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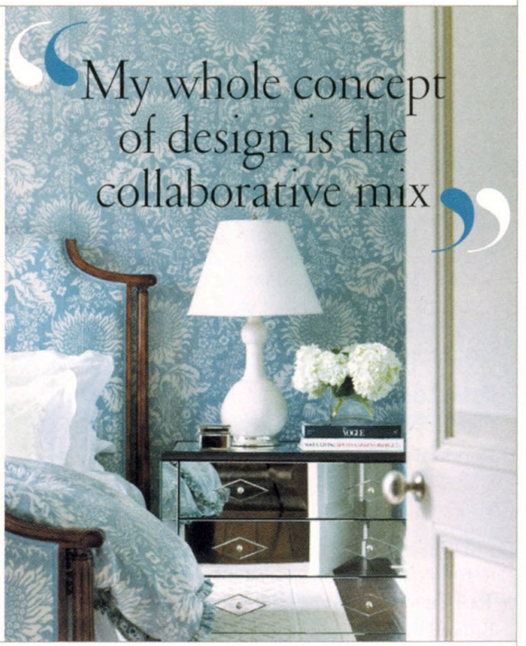
MEET THE DESIGNER

Suzanne Kasler

SOUTHERN CHARM MEETS EUROPEAN SENSIBILITY IN A SIGNATURE CASUAL ELEGANCE



A native of Indianapolis, Suzanne Kasler moved to Atlanta 20 years ago and has established herself as a noted interior designer with several signature lines of furnishings.

You started in commercial work and switched to upscale residential design after moving to Atlanta. What attracts you to designing houses? I love the art, antiques and the personal involvement. It's a whole different world. **How do you describe your style?** I think my style has a foundation of tradition but with a fresh approach. It's Continental, but people describe it as a little more feminine, and that has resonated. And I'm a proponent of serious comfort. **Why does so much of your work stem from a neutral palette?** I work from white and light. I like to strengthen the space and the architectural envelope, get it pared down and clean for a tailored start, and then I go from there. I'm known for using color strategically to have more impact. **You suggest changing pillow colors seasonally or hanging prints that almost match. Why?** I'm very influenced by fashion, and I think interiors today are also tied to fashion. People want their clothes and rooms to be a foundation that they can change with the seasons or on a whim to give them a fresh look. **How does your love of travel influence your work?** I've been collecting pieces that are Continental or French modern for years. Items I was attracted to became muses for collections I've designed. **You have design partnerships with Hickory Chair, Safavieh Rugs, Soicher Marin, Visual Comfort, Ballard Designs, Lee Jofa. Why did you go into licensing?** I love to mix and to use catalog pieces with my own designs in my rooms, and I admired the viewpoints expressed in the lines created by other designers such as Mariette Himes Gomez, Alexa Hampton, Thomas O'Brien. My whole concept of design is the collaborative mix. **How did you go about it?** First, I put together a book of concepts. And when I called Hickory Chair, it turned out I was already on their radar. They came for a big presentation and got back to me right away. It was very exciting. **What do you like about designing collections?** Product design keeps you really engaged, thinking outside the box, connecting with people all over. You work with fabrics, go to the factory and see how furniture is made. You start seeing a brand coming from your "look," and the product reinforces that. **What do you favor about Connecticut projects?** I'm doing two houses in Greenwich right now. I love working there because it's a community that loves and appreciates good design and style, and it's that kind of combination that makes my work so much fun. —*Sharon King Hoge*

Personal Touch At a Greenwich project (TOP LEFT AND RIGHT), Kasler takes a fresh approach to traditional. The Belvedere chest (TOP RIGHT) and the Alexandra chair (LEFT) are Suzanne Kasler for Hickory Chair. *See Resources.*

PORTRAIT: ERICA GEORGE DINES; INTERIORS: THIBAULT JEANSON