

hospitality design

november 2019 hospitalitydesign.com

design thread

KIT KEMP'S
LOVE OF
COLOR AND
CRAFT

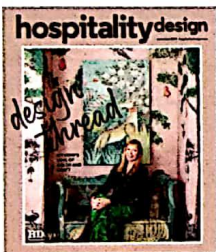


HDexpo
hospitality design event

hospitality^{design}

november 2019

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On the cover:
Guest editor Kit Kemp in
her pop-up at Bergdorf
Goodman in New York.
Photo by Simon Brown.

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from the editor

bold and beautiful

Photo by KATE PREVITE



When I first walked into the Crosby Street Hotel in New York a decade ago, I knew I had entered somewhere special. A beautiful marriage of vibrant color, unique patterns, and layers of texture; each space unfolded to offer another surprise. Though there was a lot going on, it all worked. The hotel was comfortable, inviting, modern yet traditional, and whimsical all at once—a design I had not experienced before.

I was lucky enough to meet the master weaver behind it all, Kit Kemp, cofounder of Firmdale Hotels along with her husband Tim (she handles the design, he oversees the development). You could sense that the hotel was a direct reflection of her—joyous, passionate, mesmerizing—reimagined into a physical space. She is a designer who knows the story behind every fabric and piece of art, and absolutely loves every moment of bringing it all together. In fact, she told me the story of how she wanted to do a large patchwork repeat on one of the sofas but couldn't find the right one. So her and her friend, Louise Hallet, spent a weekend listening to '70s music, with Kit cutting and Louise sewing exactly what she had envisioned. I was sold. To this day, when people ask about my favorite hotel, the answer is simple: the Crosby.

I have become a fan of all that Firmdale has created since they first started in 1985, which comprises a collection of properties in London, as well as a second in New York (the Whitty in Midtown opened in 2017), and another that will soon open in Tribeca. Each one is as colorful and art filled as the next, breaking many industry molds.

As a result, so is this issue. As guest editor, Kit naturally decided to give you a glimpse into her world—the artists and craftspeople she collaborates with to make her eclectic spaces come to life. She also takes us through her favorite spots in London, and lets us in on her process and approach to hotels in her very honest memoir. Like her hotels, she chose everything that is in these pages, and we even incorporated the thread and signature font found on her blog and in her books. It may seem like a bit of a departure for us at *HD*, but one we thoroughly enjoyed. It's amazing to collaborate with someone who loves doing what they do as much as we do. We hope you feel the same.

Stacy Shoemaker Rauhen

Editor in Chief/Senior Vice President, Design Group

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