroom suite or do you prefer to entertain guests? The interview is intimate because the goal is not just to design a pleasant or attractive space but to create what Petzold calls the client’s “favorite world.”

That’s what the word Lieblingswelt means in German: your favorite world. Every detail of the space, from the front door to the furniture to the food in the refrigerator, is planned according to the client’s personal tastes. The information gleaned from the initial interview becomes as the raw material for the creative process that follows.

On a flat Mac screen sitting atop the enormous square table where the design team works at the back of the Zeitgeist showroom in the Design District, Petzold pulls up the sketches he and Oliver Koch drew for a condominium in the Continuum building at South Pointe in Miami Beach. Delicately cross-hatched, these pencil sketches are the designers’ interpretation of the world in which their client, who is described only as a “gentleman from New Jersey,” wishes to live.

Even the entryway into this world is personalized. Because the client is a devotee of Tiffany & Co., Lieblingswelt designed a replica of the original door to the jeweler’s famous store in Manhattan. The sketches also show every aspect of the residence on the other side, from a wide open living and dining area with a breathtaking view of Fisher Island to a second guest bedroom for young visitors. A long hallway leads to the master bath. Lofty tools line a long bar in the kitchen.

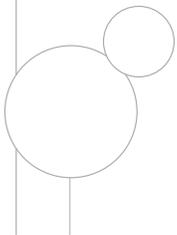
Once the sketches are finished, the designers meet with the client again for approval or revision. “He might say, ‘Nice idea, but that’s not me,’” Petzold points out. At this stage, the client might

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BY CELESTE FRASER DELGADO

Photos by Serge Brison, Brussels





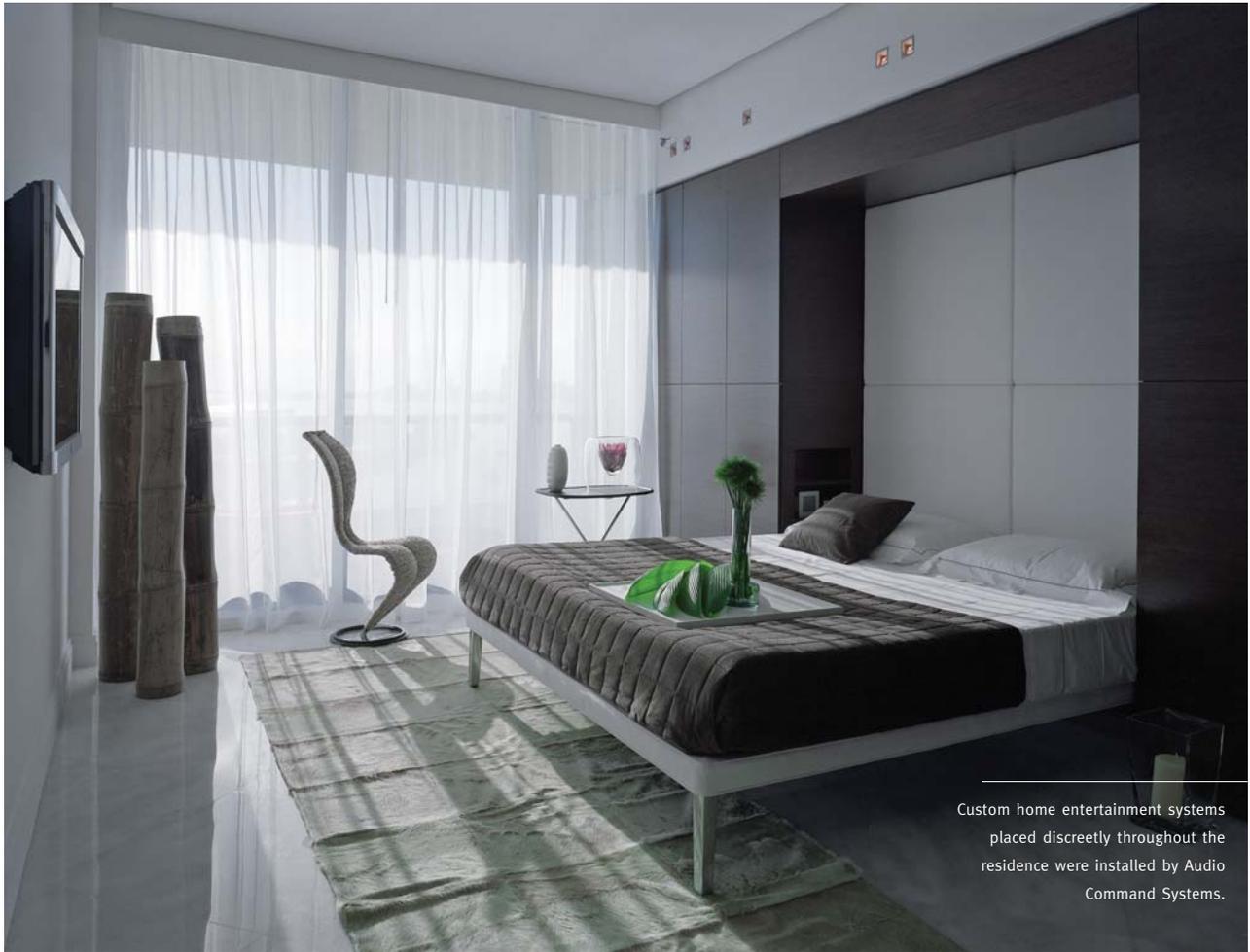
A stainless steel replica of the Tiffany door(left) and a curved hardwood wall(above) in the living room were provided by Kamper Contracting, a Miami branch of the respected Austrian firm Kamper.

also make subtle suggestions, such as rotating the dining room table or switching a sofa for a chaise. Except for the black-and-white stools that were replaced by brown leather Circo stools from Cor and tile flooring that gave way to Brazilian cherry wood, however, the initial sketches for the Continuum condominium look remarkably like the finished home.

Once the client has clarified what fits in his perfect world, the designers move on to the rendering phase. Lieblingswelt employs its own computer programmers who work with Studio Max software to create incredibly realistic renderings; the grain is visible in the custom-designed marble waterfall built into the kitchen wall. In the view of the master suite, it looks as though the viewer could step into the tropical rain shower and feel the water begin to fog the limestone wall and run along the non-slip brush hammered slate floor.

The renderings are used to generate a 360-degree view of the entire project. The mouse directs a “camera” that reveals every angle. This not only lets the client view the “world” before it is built; it also provides valuable information during the construction phase.

“This helps on a construction site, because everyone knows exactly where they are,” says Petzold. “There are no more questions.” The construction of Lieblingswelt designs is completed by a number



Custom home entertainment systems placed discreetly throughout the residence were installed by Audio Command Systems.

of trusted partners who deliver a high level of quality and craftsmanship. “When we do these condominium or single family homes, we’re creating a little bit of Europe,” Petzold explains. Zankay Construction served as general contractor for the Continuum project because the designer believes owner Alex Zangen has a “complete European standard. He is always on time with perfect finishes.”

Kamper Contracting, a Miami branch of the respected Austrian firm Kamper, provided the internal build-outs and special details such as a curved hardwood wall with a curved door in the living room and the stainless steel replica of the Tiffany door. Partner and general manager Birgit Auge says Hans and Karl kamper, owners of Kamper Graz established Kamper with Auge in Miami a year and a half ago because they saw a “big demand for good craftsmanship.” Kamper Contracting shares the Zeitgeist showroom, as does Audio Command Systems, the company that installed the custom home entertainment systems discreetly placed throughout the residence. With the exception of a few decorative lamps, the lighting is all manufactured by Kreon, the Belgian lighting fixtures manufacturer that is also on

display at Zeitgeist. “In this showroom, the client can get full service design, contracting, audio and video, and lighting systems all in one place,” says Auge. “It’s a complete, turnkey solution.”

Once construction is complete, the Lieblingswelt team goes shopping for everything from furniture to soap. The furnishings range from a striking red sofa built to an Eileen Gray design from the 1920s to the more contemporary S-chair designed by Tom Dixon for Cappellini, made out of straw. Accessories range from the exotic crocodile-look leather ottoman that accents the white Minotti sectional in the living room to the bamboo candles clustered in the guest bedroom.

“We really go into details,” says Petzold. “Dishware, cutlery, vases, flower arrangements.” In Continuum, Lieblingswelt even organized the closet with the clothes the client sent down from New Jersey. Kirsten Petzold, Uli’s wife, prepared the client’s favorite meal on the evening of his arrival. “He brought only his carry-on and moved in,” says Petzold. “It is absolutely Lieblingswelt – the world he loves.” ○



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