



# the power of women

HD's brand vice president examines gender differences in the workplace—and why they matter.

**Throughout history**, women have made a difference in the workplace...but paving the way to the top and into leadership positions did not come easy. The pioneers had to shatter glass ceilings, knock down doors, create their own paths, and help others along the way.

Today more than ever, women are having a significant impact on the field of hospitality design. This issue highlights the accomplishments of the women who have shaped and are shaping the future of the industry—from product and brand development, creativity and innovation, design and architecture, business development, education to mentoring.

In 1984, NEWH—the Hospitality Industry Network (formerly known as the Network of Executive Women in Hospitality), was founded by a group of executives—Dorrit St. John, Susan Spalding, and Shelia Lohmiller. Their intent was to help decrease barriers of entry for women in hospitality and provide support through the exchange of information, networking events, and scholarships. Today, NEWH is the largest organization of its kind, leading the way in education, leadership development, recognition of excellence, and business development opportunities. The vision of a small group of women to better other women in the hospitality industry has helped foster numerous careers and career advancements over the years and their accomplishments are truly remarkable.

As a 20-plus year veteran of the hospitality design industry, and leader of the largest media brand in our industry, I am often asked what challenges I faced being a woman in business. But when I began my career, my objective was not necessarily to become a senior executive; I wanted to do something I liked that was meaningful. As it turned out, these were key ingredients for building a business. As with many women leaders, I had a fair amount of talent, training, and opportunity, but the attributes that contributed most to my success in developing our brand were passion and performance with a purpose. Mentors and advocates played a significant role in building confidence, and as experienced advisors, they were critical for ascending to positions of power and authority.

The challenges I faced early in my career were a management style and business model that did not conform to traditional ways of thinking, at least within the media industry and our corporate environment. I adopted a management style that is more transformational or interactive, a style associated more with women than men. It's a style characterized by innovation, building trust, and empowering team members, as well as a participatory and collaborative leadership to get results. It's a business model that took a holistic approach to media brand development and the integration of communication channels within an industry. As reported by the research organization, Catalyst, in the book, *Women Take Care, Men Take Charge: Stereotyping of U.S. Business Leaders* (2005), both men and women perceive a sharp gender difference in female and male leadership.

They report that more women than men are effective at rewarding and supporting, while men are better at delegating and influencing upward. Ironically, the same attributes that contributed to my success in brand development were also challenges to overcome. There were few women in top management positions when I started with Bill Communications (now known as Nielsen) and over the years I began to learn that qualities women share are different than their male counterparts. The challenge for me was to build on my management strengths within the context of a corporation to maximize financial performance.

In terms of adaptability, the lesson learned was that the integration of best practices, new thought processes, and traits more prevalent among women can contribute to a higher rate of performance. According to Claire Shipman and Katty Kay in their book, *Womenomics*, "Generally speaking, women

have a style of management that is more open and inclusive, are more likely to encourage participation in meetings, more nurturing of subordinates, and prefer consensus to confrontation and empathy over ego.” Successful women in our industry also tend to share qualities such as:

- Stronger relationships with customers.
- Creative intelligence. Women tend to be more right-brained but are adept at using both sides of their brain, combining analytical and creative skills.
- Inspiration, or presenting a compelling vision for the future. Women have the ability to figure out where to go and to enlist the people and groups necessary to get there.
- Passion. The ability to make things happen instead of waiting for others to chart the course.
- Ability to see opportunity in setback.
- Problem solving.

The good news for women, as reported by McKinsey & Co, in an article, *Why Women Matter*, is that research suggests that companies with a higher number of women at senior levels are also companies with better organizational and financial performances. Some leadership behaviors which are more frequently applied by women than men in management teams prove to enhance company performance and will be a key factor in meeting tomorrow’s business challenges.

## “Today more than ever, woman are having an impact on hospitality design”

Moreover, having more women in the workforce is a prerequisite for breaking the glass ceiling. But based on the McKinsey report, this alone will not be sufficient. Women quickly come up against barriers inherent in the traditional business model, such as need for flexibility. This is not necessarily a woman-only issue, but women are still challenged by family demands and are still largely the ones who interrupt their careers to handle work and family trade-offs.

As a result, women tend to struggle more than men with a desire to advance their careers and balance life and family demands. Companies who have adopted work flexibility—remote working, part-time or flexible hours—are more apt to retain women managers. Probably more than any other group, Gen X and Y want and will demand more balance between work and their personal life.

Within our industry, perhaps as a result of challenges in the workforce and favorable barriers of entry, more and more women are starting their own businesses—and have achieved a great deal of success in terms of return on investment and personal gain. While this is not for everyone due to the risks associated with a business launch, it is a path many women have chosen, particularly those featured in this issue.

The workplace of the future is likely to be more fluid, more virtual, and less office-bound and this will require a different set of management skills. As reported by Chartered Management Institute in their article, *Management Futures: The World in 2018*, recruiters are looking for emotional intelligence, and the ability to appreciate people’s values as much as they’re looking for other competencies. According to Brenda Barnes, CEO of Sara Lee, “Today’s business world, where work can be done anywhere, at any time, calls for a flexible environment that provides opportunity for work-life balance. This doesn’t mean employees work less; instead it means empowering employees to do their work on a schedule that works for them.” Diversity of leadership will be a key driver in meeting the future challenges of the global hospitality design industry.

The future bodes well for the advancement of women, particularly in hospitality, where women have been increasingly successful in overcoming barriers such as discrimination, flexibility in the workplace, and resistance to women’s leadership. And women are using non-traditional management styles, drawing on their skills and attributes and demonstrating how to achieve results in a different way.

“To love what you do and feel that it matters—how could anything be more fun?”—Katherine Graham, of the Washington Post Company, the first female CEO of a Fortune 500 Company.



# break on through

Complicated answers to one simple question: what does it take to be a successful woman in this industry?

**“The first rule about fight club** is there is no fight club.” And the first rule about being a successful woman in this industry is there is no glass ceiling. Now, once you probe a bit, and start asking the questions, that’s a different story. Off the record, the men in certain large architectural firms are still making more than the women. Off the record, the men at certain large hotel companies are being promoted way more frequently than women. Off the record, certain design principals have an unwritten policy against women having children. Off the record, certain high profile women stand in the back of the room while their male employees do business in some of the hottest global markets. Off the record, some women like being the only woman in the room. Off the record, sometimes women designers have an advantage over men whose sexuality is “suspect”. Off the record, this would be a very different story if I had guaranteed anonymity.

Off the record, the truth about women is we’re way tougher than most men would ever give us credit for. And the first unwritten rule about being a successful woman is never let ‘em see you sweat. So is there a glass ceiling? Hell no, no one would ever admit to that. But are there about 1,000 more social, cultural, and business factors that women need to consider than men when developing their strategy in how to handle each and every situation they encounter in this industry each day? Ah, there’s the rub.

One look through the sea of dark suits at any hotel investment conference is all it takes to see the lack of diversity. There are, in designer terms, punches of color, but mostly in the form of a few Indian power players. And there are very few women. The hotel ownership and development side of this business is a man’s world, that doesn’t seem to be even up for debate. Some women in the design arena actually suggest that works in their favor. What is up for debate (and a heated one at that) is the veritable minefield

of “negotiations” that female designers and architects have to make when dealing with issues of travel and family and the homogenous suits or dishdashas on the other side.

Over the past several months we’ve broached this topic with women of all walks of the industry: designers, architects, purchasers, executives in hotel corporations. Some young women with small firms of three to five people, and some, gender aside, arguably the most powerful names in hospitality design. Some we discussed with one on one, and many in a roundtable forum at our leadership summit. Here we let the women of our industry speak for themselves.

## The Female Advantage

“I think it is an advantage to be a female,” says Rebecca Jones, principal, RD Jones & Associates, Washington, DC. “Because primarily, the opposite side of the spectrum is all men and [design] is something that they are not totally involved in, so they have a respect for what we do.”

“I actually think the corporate world, and maybe men universally, like dealing with women,” says Sue Firestone, founder/chairman, sfa design, Santa Barbara, California. “I think that it gives them an opportunity to deal with women outside their households in a respectful way. Again maybe it’s not OK to say that or admit that, but I’ve heard it and I just know that it’s reality. If you’re a woman and you’re competent and you’re successful, there’s a mystique I think that makes you more intriguing, and I just think that has an advantage to self promotion and having a woman-owned business, I think there’s a caché to that.”

“I personally think I’ve never been in a situation where it’s been a disadvantage to be a woman,” says Margaret McMahon, managing director of the New York office of Wilson Associates. “In the Middle East

we're dealing with Saudis now and I think it works to our advantage to be women quite honestly. I think they sit up straight and they listen to us more believe it or not. Maybe there is a glass ceiling and I just don't care."

principal designer of her Santa Monica, California-based firm, Indidesign. "Just the fact that when you go into a room and the ratio is one woman to 10 men it says something. Probably that balance is changing and it's changing quickly but it's definitely something that cannot be denied," she says, noting a current project

“I think women have to curate their lives more carefully than men...”

### Design is Different

"It gets back to the basic starting point, which is that the design business has always and historically been an OK business for women to be in in the first place," says Jill Cole, managing principal, Cole Martinez Curtis and Associates, Marina del Rey, California. "So you take someone like Eileen [Slora] or Glenn [Wilson] and you say, OK, those are male dominated corporations but it's OK to be a woman in the design department. But the president of the company isn't a woman, and the chief engineer isn't a woman."

"In a larger company I still think that there is that stigma," says Amy Hulbert, now director of interior design at Best Western International, but at the time of this interview director of interior design, Latin America and the Caribbean for Hilton Worldwide. "And there's certainly more men being promoted within some organizations, and this isn't just us, it's a lot of hotel companies. I think in the interior design world it's definitely an advantage [to be a woman], but once you get into the realm of a larger corporation, especially a hotel corporation, I think [the glass ceiling] still exists."

"I've seen a lot of promotions happen within the company and it's generally men, it's just not women," says Eileen Slora, executive director interior design at Fairmont Hotels and Resorts. Even if you look at the industry outside the design arena, if you look at the [hotel] general managers, it's very few women. And the point that you may have an advantage being a woman [designer] working with [men as clients], there could be, but within the organization there definitely is a huge glass ceiling."

"I think it's naïve to say that the glass ceiling doesn't exist," says Italian architect Beatrice Girelli,

in Malaysia where the majority of the consultants, including structural engineers and MEPs are women-owned businesses.

"We have a mentorship program at our firm that we are really actively trying to promote the women in the firm," says Nancy Nodler, principal at Gensler. "So I think that is the case; I think that will be the case. We will see change."

### Global Scale

"By the time you're winning projects in an international arena you're dealing with a different kind of executive," says Anita Degen, principal at Seattle-based Degen & Degen architecture and interior design. "I don't do any work in the Middle East, but I do a lot of work in China and being a woman has never been an issue. And very often I'm the only woman in the room."

"India and China everything is, 'I respectfully request,' and you're real low key with that," says Slora. "My personality totally changes there."

"I think it's dangerous to stereotype. There are a lot of parts to the Middle East. Saudi Arabia is very different than the Emirates," says Firestone, noting a Saudi residential client in California with whom she will never meet in person due to his royalty. "But I find it very different in Abu Dhabi and Oman and Dubai. I think the men there and the sheiks that we deal with are extremely respectful toward women. I have no feelings like I have to hold back who I am."

"We were doing a project in Doha and we purposely didn't send the female project manager because we really wanted to talk turkey," says Trisha Wilson, president and CEO of Wilson Associates. "We explained to her why, and it is easier for someone like me to explain that to a woman. I didn't go either, but I

think if I was a male, even if I thought that would have the best outcome for the team, I'd probably not say it because of the way it would be taken."

### Carefully Curating

"I think women have to curate their lives more carefully than men, because there are pulls. Men don't get pregnant. So there are nine months and a few months afterward, but I just kept on working and I curated my time. I decided what time I wanted to spend with my children," says Clodagh, principal of her New York-based design firm. "We welcome kids at the studio here just as the same as we welcome dogs. Somebody comes in with a baby and wants to work for a while, no problem."

"You're always negotiating; whether you are negotiating childcare or negotiating just your life or negotiating your boundaries. I think it's a constant negotiation because what we all do is at a very intense level," says McMahon. "We all have to travel much further than we had to travel before."

who somehow do it."

"I think that's what begs the question of is there a glass ceiling? If there is, it's of your own making," says Degen. "If you're the kind of person like we are, there is no glass ceiling for you because you're willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done and to pursue what it is that you're after. The ones who have the glass ceilings are the ones sitting at their desks not promoting themselves, wondering why they're not being promoted. It's up to every individual to break out of it."

### Speak Up

"You have to be able to promote yourself," says Helen Jorgensen, vice president, design and procurement, Host Hotels & Resorts. "And it took me a long time to get that. You just think you're doing this great job, this great design, and people are going to recognize it. Whatever you're doing you have to be promoting it."

"In corporate America in our industry, the hotel industry, it's a male dominated industry, it's a tough

“Now if they look at me and say, ‘that bitch’ I don’t care because I know where I’m coming from...”

"If you think about the leaders in residential design, in Dallas here, they're mostly women. And that's different. I think that with hospitality what makes it more difficult is the travel," says Wilson, who is working internationally in pretty much every market, including 19 hotels in Mecca. "For me, I think it would be really hard to be a great mother and a great business leader and not feel guilty about neglecting one or the other."

"The reason I think there's not a glass ceiling in our neck of the woods is, not everybody wants to do this," says Dolly Ross, COO at Los Angeles-based Design Group Carl Ross. "When it gets to the real nuts and bolts of it, if we were to ask around any of our offices would you be willing to work Sunday, Saturday, Friday, are you willing to get up at 5 a.m. to do that conference call, are you willing to do the conference call in the middle of your kid's soccer game, and the answers would be no, no, no. So the few of us who've decided to somehow do this are the ones

industry, why we ever got into it in the first place is beyond me, but I've been in it practically my entire life and I love it," says Slora. "But it is a male dominated organization, and like Helen [Jorgensen] said, unless you promote yourself and unless you get out there and you make the meetings and you talk and you network with women in the industry and in your own organization and figure out how you can do this then you will sit at that desk. I created my position years ago and I keep pushing forward through it."

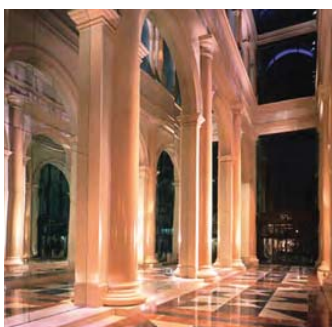
"Unless the women raise their voices to the same level as the men's voices they do not get heard," says Clodagh, noting a personal breakthrough at a Speak Up program about 16 years ago. "I really felt if I was pushing myself forward they were looking at me and thinking, 'that bitch'. Now I've pushed myself to the right level, and if they look at me and say, 'that bitch' I don't care because I know where I'm coming from, I know what I want to convey, and that is good design."





# women of influence

Pioneers, leaders, gamechangers, rising stars. Meet 65 women who have made the hospitality design industry what it is, continue to challenge it, and who will impact it for years to come.



**Sarah Tomerlin Lee**  
(1910-2001)

Principal  
Tom Lee, Ltd.  
New York

A former writer, editor, and advertising executive, Sarah Tomerlin Lee assumed responsibility for her husband's design firm upon his death in 1971. Without any specific design experience, she created many classic hotels, including the Helmsley Palace in New York, the Bellevue in Philadelphia, and the Willard Hotel in Washington, DC, all known for their quiet grace, impeccable taste, and reverence for history. (Parker Meridien shown.)

According to Todd-Avery Lenahan of ABA Design Studio, "Sarah consistently eschewed 'trend' and instead subscribed to prevailing 'good taste,' which in today's parlance may fall short of what many designers in our industry hope for as a compliment, but that to me is one of the most extraordinary and universally complimentary sentiments to express about a designer. I'll always hope for 'good taste' as a compliment that endures and overshadows 'hip design' with an expiration date."



**Dorothy Draper (1889-1969)**

Founder  
Dorothy Draper and Company  
New York

Dorothy Draper combined influential residential design with iconic hospitality projects, including the Greenbrier, the cafeteria at the MoMA, the Grand Hotel at Mackinaw Island, as well as a line of fabrics for Schumacher. Bold design and audacious use of color became her trademark. Her famous motto: "If it looks right, it is right." (Mark Hopkins Hotel shown.)

According to Carlton Varney, her heir apparent and biographer, "Draper revolutionized the concept of design by breaking away from historical room styles. She was a modern, one of the first decorators of the breed, and a pioneer. She invented 'modern baroque,' a style with particular application to large public spaces and modern architecture."



**Dorrit St. John**

Consultant  
Los Angeles

Vienna-born Dorrit St. John worked as a retail buyer, a manufacturer of architectural special effects, and a license contractor before joining Purchase Service Limited (PSL) in 1976, becoming president and partner three years later. She oversaw PSL offices in Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Singapore, and London before her semi-retirement in 1994. A co-founder of NEWH (which now stands for the Hospitality Industry Network), she was the first person named as NEWH's Woman of the Year in 1990.

Shelia Lohmiller, NEWH executive director, calls St. John "The purchasing maven of the hospitality industry." According to Lohmiller, NEWH was St. John's idea: "And what an idea! A group of women who wanted to help and support one another, to break the glass ceiling. Who would have thought that idea would have turned into an international association that links all areas of our industry. Kudos to you, Dorrit!"



**Shelia Lohmiller**

Executive Director  
NEWH Inc.  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Shelia Lohmiller is co-founder (with Dorrit St. John and Susan Spalding) of NEWH in 1984 and has been executive director since 1993. NEWH's remarkable growth in the past three decades has mirrored that of the hospitality industry. The organization now boasts 19 chapters in the U.S., Canada, and London, with three more currently in the works. Under her leadership, its savvy in creating networking opportunities, education, and philanthropy has made it a vital component of hospitality.

According to Anita Degen, a member of the NEWH executive committee, "Shelia has been the force and the vision, the heart and the soul, behind NEWH Inc. since its inception. She has never put herself at the center of that vision. For her, it has always been about strengthening the industry and helping those in need of a boost. If our industry has a den mother, it is Shelia."



## Women of Influence



### Anouska Hempel

Founder  
Anouska Hempel Design  
London

Credited with launching design trends on either end of the spectrum—London's first over-the-top eclectic boutique hotel (Blakes London in '86, shown) and the city's first minimalist hotel (the Hempel in '96)—Anouska Hempel could have stopped her career years ago and still have made this list. But according to the hotelier/designer, some of her most visionary work is yet to come: Warapuru, a resort in Brazil's Bahia rain forest is due to open early next year, as well as new landmark hotels in Beirut, Lisbon, and London.

"Anouska—and specifically the Hempel—allowed me to see the joining of minimalism with the everyday and comfort—no longer did minimalism need to imply cold or hard to use," says designer Devon Smith.



### Andrée Putman

Founder  
Agence Andrée Putman  
Paris

"The perfect balance between discipline and revolt" is how Putman describes good design, and her career has been an exemplar of that philosophy. Widely credited with creating the first boutique hotel with Ian Schrager, Putman's iconic style

has graced hotels, restaurants, and a host of classic products.

Mari Balestrazzi, senior vice president of design, Morgans Hotel Group, feels that Putman "is responsible for some of the most influential design trends of the 20th century. Her work represents a seamless blend of a curator and the deviousness of a provocateur. Her seminal project (and first commission), Morgans (shown), was the birth of a new hotel typology that integrated sophisticated design with the most coveted destination nightlife venues of their time."



### Glenn Wilson

Vice President of Interior Design  
Marriott International  
Bethesda, Maryland

Glenn Wilson has had a major impact on Marriott: she rose up through the ranks, starting as a junior designer, moving up to director of interior design for the U.S. and then the international team, and then became vice president of interior design for Ritz-Carlton. In 2005, she rejoined Marriott International, where she oversees and guides eight brands including Marriott and the newly formed Autograph. Most recently, she has spearheaded a global design strategy for JW Marriott, which has 20 hotels opening in the next 20 months. (The HBA-designed JW Marriott Shenzhen shown.)

"Glenn's passion for her work and vast knowledge of the industry make her one of the most valuable design leaders in the business," says Marriott's president of international lodging, Ed Fuller. "Her vision is woven throughout Marriott's portfolio outside of the U.S., where her creative and strategic approach

have been embraced by our owners and partners around the world."



### Michele Phillips

Vice President of Interior Design  
Ritz-Carlton  
Bethesda, Maryland

After cutting her teeth at WATG and Disney, Michele Phillips joined Ritz-Carlton in 2006. Focusing on brand initiatives and development, she has been a force in Ritz-Carlton's aggressive contemporizing renovation and expansion plan. She just finished the Ritz-Carlton, Los Angeles at LA Live (shown), and has projects in Toronto, Dubai, and Puerto Rico on the boards.

"Michelle has been such an asset to Ritz-Carlton during its expansion phase, because she understood long ago that consistency in design appearance was no longer an asset for the company," says Lisa Poppen, corporate senior director, marketing, Ritz-Carlton. "The need to create hotels which surprised and delighted our guests helped to dispel any thoughts that we took a cookie cutter approach. Michelle will continue to be a major force in the field because she has the ability to forecast trends before they become trends, yet design hotels whose look and feel are not 'trendy,' but will pass the test of time."

### Eileen Slora

Executive Director, Interior Design  
Fairmont Hotels and Resorts  
San Francisco

With more than 23 years of experience in hospitality design, Eileen Slora manages the design process for Fairmont hotels and resorts throughout the world

(Fairmont Savoy shown). Not only is she responsible for creating and implementing the FF&E brand design standards for all properties, but she also continues to push the envelope, ensuring the brand works with the most proven designers in the industry.



Says Margaret McMahon, managing director, Wilson Associates in New York, "Eileen is a rare talent. She holds a passion for each intricate project, which includes much more than the design concept itself. She truly is a visionary and the gatekeeper of the design standards of Fairmont. We have worked together for many years and she has always been professional, graceful under fire, and a tireless advocate for design firms in our industry, as well as the value we bring to each project."



### Dana Kalczak

Vice President, Design  
Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts  
Toronto

After opening theater complexes as vice president of design and construction at Cineplex Odeon Corporation, Dana Kalczak joined Four Seasons with a plan to help redefine and redesign one of the largest hotel brands. With too many openings to list in her more than a decade of helping the industry re-think luxury, her recent projects include the brand's forthcoming New York Hotel at World Trade Center and the





### Eva Ziegler

Global Brand Leader  
W Hotels Worldwide and Le Meridien  
New York

In 2005 Vienna-born Eva Ziegler brought her branding experience from Le Rendez-Vous Toyota and other Fortune 500 companies like Coca-Cola and Saatchi & Saatchi to Starwood Hotels & Resorts. As global brand leader of Le Meridien, she helped integrate the new brand into Starwood's portfolio, repositioning it as cultural hub. Her success led to adding W Hotels to her responsibilities in 2008. She has helped turn the brand into a global powerhouse, set to double its footprint by next year with openings in coveted locations such as Paris, Milan, Dubai, Shanghai, and Vieques (shown). Her combined portfolio consists of more than 130 hotels and resorts in more than 50 countries, and growing.

"Eva Ziegler is an excellent marketer and brand builder, invaluable in the competitive hospitality industry," says Phil McAveety, executive vice president and chief brand officer, Starwood Hotels & Resorts. "Her passion for branding mixed with her global work experience has helped to not only transform W Hotels from a New York City phenomenon into a global powerhouse, but also to reshape Le Meridien into an international contemporary lifestyle brand. She is creative, energetic, and has a clear vision for both brands."





## Women of Influence

award-winning property in Bora Bora (shown).

"Throughout Dana's 12 years with Four Seasons, she has played a vital role in developing the design ethos that continues to distinguish our hotels," says Kathleen Taylor, president and COO of Four Seasons (CEO as of August 1st). "Her masterful ability to elegantly evoke the flavor of a property's destination in a refined setting has made her instrumental to our growth and success."



### Liselotte (Lisa) Anke

Senior Vice President, Architecture and Design – North American, Canada, Caribbean  
Hyatt Hotels Corporation  
Chicago

With a career spanning 24 years, 15 countries, and a total construction value exceeding \$1.6 billion, Lisa Anke's resume literally reads like a novel. She founded her San Francisco-based firm, ANKE design Corporation, in 1996, and for the past four years she's been with LXR Luxury Resorts & Hotels working on projects such as the London West Hollywood and developing the brand's design guidelines and standards. Most recently, Anke landed in her new role heading up design at Hyatt. (Grand Hyatt San Francisco shown.)

"With her eye for details and thorough understanding and management of budgets—she provides a steady and outstanding influence on the design and construction on all her work," says Steve Harbin, senior vice president, design and construction, LXR. "Lisa brings a dimension to our industry that is not just highly professional but also includes a rare and valuable attribute—a sincere concern

for the guest experiences. This concern is incorporated in her designs and construction, making her a leader in her field."



### Mari Balestrazzi

Senior Vice President of Design  
Morgans Hotel Group  
New York

After stints as studio director for Aero Studios Limited working on such projects as the 60 Thompson Hotel, and as director of design for the St. Regis brand, Mari Balestrazzi brought her impeccable taste and knack for custom, site-specific spaces to the venerable Morgans Hotel Group as senior vice president of design in 2006. She has since led design teams on the renovations of iconic properties such as Morgans, the Royalton, and the Mondrian Los Angeles, as well as creating the company's newest, Mondrian Miami and the Ames in Boston. Still to come: Mondrian Soho (shown).

"Having a team crafted and driven by Mari Balestrazzi is a very significant asset to Morgans Hotel Group," says Marc Gordon, president of Morgans Hotel Group. "She is genuinely respected and accomplished within our industry. Mari is a leader with true passion and an inspiring vision. She is authentic with tireless curiosity and thoughtfulness."

### Eva Malmström Shivdasani

Creative Director  
Six Senses  
Bangkok

From being a top fashion model in the '70s and '80s, and launching successful clothing company in Paris, L'Eva, Eva Malmström Shivdasani has put her fashionable

sense on Six Senses, overseeing the design process for each of the company's unique resorts and spas. (Porto Elounda shown.) In just 15 years, she has worked to build a brand (now nearly 30 resorts and more than 40 spas) pioneering luxurious design with a minimal footprint.



"As a Swedish native, Eva always values and has passion for the simplicity and environmentally friendly concept," says Supicha Puthapinyo, manager of Six Senses' creative department. "She is always constantly trying to do everything a little better, and a little simpler. Her passion and belief has created our philosophy, 'SLOWLIFE' (sustainable, local, organic, wholesome, learning, inspiring, fun, and experience), which has massively influenced the business."



### Kelly Wearstler

Founder  
kwid  
Los Angeles

Designer Kelly Wearstler has put her signature style—a twist on mid century modernism with a 1930s glam—on everything from residences and products to TV shows and books. Her hospitality work is best admired in the hotels she has done for the Viceroy Hotel Group (formerly Kor), run by her husband Brad Korzen, such as the Viceroy properties and the redo of the Tides in Miami Beach (shown), and the Avalon and

Maison 140, both in Beverly Hills.

"Before Kelly, all the design-y boutique hotels were quite masculine and austere—think Philippe Starck," says Jonathan Adler, her former co-judge on Bravo's *Top Design*. "Kelly brought a feminine edge and a luxurious sense of glamour to the boutique hotel." Adds architect Zach Adams, "Her interiors offer exactly what the industry seeks to provide: a sense of surprise, excitement, fantasy, and in some cases, wonder. She expertly mixes colors, patterns, textures, shapes, and scales, to create interior environments which are as sublime as they are beautiful."



### Anda Andrei

Partner and Director of Design and Architecture  
Ian Schrager Company  
New York

For the past 25 years, Anda Andrei has been Ian Schrager's right-hand woman, playing an integral part in the design and architecture of all of his properties—from his Morgans Hotel Group portfolio (starting with the Royalton) to the redesign of the Gramercy Park Hotel (shown). Currently she's concentrating on the Edition brand, a partnership between Schrager and Marriott, and the Ambassador East hotel opening next year in Chicago.

"With all the incredibly smart, creative, and talented people I've had the good fortune to work with, Anda is the smartest, most talented, and most creative; I trust her judgment more than anyone in the world," says Schrager. "Before Anda, hotel design was institutional, uniform, and monotonously similar. Now her work has opened up a whole new world, changed



**Grace Leo**

President  
G.L.A. Hotels  
Paris

After honing her skills at InterContinental, Sheraton, and Warwick International, where she was named vice president by age 26, Grace Leo struck out on her own to found G.L.A. Hotels in 1985. Since then, the company has developed, designed, repositioned, managed, and marketed (sometimes all at the same time) a diverse group of luxury properties, each with their own look. G.L.A.'s portfolio includes the bonafide hip Clarence in Dublin, a fistful of French Caribbean resorts, and a quintet of Parisian properties, including the newest, Hotel Beauchamps (shown), which opened in April.

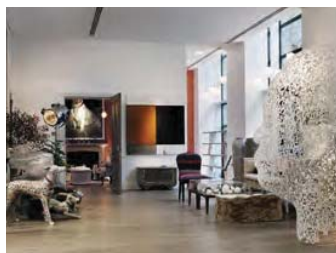
"She's incredibly generous and is rewarded by seeing her employees do well," says Pippa Ona Williamson, now villa services manager for the private island of Mustique, after a 15-year career with G.L.A. that started behind the reception desk of the Hotel Montalembert and ended with her serving as GM at the Cotton House Resort. "There's a definite philosophy behind the way she does things, and that inspires loyalty."





## Women of Influence

the industry forever, exposed the infinite possibilities of design, the satisfaction of daring to be different, and shown the way to a new generation. Hotels, hotel design, and the world will be better for it."



### Kit Kemp

Design Director  
Firmdale Hotels  
London

Kit Kemp and her husband Tim have been reinventing the look of boutique hotels since 1985 by turning spaces into playful and colorful environments. As the co-owner of Firmdale Hotels, Kemp has infused her innovative artistic style in seven luxury boutique properties. To broaden the company's UK-focused scope, they made their U.S. debut by turning an eight-story parking lot in New York into the Crosby Street Hotel (shown).

"Kit's interiors are a prime example of an artist/designer not following the norms of how 'it is done,'" explains Paul Taylor, president, Stonehill & Taylor Architects, PC, who was responsible for the Crosby's architecture. "She is outside the industry and decorates by her own internal compass. [She] makes every room different, shops personally in India and Africa, commissions significant artwork, uses Zegna fabrics on the walls—why not! If you follow the same rules you end up in the same place. She has different rules."

### Kay Lang

President & CEO  
Kay Lang + Associates  
Los Angeles

For more than 30 years, Kay Lang's specialty has been 4-

and 5-Star hospitality spaces that evoke a sense of place. Her designs can be found in boutique destination resorts to full-service properties, for an impressive client list that includes Four Seasons, Hyatt, Le Meridien, Fairmont, and Disney. Most recently she designed the residences at the Mandarin Oriental at CityCenter in Las Vegas (shown) as consultant to AAI Inc., Nevada, and the Sheraton Tucson Hotel & Convention Center, a 26-story tower connected to the convention center's new expansion.



"Kay designs from the heart with a passion that exudes elegance, playfulness, warmth, and vitality. You just can't help but feel good in one of her spaces," attests Sven Van Assche, senior vice president design and architecture, MGM Resorts International.



### Sue Firestone

Founder/Chairman  
sfa design  
Santa Barbara, California

Sue Firestone has brought her classic, residentially inspired designs to 5- and 6-Star hotels and resorts for 30 years. Before founding sfa in 1996, she spent two decades directing Los Angeles interior design firm Design 1, making it the sixth largest design company in the U.S. Now with sfa, she has created an international

profile of luxury hotel brands, including Four Seasons, Fairmont, Waldorf=Astoria, Trump, Indigo, Hilton, Marriott, and Disney. (Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills shown.)

"Sue brings to the table her worldly design taste," says designer Wing Chao, who worked with Firestone while he was at Disney. "She is versatile and multi-talented and her designs carry a special 'soft touch' that makes her creations outstanding. She is sensitive to each design challenge and approaches the process with a charming and inspirational style. She also possesses impressive marketing and business skills."



### Alexandra Champalimaud

Founder and Principal  
Champalimaud  
New York City

Alexandra Champalimaud founded her eponymous firm nearly three decades ago in Montreal, moving its headquarters to New York in 1994. Over the years she has made a specialty of luxury hotels, restaurants, and spas, including the Algonquin and Carlyle in New York, Quebec City's Chateau Frontenac, London's Berkeley and Dorchester, the St. Regis Beijing, and the Fairmont San Francisco (shown), among others.

"As a citizen of the world," says Denise Korn, principal/owner, Korn Design, "Alexandra brings an inspired global perspective to her work. Her environments touch people in emotional ways. Often tapping into subtle historic references, playful details, emotive palettes and textures, these places warm you up or let you rest in honest and personal comfort."



### Julia Monk

Founding Partner/Managing Partner  
BBG-BBGM  
New York

BBG (Brennan Beer & Gorman, founded in 1987) became BBGM three years later with the arrival of Julia Monk; the firm now has offices in four cities, including Shanghai. Monk's portfolio includes the St. Regis and the W Union Square in New York; the Peninsula Hong Kong; Vdara at CityCenter for MGM Mirage in Las Vegas (shown); and the InterContinental Boston.

"Julie is one of a rare breed that truly understand what makes a hotel project successful," says Mark Boekenheide, senior vice president, hotel development, Related. "She has the unique ability to blend the operational and functional needs of the client with the creation of an exceptional experience for the guest. Her body of work exhibits a wide diversity of style and a true understanding of luxury, lifestyle, and design, all wrapped up in a timeless quality."



### Connie Puar

Principal/Director  
HBA  
Singapore

Connie Puar is an HBA lifer. From an intern some 19 years ago, the native Singaporean has worked her way up through the ranks. Her level of detailed design





#### Clodagh

Founder and Principal  
Clodagh Design  
New York

The creation of her design studio 25 years ago has resulted in a wide range of projects: hospitality (the W Fort Lauderdale; Miraval Hotel & Spa in Tucson, Arizona (shown); Sasanqua Spa in Kiawah Island, South Carolina) and furniture and products (Ann Sacks, Designtex, Dennis Miller, Tufenkian). The Irish-born Clodagh, long a proud New Yorker, has for decades been recognized for her iconic signature style. Drawing on her soulful inner spirit and her international travels, she generously gathers influences from myriad sources to create her much-lauded work.

Says D.B. Kim, associate principal of Pierre-Yves Rochon Design, "Her sensitive nature has defined her signature aesthetics: comfortable, universal, and timeless. Her palette is earthy and organic, concepts are sustainable, and designs are collages of textures, as if in a garden of Clodagh's world."

A champion of environmental sensitivity well before the current boom, Clodagh's ideals manifest themselves in enriching human resources as well. Through Clodagh Cares, she oversees the support of schools—"to bring the power of education to children in the neediest and most remote places on earth." Her fundraising efforts (often held as part of riotous, colorful parties in her studio) have resulted in hope and resources for children in Ecuador, Cameroon, and Kenya.



## Women of Influence

has led her to have a major hand in such projects as the award-winning Four Seasons Resort Seychelles, the JW Marriott Beijing, the Regent Kuala Lumpur, and the Westin Golden Bund Shanghai. She is now working on the Waldorf Astoria Shanghai (shown), the brand's first Asian property, among others.

"I've had the opportunity to work with Connie on several Four Seasons Hotels in Asia," says Neil Jacobs, president, global hotel operations, Starwood Capital Group. "She is a consummate professional and unlike many, can work smoothly and with purpose in all design vernaculars and produce innovative, market-driven design that excites and delights. Connie leads her teams with precision, speed, and effectiveness and instills a perfect balance of aesthetic, budget, and schedule awareness."



### Andi Pepper

Principal  
Andi Pepper Interior Design  
New York

Since 1982, Andi Pepper, along with her husband and business partner Stephen B. Jacobs, has been creating contemporary restaurant and hotel interiors. Her designs can be found at noteworthy New York properties like the Hotel Giraffe, Library Hotel, and the Mansfield. She is perhaps best well known for her work on the sleek Gansevoort properties—New York's original Meatpacking District location and the soon-to-open property on Park Avenue (shown), as well as the Gansevoort Miami—where she helped redefine hotel rooftops as

destinations.

Says Michael Achenbaum, president of Gansevoort Hotel Group, "Andi has an innate ability to balance form and function. Her guestrooms are, in our opinion, the most comfortable and aesthetically pleasing in the industry. She never forgets who her customer is, and truly designs with the hotel guest in mind."



### Deborah Lloyd Forrest

Principal  
ForrestPerkins  
Dallas

With three decades dedicated to the design industry and a passion for the restoration and renovation of luxury hotels, Deborah Lloyd Forrest has built an extensive portfolio. Forrest has had two successful firms: first, her own, which she founded in 1986, and ForrestPerkins, a firm she started with longtime collaborator Stephen Perkins 12 years ago. Her mark is long-lasting, as some of her most notable projects completed at the very beginning of her career such as the Eola Hotel in Natchez, Mississippi, are still highly regarded today. (The Jefferson in Washington, DC, shown.)

"Deborah and I designed our first hotel 30 years ago," explains Perkins. "Little did I appreciate in that youthful time what her passion for design would produce! In that first hotel, one can see the germ of talent that traces full-grown to truly original and creative dimension."

### Cheryl Rowley

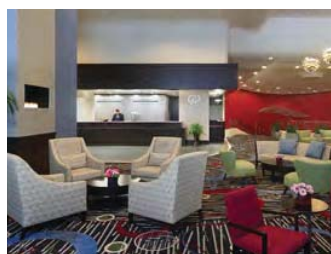
Principal  
Cheryl Rowley Design  
Beverly Hills, California

A pioneer in boutique hotel design, Rowley helped define the

Monaco and Palomar brands for Kimpton Hotels designing a total of 15 hotels for the brand, as well as the new Epic in Miami (shown). This year, she also lent her style to the Wit Hotel, which is helping to revitalize Chicago's North Loop. At the same time, her 24-year-old company's client list includes Four Seasons, St. Regis, Rosewood, Renaissance, Ritz-Carlton, and Mandarin Oriental. Current projects include a 5-Star boutique hotel outside of Hangzhou, China, and a new Four Seasons Hotel in a renovated old palace in St. Petersburg, Russia.



"We can always count on her to identify a central guiding idea or story that evokes a true sense of place and belonging," says David Sussman, Kimpton's senior vice president of hotel development and design. "Cheryl is a major part of why our guests feel both comfortable and stylish while traveling."



### Jill Cole

Managing Principal  
Cole Martinez Curtis and Associates  
Marina Del Rey, California

Jill Cole's devotion to hotel, resort, club, and spa design over the past 43 years speaks to her success. Her rich background in history, language, and design translates through her work—everything from the Lodge at Sea Island Golf Club in Georgia to the Arizona

Biltmore. Cole, also an author, has won numerous awards and has taught at UCLA. (Doubletree Chicago City Centre shown.)

"Jill is a world-class leader in the hospitality design industry," says Doris Parker-Grossman, president, CHIC Advisors. "She is well respected by her peers, brands, and owners for being creative and understanding the importance of timing and designing to meet a budget. She has made major contributions to the successes of some of the best-known projects in the U.S. and international markets."



### Pamela Babey

Co-Founder/Senior Principal  
BAMO  
San Francisco

With David Mouton, Gerry Jue, and Michael Booth, Pamela Babey founded BAMO in 1991 after previous employment at Skidmore Owings & Merrill and the Pfister Partnership. In the past two decades, the firm has been the award-winning designer of a host of luxury properties, including the Four Seasons Resort Bora Bora, Four Seasons Hotel Boston, Peninsula Chicago, and Rosewood Sand Hill (shown).

According to Richard Beard, president and CEO of BAR Architects, "It has been my pleasure to know and frequently work with Pamela [and the BAMO team]. The talent is as personally enriching as it is refreshing. And it sure looks great!" Adds Four Seasons' Dana Kalczak, "[For Four Seasons Bora Bora], she immersed herself in Tahitian culture and scoured the islands for inspiration. The result is fresh and innovative design with a liberal sprinkling of the unexpected."





### Zaha Hadid

Founding Partner  
Zaha Hadid Architects  
London

With organic architectural silhouettes that seem to be beamed from a more advanced universe, Zaha Hadid can only be described as a visionary. Despite her slender hospitality credentials (such as a floor at the Hotel Puerta America in Madrid), she stands as an inspiration to many industry designers. During her 30-year career, she has been honored with the Pritzker Architecture Prize, and among her iconic projects are New York's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the MAXXI: National Museum of XXI Century Arts in Rome (shown).

"Zaha's work is pure artistry, both beautiful and inspiring," says Kay Lang, president and CEO, Kay Lang + Associates. "I respect the fact she is a true trailblazer and has achieved so much in a predominantly male profession. I love her personal design vision and the fact she is not afraid to express herself. She once said: 'that's the problem with architects, they are all terribly serious about themselves, they can't have a good time and act frivolously and be human beings.' To me she is a visionary because her work communicates sensuality in a rigid world. Her architecture and custom designed furnishings exemplify her sense of freedom and expression. I admire her gift of fierce individuality coupled with her bold talent and artistic signature style."



**Janice Feldman**

President and CEO  
JANUS et Cie  
Los Angeles

The look of pretty much every poolside, beachside, resort and/or garden oasis can be traced back to Janice Feldman. She started JANUS et Cie 32 years ago in the Pacific Design Center, originally as a representative firm for established furniture and textile manufacturers. Since then she's opened 12 showrooms, launched too many award-winning indoor and outdoor collections to name (Trenza lounge chair shown), not to mention accessories and textiles, and this year, she released a book. Feldman supports the Israel Cancer Research Fund where she was honored as Woman of Action in 2001, is co-founder of two organizations, Architects/Designers/Planners for Social Responsibility and Executive Women in Hospitality, and just last month, she announced the company's certification as a Women's Business Enterprise by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).

"Janice is a visionary designer and creator," says designer Wing Chao. "Her products and designs stand for beauty and style. Janice is widely admired and respected for her extraordinary taste. She has been leading the way for innovative designs and certainly has shaped the creative direction for the hospitality industry."







### Ave Bradley and Niki Leondakis

Vice President of Design/COO  
Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants  
San Francisco

From Pottery Barn to overseeing the design of more than 20 W Hotels and launching her own design business with clients like Hyatt and Trump, Ave Bradley has definitely made her mark on the design industry. She continues to do so, now with Kimpton since last year, putting her touch on everything from photo shoots to guestroom styling. (The Muse in New York shown.)

Since 1993, Niki Leondakis has been responsible in helping to grow and develop Kimpton from the inside out (including the Women InTouch program), first on the restaurant side, then becoming executive vice president, hotels and restaurants in 2001, and COO in 2003. Besides being known for her charity work, she has received numerous accolades including being named one of the 100 Most Influential Women by the *San Francisco Business Times* every year from 2002 to 2009.

“Kimpton is fortunate to have influential female leaders like Niki and Ave,” says Michael Depatie, CEO of Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants. “Niki has an extraordinary ability to connect with people, from guests she meets on the road to each and every one of our employees. She understands that every interaction matters and thoughtful care is what inspires and motivates everyone around her. Ave’s highly stylized and comforting design aesthetic exemplifies our goal of creating a ‘home away from home’ for our guests, and is a major reason why such a large number of female travelers choose to stay with us. Each of these women brings a unique set of skills and characteristics to the table.”





## Women of Influence



### Kimberley Miller

Founder and Principal  
Design Duncan Miller Ullmann  
Dallas

Kimberley Miller joined forces professionally and personally with Duncan Turner to form Design Duncan Miller Ullmann in 1986. Together, they have opened offices in Shanghai and Hong Kong, created stylish interiors with a bit of flair for boutique hotels like Mosaic in Beverly Hills and Hotel ZaZa in Dallas and Houston, worked with luxury brands like Mandarin, Ritz Carlton, and St. Regis, and designed for celebrity chefs such as Stephen Pules and Todd English. Miller has received multiple awards including the International Achievement Award for Mid-Size Businesses in 2009. (Ritz-Carlton Abaco, Bahamas, shown.)

"I've known Kimberley for nine years," says Benji Homsey, president, Z Resorts Management and Development, who worked with her on the Hotel Zazas. "It's wonderful to watch her work. It's one thing to spec furniture for a room, it's another to see Kimberley put the finishing touches on everything. It all comes together when she walks in. She's an amazing talent with a unique eye."

### Mary-Jean Eastman

Principal  
Perkins Eastman  
New York

Mary-Jean Eastman, whose career spans more than 30 years, is a founding partner of Perkins Eastman and the managing principal of its New York office. She plays a key role in the overall design direction of the firm, putting particular emphasis on

the development of healthcare design, interior architecture, and public buildings that enhance the human experience. (Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center shown.)



"Mary-Jean Eastman has developed a design philosophy that marries a hospitality approach with state-of-the-art medical planning—creating supportive patient-focused environments," attests partner Bradford Perkins, principal and executive director of Perkins Eastman. "Mary-Jean has been at the forefront of understanding the convergence of hospitality aesthetics and amenities with forward-thinking medical spaces."



### Barbara Barry

Founder and President  
Barbara Barry Incorporated  
Los Angeles

Residential designer Barbara Barry has not only influenced hospitality design for two decades with her classic and elegant style, but she was one of the first crossovers, designing the Savoy Grill at the Savoy; the Boxwood Café at the Berkeley Hotel in London; and Michael Mina restaurant and Onyx Lounge at the St. Francis in San Francisco, among others. Yet lately Barry is as well known for her product design for manufacturers like Boyd Lighting and McGuire Furniture Company. (The Fretwork Lounge Chair by Barry

for McGuire shown.)

"Barbara has an aesthetic that's pitch-perfect for our times," says Jason Phillips, president of McGuire Furniture Company. "Her designs embody an elegance and a simplicity that is in tune with how we live. Her forms are quintessentially American—incorporating ideas and inspiration across cultures and centuries. It's been a delight to collaborate over the years with a designer whose vision is so clear, yet continually evolving."



### India Mahdavi

Principal/Founder  
imh  
Paris

Known for her fluid spaces that are a mix of masculine and feminine elements, Christian Liagre-alum India Mahdavi has made a name for herself across many disciplines. Since starting her studio 11 years ago, she has designed multiple hospitality spaces such as the Hélène Darroze restaurant at the Connaught Hotel in London, the Townhouse hotel in South Beach, and Condesa df hotel in Mexico City; participated in multiple exhibitions; and designed numerous products, from sofas to lamps, including her own line of furniture. (Bishop's Family shown, available exclusively through Ralph Pucci International.)

"India first immerses herself into the local culture and then delves into the local intricate ways," says Rafael Micha, managing partner, Grupo Habita. "Her designs are always in sync with the surroundings and never feel out of place. In Mexico City, she started the craze for 'vintage' furniture by selecting a few pieces for Condesa df. India Mahdavi turned a corner in Mexico City into a Parisian Condesa df."



### Liz Diller

Principal  
Diller Scofidio + Renfro  
New York

Throughout her long career, Poland-born Liz Diller has created spaces that inspire. Recognized for the breakthrough design of New York restaurant Brasserie in the Seagram's Building, Diller went on to create culturally significant works spanning the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall in Manhattan, and New York's urban masterpiece, the High Line (shown), which recently received an AIA New York design award. She continues to pass on her wisdom as an architecture teacher at Princeton University.

"Her design influence starts with empathy—she knows how people use space, and more importantly, how they enjoy space," notes Rick Bell, executive director of AIA New York/Center for Architecture. "The spaces she creates are all about the celebration of the here, the now, the ephemeral, and the places that give delight. For New Yorkers living in too-small apartments, her visions are grand, public, and welcoming."

### Laurinda Spear

Principal  
Arquitectonica  
Miami

A founding principal of Arquitectonica, architect Laurinda Spear's sleek designs for Ritz-Carlton, Melco Crown Entertainment, Canyon Ranch, Grand Hyatt, Hilton, InterContinental, Le Meridien, and Four Seasons have received more than 100 awards. She has expanded the firm through the





**Susan Harmsworth**

Founder and CEO  
ESPA International  
Farnham, Surrey, UK

Susan Harmsworth knows spas. Before forming ESPA in 1993, she wrote for *British Vogue*, launched Sassoon in North America with her husband, opened an über successful spa in Toronto, worked at spa retreat Grayshott Hall, trained therapists for Coiffeur Transocean, and created a spa for Turnberry Resort. Now, with ESPA, which conceptualizes, designs, and manages spas in luxury independent and branded (Ritz-Carlton, Peninsula) hotels, her portfolio includes 150 spas spanning 55 countries, each with a dramatic interior by designers from HBA to Bill Bensley. Notable openings include Phulay Bay, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, and the Leela Palace in Udaipur, and more are planned for a Leela in Chennai and New Delhi, Resorts World at Sentosa in Singapore, and the Edition in Istanbul. (ESPA Riga shown.)

"I've worked closely with Susan on seven spas, and have always been incredibly impressed by her passion for wellness, customer service, and her obsessive attention to detail, self-evident in every aspect of her spas, products, and teams," says Peter Borer, Peninsula Hotel's COO. "With more than 30 years experience of all parts of the spa industry, including concept, design, operations, spa treatments, and products, she is the spa guru—incredibly knowledgeable and passionate, she embodies the epitome of what the spa experience is, or should be, all about."





## Women of Influence

launch of ArquitectonicaInteriors, an interior design practice; Laurinda Spear Products, offering more than 150 design products; and ArquitectonicaGEO, a landscape architecture practice focusing on environmental land planning and design. (Tempo Miami Hotel shown.)



"Laurinda has given the community intellectual, romantic, and graceful designs throughout her career," says her sister, New York-based architect Alison Spear. "Her new found interest in landscape architecture now brings full scope to the projects by melding buildings with their landscapes. In my mind, Laurinda's most salient design talent is her sensitivity to her community and her sense of community service served through the profession."



### Ilse Crawford

Founder  
Studio Ilse  
London

Ilse Crawford's 20-year career has touched almost every facet of the international design world. She started the department of man and well being at design academy Eindhoven; was founding editor of *Elle Decoration*; introduced Swarovski to a new market as concept creator of Swarovski Crystal Palace; raised the bar on branding and concept

development for the likes of the Soho House Group (Soho House New York shown); dabbled in product design (lighting, seating, and champagne glasses); and made inspiring designs for hotels like the Grand Hotel Stockholm and Kranzbach Spa Hotel.

"Ilse has built an impressive portfolio of clients and her thought-provoking interior designs have earned her the highest recognition and praise," says the Grand Hotel's Filip Odelius. "Since opening Matsalen and Matbaren [restaurants], the Grand Hotel has received international recognition. There is no doubt that this is augmented by the beautiful and dramatic interiors created by Ilse."



### Denise Korn

Principal and Owner  
Korn Design  
Boston

Since 1992, Denise Korn and her namesake brand design and strategy firm have been helping prestigious clients like Daniel Boulud, LXR, Sage Restaurant Group, and Ritz-Carlton create complete experiences through brand strategy, signage, graphics, print and marketing materials, and packaging. And people are taking notice: last year, she took home a James Beard Award for Outstanding Graphics for the Corner Office in Denver, and this year she received another nomination for Mercat a la Planxa in Chicago. But Korn's reach goes beyond branding: she founded Youth Design, a summer mentorship program that links inner city high school students with paid design internships.

(Graphics for DBGB in New York shown.)

"She is a force of nature," says David Ashen, principal, d-ash design. "Denise is not shy and never is hesitant to express her point of view and her point of view is usually formed from her rich experience in hospitality and her high level of creativity. She doesn't have a huge ego, and therefore, is a great creative collaborator. I find that her input enriches our work and that I get a lot of inspiration from her work."



### Celeste Fierro

Senior Vice President of Operations  
The One Group  
New York

After making her mark as one of the preeminent event planners in New York, Celeste Fierro partnered with Erica Cohen to open restaurant and lounge One Little West 12th in 2004 in the Meatpacking District. (It's new incarnation, the Collective, shown.) Since then, she has helped turn one venue into the One Group, a nightlife powerhouse operating or partnering with 20 venues, with more concepts in the works in Las Vegas, Atlanta, and Chicago.

"Celeste is one of the finest operators in the business," says Michael Achenbaum, president of the Gansevoort Hotel Group. "Her understanding of the daily operations issues combined with her marketing and design sense are a rare combination. Generally you don't have talents in three areas. Her skills in combination with the One Group's infrastructure leaves her in a position to influence the restaurant and nightlife industry for years to come."



### Elizabeth Blau

Founder & CEO  
Blau & Associates  
Las Vegas

Elizabeth Blau has helped establish Las Vegas as one of the country's top gastronomic destinations through the sound expertise she provides at Blau & Associates, the strategic restaurant planning and development company she founded in 2002. Blau first launched her restaurant career working with Sirio Maccioni, opening three of his outposts. At MGM/Mirage, she attracted top chefs to Las Vegas to forge a new dining scene. She has also worked with Steve Wynn to create an award-winning F&B program for Wynn Resort, overseeing 22 different concepts. (The Viceroy Snowmass restaurant shown.)

"Describing her culinary vision for the city, Elizabeth convinced me that Las Vegas was a city where I should be involved," recalls Blau's business partner, Kerry Simon, chef of his namesake Simon Restaurant & Lounge. "She's intelligent, worldly, and doesn't back down; she's able to convince you when she truly believes in something through effective communication."

### Barbara Lazaroff

President  
Imaginings Interior Design, Inc.  
Los Angeles

One of the pioneers of chef-driven restaurant design, Barbara Lazaroff is largely credited with creating the first exhibition kitchen at Spago Hollywood more than 15 years ago. (Spago Beverly Hills shown.) She has continued to design timeless fine dining interiors, but as co-founder of the



### Trisha Wilson

President and CEO  
Wilson Associates  
Dallas

By many standards the most successful female hospitality designer of her era, Trisha Wilson, through her firm, in the last 40 years has designed more than one million guestrooms in innumerable hotels throughout the world. Her career began with partner Fred Merrill, who together specialized in hotel and restaurant design. With her solo effort, Wilson has branched out to resorts, casinos, and spas for such clients as Four Seasons, Rosewood, Ritz-Carlton, Hyatt, and Westin, in locations as far-flung as Greece, Indonesia, and Africa. (Grand Hyatt Shenzhen, shown.)

Her design awards are legion, but the recognition she seems to cherish most is that accorded to the Wilson Foundation, the nonprofit she established in 1997. Devoted to endowing financially disadvantaged high school graduates with college scholarships, providing education and health support in rural South Africa, it has also created a medical fellowship to send trained HIV/AIDS specialists to the Waterberg region in South Africa. "Trish Wilson rolls everything I admire into one glamorous body," designer Clodagh says. "She is living proof that you do not have to give up anything to be a successful woman in design. She is an icon of professionalism, who has an enormous philanthropic heart and the kind of mindful talent and vision that has kept her on top."





## Women of Influence

Wolfgang Puck Food Company, she has also developed the design for the Wolfgang Puck Cafés. Today Lazaroff is as well known for her philanthropic efforts, and has recently released a new book *Wishes for a Mother's Heart*, with a portion of the proceeds going to her favorite charity, Aviva Family and Children's Services.



"I've known Barbara for over 15 years, and during that time her intelligence, fortitude, and aesthetic sensibilities have consistently inspired and astounded me," says designer Eric Engstrom. "I admire her greatly as a designer and a humanitarian, and am amazed at her energy and commitment to all she believes in. She has influenced and inspired a generation of women to demand the best in whatever they undertake, and to never take no for an answer."



### Karen Daroff

President and Principal  
Daroff Design Inc. + DDI Architects  
Philadelphia

Since starting her firm in 1973, Karen Daroff has made a name for herself in themed hospitality, resort, and gaming venues, creating luxury hotels and resorts for Marriott, Starwood, Le Meridien, Shangri-La, Hyatt, InterContinental, Loews, Ritz-

Carlton, and more. (Hilton Baltimore shown.) She is also widely known for her "eater-tainment" themed restaurants for Rainforest Café, Harrah's, multiple Disney properties, and Mars 2112 in New York. In 2009 she expanded her 50-person company internationally, opening a Shanghai office.

"She is terrific, a real talent who is passionate about finding the best overall design and environment for her clients. And I've found she is relentless in pushing team members to find innovative solutions. Karen is committed to bringing visions to reality and exceeding expectations," says Karen Dougherty Buchholz, vice president of administration, Comcast Corporation.



### Helen Jorgensen

Vice President of Design and Procurement  
Host Hotels & Resorts  
Bethesda, Maryland

Helen is the woman to know to get products placed in multiple hotels. As vice president of design and procurement for the largest hotel ownership company, Jorgensen is responsible for the implementation of a strategic supplier program for Host and has made green FF&E a large part of the hospitality purchasing conversation.

"No other person has had such a great effect on the relationship between the owner, project management firms, architecture and design firms, purchasing firms, FF&E vendors, and logistics firms as Helen Jorgensen," says Alan Benjamin, president, Benjamin West, and co-founder of the International Society of Hospitality Purchasers.

"In her brief five years at Host [previously she was in the sourcing department at Disney for 10 years], Helen has led the revolution of how all stakeholders in the CapEx process interact, and defined the work process of creating value for the owner and working to the sole benefit of the owner of the hotel. When someone in our industry says 'Helen,' no last name is needed, we all know who they are talking about! There is no finer leader, and she is the role model others aspire to in our industry."



### Sandy Chilewich

Founder and Creative Director  
Chilewich I Sultan LLC  
New York

As the co-founder of HUE, Sandy Chilewich brought the legwear market to another level with smart design, packaging, and brand development. After selling the company in 1991, she took on her next business endeavor and again, transformed an industry: this time, with textiles and tabletops. Her enterprise has grown significantly in the past 13 years—woven fabrics for bags, tables, and other surfaces, flooring, tile, and even iPhone covers are defining Chilewich these days—including a name change reflecting the new business partnership with her architect husband Joe Sultan. (Basketweave rolls, shown.)

"For the tableware industry, Chilewich fills the gap between the informal disposable paper product and the tradition of linen," says tabletop stylist Brigitte Intuputi. "It brings textures with fashion colors, from neutrals to shimmering weaves with the ease of use and

practicality. It's a bit like being able to have it all! A very modern concept."



### Randy Rubin

Co-Founder  
Crypton Super Fabrics  
West Bloomfield, Michigan

Randy Rubin's background in marketing (implementing award-winning programs for companies like General Motors and Kmart) helped Crypton Super Fabrics, along with her husband and business partner Craig, explode into the marketplace and become an international brand. Rubin has brought Crypton to hospitality and residential, has been voted one of the 50 most influential women in Michigan by *Monthly Detroit*, and continues to grow the business with new collections and marketing programs. (Power Lines carpet by artist Randy Twaddle shown.)

"Randy [and Craig] have expanded the technology in our industry so now we have a new category of performance fabrics that almost give us limitless opportunities to do wonderful things to the fabric for the end use," says Arnold Grodman of Kravet. "Randy and Craig do more for our industry than almost anyone else."

### Judy Dobin and Diana Dobin

Founder/Principal/Executive Vice President  
Senior Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer  
Valley Forge Fabrics  
Pompano Beach, Florida

The mother-and-daughter team who is a crucial component of the largest decorative fabric supplier company (founded in 1977) in



#### Mary Fox Linton

Interior Designer and Founder  
Fox Linton Associates Ltd  
London

There's a certain livable elegance to Mary Fox Linton's interiors. The British designer founded Fox Linton Associates Ltd more than 30 years ago, and since then has created classics around the globe: One Aldwych, London; Carlisle Bay, Antigua; and Shiodome Tower, Tokyo, to name a few. Her accessories, furniture, and fabrics fill a showroom at the Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, she has been awarded the Royal Oak Foundation's Timeless Design Award to mark a lifetime's achievement, and most recently she worked with long-time collaborator Gordon Campbell Gray on Le Gray Hotel in Beirut (shown).

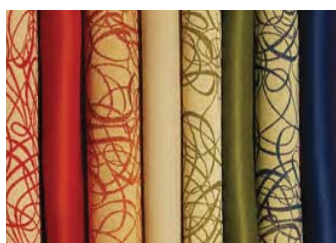
Says Gray: "Mary has the unique ability to completely understand the brief of the client, interprets it exquisitely, and then adds her own magic twist. It is for this reason I always work very closely with Mary on all our projects and am always thrilled with the results."





## Women of Influence

hospitality, Judy and Diana Dobin have made an impressive mark on the industry in many ways: Judy through her activism, philanthropy, and mentoring both within and outside of the industry; and Diana, by promotion of new green products (the FRESH upholstery and drapery, shown), as well as her efforts to educate the business community and consumers alike to the value and importance of sustainability.



"Design has only recently espoused a strong social as well as environmental focus," says Jillian Van Dresser, principal and creative director, Van Dresser Company. "Diana Dobin has been a champion very early in the process and through her enthusiasm, leadership, and earnest research and development, she has influenced a generation of young designers. Not an easy task following the legacy of her mother. Judy has always been a visionary mentor with great compassion and business acumen."



### Susan Nagle and Carol Rusche Bentel

Partners  
Bentel & Bentel Architects/Planners  
Locust Valley, New York

Susan Nagle and Carol Rusche Bentel, two of the partners of Bentel & Bentel, bring new methods of design and

architecture to every project with inspiration drawn from history, landscape, and various styles. Celebrated projects include multiple Craft outlets for chef Tom Colicchio, Danny Meyer's the Modern at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the VIP Suites at Red Rock Casino Resort & Spa in Las Vegas, and Rouge Tomato in New York (shown).

"I first worked with the Bentels when I built Gramercy Tavern," explains Colicchio, chef and owner of Craft Restaurants. "I was attracted to them because it was a family business. They also listen and they take your ideas. With Craft, we started with the kind of food we were doing in the restaurant and used that as a jumping off point for the design. We've done nine projects together now and they just get it. They get exactly what you are going for. I would never consider using anyone else at this point."



### Lisa Simeone and Gina Deary

Founders and Principals  
Simeone Deary Design Group  
Chicago

After meeting at Leiber Cooper Associates in Chicago, Lisa Simeone and Gina Deary decided to join forces in 2002. Since then, the award-winning duo has had nothing but success, creating designs that are contemporary and cohesive for 14 restaurants and six hotel and resort projects like the Elysian hotel in Chicago (shown), multiple Westins, and the JW Marriott Indianapolis.

"In addition to their incredible skills as designers, they create a story for each of their projects which serves

as a touchstone throughout the process," says Mary Beth Malone, principal of Elysian. "They approach each project with incredible passion and commitment—they truly care about every detail and make sure the final product is as close to perfection as they can get it. It is unusual, I believe, to work with a company that embraces their projects with the attention to detail and devotion that Simeone Deary does."



### Siobhan Barry

Partner and Studio Director  
ICRAVE  
New York

After designing high-end stores for the likes of Donna Karan, Calvin Klein, and Prada, Siobhan Barry partnered with Lionel Ohayon to launch ICRAVE in 2002. Since then, they have gone on to create a bi-coastal firm that has designed a slew of restaurants and nightclubs for high-profile clients such as the One and EMM Groups, Sushi Samba, JetBlue, and SBE, as well as their first hotel, the W Midtown Atlanta. Next up: the much-anticipated Asellina and Lavo restaurants in New York, among others. (Abe & Arthurs in New York shown.)

"Siobhan Barry has had the opportunity to work with some of the most creative, cutting-edge operators and, as a result, she has been at the forefront of understanding hospitality trends and influential in developing new hospitality experiences," says Jonathan Segal, CEO of the One Group. "Siobhan and ICRAVE have proved themselves as groundbreakers in both design and concept and are responsible for a tremendous number of successful venues that

have redefined the dining and hospitality experience."



### Peggy Leung

Principal  
Peggy Leung Design  
New York

Small to large scale, from nightclubs and lounges to restaurants and hotels, designer Peggy Leung has worked on it all. Before recently starting her namesake firm, she worked at HOK, Walt Disney Imagineering, Rockwell Group, and Studio GAIA, making a name for herself with designs that are unique and fluid for clients like Tao Las Vegas, McDonalds (Urban Living concept shown), and Thompson Hotels.

"I have always related and appreciated Peggy's thorough, proactive yet gentle ability to design and manage projects," says Clark Johnson, Johnson Light Studio. "Her keen insight on the design philosophy, along with her ability to manage documentation and visual reference has always helped keep the vision and feeling of the lighting designer on target and on schedule."

### Kristina O'Neal

Principal  
AvroKO  
New York

Kristina O'Neal and college friends William Harris, Greg Bradshaw, and Adam Farmerie started AvroKO in 2001. But they burst onto the hospitality scene in 2004 when they swept the James Beard design category for Public, their first restaurant, which they own and designed. Since then, they have grown to a staff of more than 30 with offices in Hong Kong and Bangkok. They





#### Alejandra Lillo

Partner

Graft

Los Angeles

After stints at Mattel and Corbett Cibinel Architects, Argentinean-born Alejandra Lillo joined Berlin-based Graft in 2004 as lead designer. She quickly became partner in 2007, and now leads the Los Angeles office, the only woman of the five young heads of the firm. She, and the firm's, layered, architectural spaces make them a globally desired commodity: Brad Pitt partnered with and enlisted them to build model homes for his Make it Right foundation for displaced residents of New Orleans' Ninth Ward; they've designed boutique hotels and restaurants in Las Vegas, China, the Republic of Georgia, and Berlin; and opening this summer is the W New York Downtown, their largest U.S. project to date.

"Ali has hit the mark on creating the vibe and atmosphere we have hoped to obtain in every venue," says Andi Masi, managing partner of the Light Group (their newest collaboration, CityCenter's Aria pool deck, shown). "Her innate ability to pull the ideas from the imagination and use them to produce realities has and will continue to raise the bar for unique and innovative design. Ali has the natural ability to conceptualize and bring to fruition what most other designers would consider an intangible idea. She is an unprecedented talent with unparalleled vision, but also has the fearless approach to execute any number of projects and ideas."







## Patricia Urquiola

Principal  
Studio Urquiola  
Milan

Patricia Urquiola's unique designs have a distinct style—poetic, inviting, and organic. Born in Oviedo, Spain, she started working for Milan-based furniture company De Padova in 1991. Urquiola went on to open an associated studio with two friends, working on architecture, interiors, showrooms, and restaurants, and in '96 became manager of the Lissoni Associati Design Group. In 2001 she opened her own studio working with companies like Moroso and Axor, with whom she just completed Axor Urquiola, a collection that embraces curves and richness with faucets used at one of her latest projects, the Mandarin Oriental in Barcelona (shown).

"Patricia is more than a designer, she is a storyteller," says Gray Shealy, global design director for W Hotels, who recently worked on the W Vieques with Urquiola. "She has a remarkable way of bringing spaces to life in ways that are more than just aesthetically beautiful but emotionally evocative. Her designs are comprehensive in that she connects the architectural shell to the human experience by designing even the most minute of details in the space, which sends a message to guests that their experience at the W is more than just a 'hospitality' experience, but something much more holistic."



are sought after for their layered, detailed spaces with a twist on the past by the likes of Richard Sandoval, Starwood, Michael Mina, and Thompson Hotels (Plein Sud in New York shown); opened their second self-propelled restaurant and bar, Double Crown and Madam Geneva; and have expanded into product and uniform lines.



Say her partners: “Besides playing the part of ‘the good looking one,’ Kristina’s conceptual compass and big picture vision has been an incredibly important component of our partnership. She’s an immensely talented abstract storyteller, an eerily insightful predictor of human behavior, and a highly capable (although completely unlicensed) psychiatrist.”



**Robin Standefer**  
Principal  
Roman and Williams  
New York

It’s Robin Standefer’s 15-year career designing film sets around the world that influences her bespoke hospitality interiors she creates with her husband and business partner Stephen Alesch. Together, they have helped changed the New York hotel landscape with the much talked about re-do of the Royalton (shown), the Ace Hotel, and the Standard Hotel. Imminent projects are product launches (a line for Waterworks is the first) and a Willow hotel in New York.

“Robin is steadfast in her beliefs and a stickler for quality,”

says Mari Balestrazzi, senior vice president of design for Morgans Hotel Group. “Her support for handcrafts has added a new dimension of bohemian chic to the hotel world.”



**Dr. Lalia Rach**  
Divisional Dean  
Preston Robert Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism, and Sports Management  
New York

During her tenure as divisional dean, Rach transformed the higher education programs in hospitality, tourism, and sports management at the NYU School of Continuing and Professional Studies (NYU-SCPS). Rach recently announced a well-deserved sabbatical at the end of this academic year followed by a return to teaching full-time, conducting research, and mentoring students at the Tisch Center.

“Lalia set out to build an exemplary model for higher education that did not walk in the shadows of the various industries; she wanted to be equal partners,” explains Jonathan Tisch, chairman and CEO of Loews Hotels. “With her 15 years of commitment and dedication, Lalia built a new model for higher education that has now earned a global reputation for ‘best in class.’ She can fairly be credited with having created the Tisch Center as it is today.”



## The Customer

The oversized tub, the flattering lighting, the magnifying mirror, the high-end shampoos and lotions, all innovations courtesy of possibly the most demanding woman in hospitality design: the customer. According to Stephanie Holland, executive creative director for Holland + Holland Advertising, and creator of she-economy, a blog about marketing to women, women account for 50 percent of all American business travel and are responsible for 92 percent of all money spent on vacation.

Sure we can point to the birth of niche travel segments like women’s adventure or girls’ getaway packages, or the still controversial women-only floors (or Saudi’s women only hotel), or increasingly popular amenity packages like W Hotels’ Diane von Furstenberg Fashion Emergency Kit, or the launch of feminine steakhouses like STK, but the truth is women are not a consumer group to be marginalized. Boston Consulting Group recently named women the largest emerging consumer market: larger than China and India combined.

If that doesn’t get your attention, here are some staggering statistics according to *Women Want More: How to Capture Your Share of the World’s Largest, Fastest-Growing Market*: globally women control nearly \$12 trillion of the overall \$18.4 trillion in consumer discretionary spending. By 2013, that number will increase to \$15 trillion and by 2028, women will control 72 percent worldwide. In the U.S. and E.U., most college students (57 percent and 55 percent, respectively) are women while worldwide half (49 percent) are female. And women own or co-own 40 percent of U.S. businesses; solely women-owned businesses are growing at twice the rate of all U.S. firms and faster than male-owned businesses.