

# AVENUE

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## THE TRUMP CARD

Magnificent Melania offers a peek into her life with Donald and Barron at Mar-a-Lago

**PAMELA FIORI**  
on her new book and the real Palm Beach

## PALM BEACH A-LIST

The who's who of Palm Beach: the Fanjuls, Kochs, Lauders, Pulitzers, Schwarzmans, LeFraks, Gubelmanns, Acquavellas and many more

Melania Trump



# Southern Charm

Lee W. Robinson's design philosophy resonates from city to city



In 1999, Kentucky-born Lee Robinson came to the realization that banking—the family business—was not for him. After a brief period of study in New York, he bought the three largest interior design businesses in Louisville, forging ahead with what is today known as the Lee W. Robinson Company.

"My whole business model was to have a one-stop-shop," Robinson says. "We do the construction, have our own architects, foreman, crew, and interior designers. Then we branched into our own home proprietary products." This includes a paint line with Robinson's own signature colors, in hues with names like chinchilla (a rich, glistening grey that looks "just like the real thing") and Palm Beach Coral. Lee W. Robinson Company also boasts a room fragrance collection and custom furniture line.

And while the company doesn't have a fabric line of its own ("Not yet," Robinson says with a knowing smile), Robinson and his designers will work with fabric companies on anything customers dream of, "And

then you have a custom Lee W. Robinson design of your very own," Robinson says. This is all rounded out with an e-commerce portion on the Lee W. Robinson Company website, as well as certification in 48 states—making Robinson's renowned aesthetic increasingly accessible.

And to make the design process even smoother, Lee W. Robinson Company offers three palettes as starting points—research has told them 88 percent of people identify with one of the three palettes. Named for Robinson's three sons there is "The Owsley," reminiscent of the elegance and opulence of Park Avenue. Then there is "The Thurston," more of a downtown, bohemian-chic feel, and "The McDowell," a cozy, country style that incorporates history.

One place Robinson feels particularly connected to is Palm Beach. "I work in Palm Beach and play in Palm Beach," says Robinson. He explains how Palm Beach feels like home for him and his family. Not only do they have many friends in the area; he feels that Palm Beach shares the spirit of his very own Louisville. He says both towns possess a richness of Southern traditions, yet each has a Continental vibe. "Louisville has people coming from around the globe because they own horse farms or racehorses. Palm Beach has that same feel—it's an international set," says Robinson. "No matter how hip and modern the interiors might be in a Palm Beach home, or how old world 'Marjorie Merriweather Post' they may be, you're still going to see one common vibe in Palm Beach and that's a little bit of glamour," says Robinson.

People in both places know the importance of being a gracious host or hostess. "When you love to entertain, you introduce the five senses. That's why I have a fragrance line and paint line." Robinson is all about creating a multi-sense experience. He uses tone on tone and layers to intrigue the eye; touchable textures, believes in always piping in music, playing with fragrance and will happily advise clients on themes and food.

"People in Palm Beach have wonderful crystal and porcelains," says Robinson, who emphasizes finding new and fun ways of making things current—not getting caught up in all the tradition of everything. "If you have your great-grandmother's crystal you might as well use it. If you have fingerbowls, they don't have to be used as fingerbowls anymore. They can be used for a cold soup."

Robinson believes that each Palm Beach home should be designed to fit the lifestyle of the family living in it. He incorporates elements of glamour and tradition, while being mindful of overall aesthetic but practicality too—with the wet or sandy aspects of Floridian life always on his mind. As for his Palm Beach palette he says, "You're going to see a lot of nods to the ocean and ocean motifs. I love coral, but it can be the white coral subtly worked into the room. I love some pops of color and am a big believer in bringing the outside in—either through window treatments or by creating outdoor spaces such as cabanas," says Robinson. "It is equally important for a home to be stylish and functional. I really listen to my clients' needs." ♦

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