

THE ROBB REPORT COLLECTION



Magic Carpets – Conjuring up the perfect rug for any home.

IN THE 16TH CENTURY, Cardinal Wolsey of England was a great collector of carpets. It is said that when the Venetian ambassador presented him with a bale of Turkish rugs, Wolsey demanded 100 more to furnish his palace at Hampton Court. His rival collector? King Henry VIII. Men like Frick, Hearst, and Getty developed great collections in their time. And for 21st-century titans, there is a dealer who provides access to the world's finest rugs.

Jan David Winitz, founder and president of the Claremont Rug Company, deals in art-level Persian antique rugs for the connoisseur—whether one is looking for a home collection, or buying as an investment. “Many clients start with one room and ask us to place a piece. We have two clients in particular who are incorporating rugs into their private museums,” says Winitz, whose main showroom is in Oakland, Calif. His passion and knowledge have gained

him access to private collections worldwide since he began the company in 1980.

Winitz and his experienced staff cater completely to their clients, people with whom they have worked a number of times. “We help find which aspect of rugs they’re interested in,” he says. “Some people focus on tribal rugs or Caucasian. We give private tutorials, so they can make educated decisions when the great piece arrives.” There are many factors to consider when purchasing collectible rugs from the 19th and 20th centuries, including cost. For a small rug measuring three by five feet, prices start in the \$6,000 to \$10,000 range, with a rare specimen costing more than \$100,000. Room-size carpets begin around \$18,000 and can top \$300,000.

By Kate Wafer, published in the September 2008 issue

