



GULF COAST DESIGN+DECOR

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

GULF COAST
DESIGN+DECOR

2018
TOP 25
DESIGN FIRMS







Beth Walker Fenton, Minka McDonald,
Barbara Schwenk, Chrissy Howard

What is your interior design philosophy, and how does it apply to meeting your client's design needs?

Our goal is to help our clients create beautiful, comfortable, livable homes that reflect their personalities, lifestyles and interests. We help them express themselves through their interior design, so when they walk through the doors, they feel connected and happy.

How do you define luxury design?

To us, luxury design means the marriage of beauty and comfort. Every single thing in your home should delight your senses!

Can you remember the first space that really made an impact on you?

Growing up with Jinx McDonald (our founder and president) as my mother, I was always surrounded by beauty, and our homes were gorgeous and supremely comfortable. However, I'll never forget the first time I walked into The Delano hotel in South Beach, Miami. Design legend Philippe Stark broke all rules of scale and proportion there. He created a fantastical environment, and it was very cool and sexy, bringing an energy that excited everyone who walked through the doors. That's when I realized how powerful good design could be.

What inspires you inside and outside the interior design world?

Beauty—in all its creative expressions.

What is the best interior design lesson you have learned?

Look and listen before you act. Then listen some more.

To which city or country would you move for the design?

Jamaica for the West Indies feel, the incorporation of the gorgeous natural surroundings, where the British colonial culture meets an organic vibe. Miami for the exciting hotel lounges and restaurant spaces that surprise you and take your breath away.

A lot of consumers utilize the Internet for research on design. Do you feel this helps the process when they come to you as a designer? Why?

Yes. It helps when your clients are knowledgeable. It is much easier to help them when they know what they want.

What are three things about you that nobody knows?

1. I love hot yoga and wish I had more time to practice.
2. Good music, great food, red wine and a good read. These are a few of my favorite things.
3. I love playing soccer with my eight-year-old son. We crack up trying to steal the ball away from each other!

Are you a morning or a night person?

Morning. I love going for a walk or jog before the sun is up. I can still see the stars. It's cool out and so quiet and peaceful. It's a great time to gather my thoughts. On weekends my favorite time of day is twilight, just before dusk when you can see evening lights twinkling in the darkening sky. It's a romantic time.

What is your favorite space to design?

Living rooms. For me, living rooms are the hub of the house and set the tone. They are usually the most exciting and elegant spaces in the house.

If you could bring back one era of design, what would it be?

I would like to see green design come to the forefront more; it's so important. I would also like to see a resurgence in the popularity of porches and verandas. I love the spaces between outside and in. That is where we should be living.

If you could create any style home in Southwest Florida and go against the current trends here, what would you do?

I adore the West Indies style we are seeing in Naples currently. Being from Jamaica, I have an affinity for casual elegance and a coastal aesthetic. This design style makes sense in the Southwest Florida climate.