



LAW & ORDER

Plaid, brown leather, lots of high-tech toys — these have long comprised the hackneyed concept of bachelor pad decor. But perhaps cable TV's Fab Five (you know, those wonderfully tasteful gay guys who set straight men straight on decor, grooming and entertaining) have exerted a more profound influence on the living spaces of the nation's single men than previously recognized.

The U. City digs of Travis Noble, a single, high-profile criminal attorney, indicate a man can have his hi-def flat-screens and eat at a table, too. (In this case, an ebony-stained rectangle flanked by sleek and simple leather chairs.) On one wall, glowing glass discs — electrified pieces by artist Sam Stang — simultaneously provide visual aesthetics and mood lighting. A bold triptych, which he commissioned from St. Louis painter SJ Hammack, hangs on an adjacent wall.

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The focal point of the living room is a 40-inch plasma TV, mounted on a swivel-arm and usually tuned to ESPN. An avid sports fanatic, Noble has five TVs in all, including a 60-inch in the bedroom and a small plasma in the master bath.



Noble first arrived in St. Louis about 10 years ago to attend law school at Saint Louis University. He already had a career in the criminal justice system, as a policeman in Portland, Maine, and narcotics agent in Maine and Massachusetts. His softly accented speech, though, retains a touch of the Piedmont that betrays his Virginia roots.

It was during his time as a narcotics agent, doing investigations and surveillance, that he remembers becoming fascinated with the drama of the courtroom. While still a law student, Noble landed a part-time job consulting on drug cases for Sindel & Sindel. Senior partner Rick Sindel asked him to stay on after graduation. "I said I would, as long as I could do jury trials," Noble recalls. "I tried my first case before a jury just a few weeks out of law school — and I won."

Over time, Noble became known for his astute defense of serious DWI offenders, and, later on, of felony drug cases. (And the firm became known as Sindel, Sindel & Noble.) It's no surprise that the former policeman and special agent is adept at the cross-examination of police officers. "I miss police work and still consider myself in law enforcement," he says without irony. "DWI is one crime the average person can be charged with, and it has very serious consequences — you can lose your job or go to prison. Police officers have the power and the responsibility. I have to make sure they do it right when they perform a field sobriety test," he explains.

Noble is frequently invited to speak at police training seminars and prosecutors' conferences, sharing his expertise and unique perspective on law and order. "I am, of course, very anti-drinking and driving and am not a drinker myself — one glass makes me dizzy. And I often encourage clients to enter treatment," he adds.

Noble purchased his condo a year and a half ago, but still owns a house in Brentwood, which he shared for two years with his ailing grandfather. "The social worker advised against it, but bringing my grandfather to live with me was the best thing I ever did," he says. "We became so close. And that's when I got my dog Jake, a pound rescue, to keep him company." With his grandfather now in a nursing home, Noble visits him almost every weekend, bearing the older man's favorite treat: a large Starbucks coffee.

"I love color, and you get a great 'pop' from glass without being gaudy."

Location was a big factor in Noble's decision about where to live. "It's all about convenience for me. Here, I'm three-tenths of a mile from my office," he says. "There's one traffic light, and if I miss the green, I'm in a bad mood." He also enjoys the proximity to the U. City Loop and Clayton.

Noble created the condo's decor and chose furniture on his own. "I like minimalist and clean lines. I don't like clutter," he says. "And because I have dog, I think leather furniture is easier."

As for his interest in collecting art glass, he credits colleague Rick Sindel. "He took me to a Sam Stang show, and I was hooked," Noble recalls. "I love color, and you get a great 'pop' from glass without being gaudy.

THIS PAGE, TOP:

Travis Noble, pictured in his home office, a repository of mementos, including a photo with fellow S.W.A.T. team members in Mainz.

BOTTOM:

A Jacuzzi tub and candlelight create a relaxing bathroom retreat.

It's such a unique medium." He also feels a personal tie to the material: his mother's stepfather was a glass blower for Westinghouse in upstate New York.

A true metrosexual, Noble is also known for his natty wardrobe. "A friend once told me that every man should have at least one custom-made suit, and you can't go cheap on shoes," he says. (Favorite footwear: Ferragamo and Louis Vuitton — "They're so comfortable," he attests.) Noble's sartorial acumen has not escaped the notice of his

law partners, who, when not ribbing him, sometimes seek his fashion advice.

Noble's extensive (and insured) business wardrobe consists of not one, but 45 custom-made suits, carefully arranged on wooden hangers in his orderly walk-in closet. "I love to shop. It's an illness, a compulsion," he says with characteristic self-deprecation. He favors a classic look, nothing edgy or trendy: three-button suit coats, double vents and 'surgical' buttons on the sleeves, tailored locally at Bespoke Couture. An array of shirts is organized by color, forming a subtle rainbow of pinks, blues, whites and yellows. "I'm a very detail-oriented person — in work and in life," he says. "It's hard to believe I went from carrying machine guns for a living for 10 years to this," he adds with a laugh.



Noble chose shades of slate blue and celery green for his master bedroom and bath because he finds them "soothing." Lab-mix Jake obviously agrees. An oil painting by St. Louis artist SJ Hammack, called 'Lapis Lazuli,' hangs above the bed. Pillow shams and neck roll courtesy of Soft Surroundings.

Noble worked with the builder to upgrade the kitchen, adding steel tile backsplash and commercial Viking appliances. "I'm not a cook — it's for resale," he confesses. *Floral: courtesy of Ladue Florist.*



Not that he's gone soft. When Noble turned 40 last year, he began training for his first triathlon. Since then, he competes in events all across the country. In addition, he's an avid cyclist, biking long distances during treks through Wisconsin, Napa Valley and France. He also rides a Big Dog chopper, just for fun.

For now, one of St. Louis' most eligible bachelors isn't seeing anybody special. "But I would love to be married and have kids... to come home to someone, talk about the day, have dinner and a glass of wine," he confesses. He's grown weary of "serial Seinfeld dates," he says. "I knew I wasn't ready to settle down in my 20s and 30s, because my philosophy is once you do this, that's it." A romantic at heart, Noble remains hopeful. "I'm looking for the right person. I'll just know when it happens."

1 Noble keeps his electronic gadgets handy in the living room for times when he prefers to watch TV from his outdoor hot tub. With its swiveling arms, the plasma TV can turn to face the rear patio, where Noble listens from his headphones and enjoys a relaxing steam.

2 With more than 30 glass pieces, Noble is an avid glass collector — having a personal tie to the material in the form of a step-grandfather who was a glass blower.

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3 "Sleight of hand fascinates me," says Noble, who began learning magic tricks as a teenager after his parents "shipped me off to 'magic school camp' as a way to keep me out of trouble."

4 Noble's decor emphasizes his love for minimalist and clean lines.