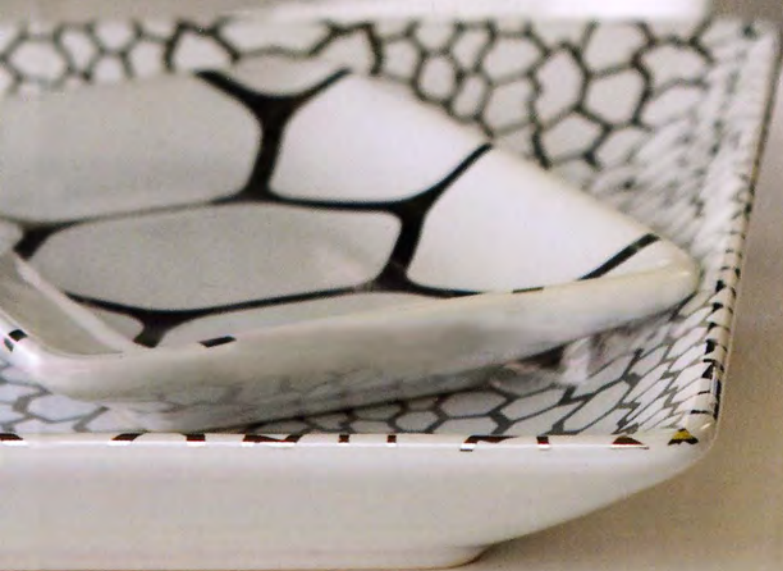


GENTRY
Design

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trade secrets

Tucker ON DESIGN



Suzanne Tucker

Santa Barbara native Suzanne Tucker is considered one of America's foremost interior designers and has earned a long list of accolades and awards. Most notably she is part of *Architectural Digest's* prestigious "Top 100 Designers in the World." Tucker's early career took her to London to work at the famed Colefax & Fowler. Just a few years later, legendary California designer Michael Taylor hired Tucker—she soon became his protégé. Following Taylor's untimely death, Tucker and her partner Timothy Marks bought Taylor's business, and for the past 24 years have carved out a niche as one of the most sought-after design firms on the West Coast. Tucker's interiors have European influence, but California scale.

Gentry Design caught up with Tucker in Paris in January where she was hosting book signings for her spectacular new shelter book *Rooms to Remember*.

GENTRY DESIGN: *What prompted you to become an interior designer?*

SUZANNE TUCKER: At the University of Oregon, where I was an Art History major, I took a year-long, life-changing course in the history of furniture. It was inspirational, and I switched my major to Interior Architecture and took everything the department offered before transferring to UCLA. I immersed myself in the won-

derful art department there and studied all aspects of design—textiles, color, drawing, drafting, even photography—and finished with a BFA in Design. At that point, I seriously considered becoming an architect, having grown up in Santa Barbara surrounded by fantastic architecture, but leaped into the "real world" instead.

GD: *What is your all-time favorite project?*

ST: That is like asking a parent who their favorite child is! They are all special and unique for separate reasons.

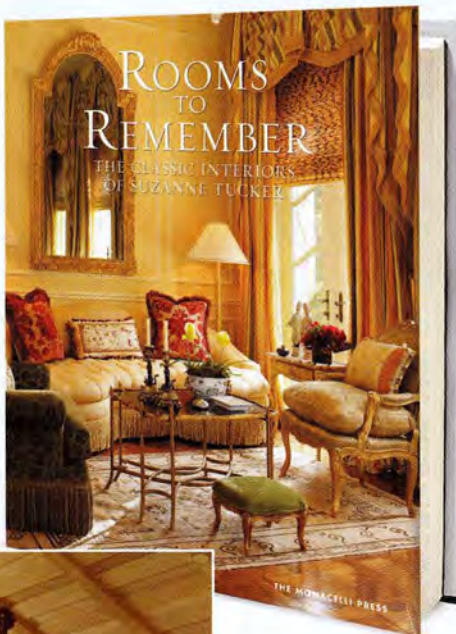
GD: *What prompted you to write your book?*

ST: Over the past 5 – 6 years, more and more clients and friends were asking me when I was going to publish my own book. I'm constantly adding to my own library and giving design books as gifts. One day I thought, why not write my own? I certainly felt as though I owed it to my clients for all the wonderful projects I've had the good fortune to be involved with as well as to my very loyal and talented staff. And as most things in life, you don't realize what you get yourself into until after you are deeply involved! I had no idea how much work it would entail when I agreed to a very tight deadline, nor did I realize how rewarding it would be. →

One of the beautifully appointed spaces created by Suzanne Tucker of Tucker & Marks

GD: Favorite Design Icons?

ST: There are so many great decorators from the past: certainly John Fowler, Nancy Lancaster, Henri Samuel, Frances Elkins, Michael Taylor, Billy Baldwin, but also the great architects—Adam, Kent, Soane, Le Notre, Palladio, Mizner, George Washington Smith.



GD: Favorite Museum?

ST: It is hard to just list one! I love house museums, one being The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, which displays tapestries, furniture, and decorative arts from cultures representing over 30 centuries, as well as the Axel Munthe Museum in Capri, Italy. I also enjoy the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and The Legion of Honor in San Francisco.

GD: What inspired you to create your fabric line?

ST: I've been collecting antique textiles for many years out of love and appreciation of the art. When it came down to creating my own fabric line, I was inspired by my own personal collections of 18th, 19th, and early 20th century textiles, as well as fabrics that I have used in interiors I have designed, and things I have seen on my travels.

GD: Design Mottos?

ST: Embrace the challenges • Always follow your intuition • “When in doubt, take it out!”—Michael Taylor • The thing that ultimately makes a room great is mood and atmosphere. That's intangible.

GD: What are you looking forward to working on in the coming months?

ST: My design staff and I are working on a fantastic Spanish Revival project on the Peninsula with new construction on both the house and the grounds, a really special and quite spectacular mountain house on the north shore of Lake Tahoe, a sophisticated city apartment with classic San Francisco Bay views, and a large-scale Michael Taylor-esque timber and stone house in Sun Valley, Idaho, just to mention a few.

After launching my textile line (Suzanne Tucker Home) in Paris, San Francisco, New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, we're planning on expanding into the Dallas, Atlanta, and Florida markets. I am also designing my first line of china for Royal Limoges, which I find so exciting as it has always been one of my personal passions. And, of course, I am continually working on custom furniture pieces for my clients, so perhaps I'll find myself doing that on a limited edition basis! Can I also say I am looking forward to getting a bit more sleep!? ■



A page from Tucker's new book (pictured above).

GD: Designers (working today) that you most admire:

ST: Albert Hadley tops that list (even though he's semi-retired). But there are many colleagues whose work I admire, am always interested in, and appreciate, but if I started listing them I could get in trouble with those whom I don't mention!

GD: Favorite Hotels?

ST: Casa del Herrero in Santa Barbara, Villa San Michele in Capri, and The Villa Balbianello on Lake Como, Italy . . . paradise!

GD: Favorite boutiques?

ST: If I'm in Paris, I love to visit Annick Goutal to stock up on my favorite scents and soaps, to Cassegrain to order custom writing paper, Sabbia Rose for lovely nighties, and La Maison du Chocolat for my staff and friends. And in Capri, all the boutiques! My husband renamed it “Shop-pri.”