

PHILADELPHIA STYLE

CHELSEA HANDLER

HOW THE JERSEY GIRL
TOOK ON HOLLYWOOD

EXOTIC ESCAPES

DISCOVERING
BRAZIL'S BEACHES
& THAI CUISINE

WINTER'S MUST-HAVES

CHOCOLATE
& CASHMERE

THE HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

FASHIONABLE FINDS FROM CENTER CITY AND THE MAIN LINE



FOX 29'S **MIKE JERRICK**
HIP-HOP INSIDER **SHAWN GEE**
LIFESTYLE GURU **HOPE COHEN**

UGLY BETTY WUNDERKIND **MARK INDELICATO**



Susan Davidson



Forty 1° North

Building Blocks

Insights and reflections from local architect Susan Davidson
BY SARAH SCHAFFER

PHILADELPHIA STYLE: Which artists or designers have inspired and informed your work over the years?

SUSAN DAVIDSON: Philippe Starck, because his inspirational designs created in partnership with Ian Schrager changed the hotel industry. My first experience with a Starck-inspired interior was the Paramount Hotel in New York City. [It was an] experience in the actualization of the delight in rethinking everyday things and environments. Also Ralph Lauren—nothing can be more inspiring than timeless beauty. I have always believed that a sense of American design exemplified by natural elegance and attention to detail should be the goal of a successful interior, be it a restaurant, hotel or home. Finally, Claude Monet. The effects of light and its changing qualities on the passage of time is a crucial element of human perception and experience.

PS: What's on your iPod or in your CD player right now?

SD: Believe it or not, Tim McGraw! There is an honesty and sense of humor in the experience of everyday life that makes this type of listening a great escape—depending, of course, on the mood you are in. The other is Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

PS: What's on your nightstand?

SD: *Outside* magazine, a publication always on the edge of exploring the human spirit, will and determination. The other: *Dog on It* by Spencer Quinn, a story of a private detective and his canine partner.

PS: What was your first job, and how did it shape your life?

SD: My first job was with my design professor, John Strite, an architect and true Renaissance man. What I thought would be a typical entry-

level "design" position was an experience in classical music, chess matches, culinary classes, dog training, world travel and the psychology of color. It taught me that the career I had chosen had so many avenues to explore.

PS: What has been your favorite project?

SD: That's a tough question, but I would have to say it's a tie: Rat's at the Grounds for Sculpture and Forty 1° North in Newport, RI. Rat's gave me the opportunity to work with an artist in the creation of a true fantasy escape. The boutique hotel, restaurant and marina at Forty 1° North is quite the opposite—a chic, warm, friendly destination spot. Both of these projects were based on the idea of creating a design that allows the patron to escape and have their own individual experience, find something new and leave with the sense that they want to return to continue the journey.

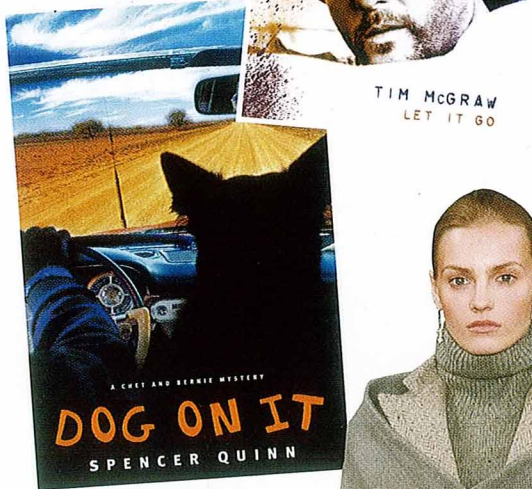
PS: What was your most memorable vacation?

SD: Loire Valley [in France]. My husband and I found the "Garden of France" on our honeymoon. Naturally romantic with fragrant fields of lavender and rich in landscape, history and wine. The hospitality experience here was naturally intimate and warm with a sense of timeless design. A true escape.

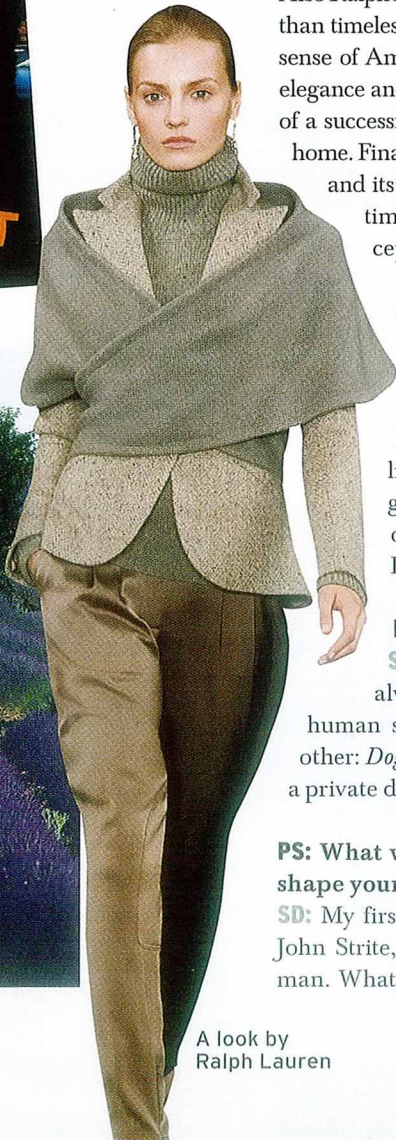
PS: Why is the design and architecture of today important to future generations?

SD: The designs being developed today will teach responsibility and respect for the world and its precious resources. Green is not just a trend, it's a way of seeing and living. Start small, dream big and—as my professor said—nothing is impossible.

Susan Davidson of DAS Architects designs spaces in Philadelphia and across the country. Her firm recently developed the distinctive interiors at Union Trust Steakhouse. Visit dasarchitects.com.



France's Loire Valley



A look by Ralph Lauren