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PALM BEACH POP

Fashion designer Lisa Perry stripped her family's Florida getaway to its pure white essence, then filled it with the bright colors and bold artworks she loves

TEXT BY WILLIAM NORWICH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY OBERTO GILI
PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA FRANK

Lisa Perry has had many eureka moments. You don't become a fashion designer of her caliber without them. Many of her awakenings are triggered when a bright white light—the palette, not the parable—calls to her, guiding her in what to do and how to proceed in her creative process.

For Perry, white as an inspiring design choice dates back to an epiphany she had at the age of 10. Making herself a sandwich one day at home in Chicago—her family owned the textile company Dana Mills there—she realized that the signature white-with-colored-dots motif on a Wonder Bread package wasn't arbitrary. "It was really great design," she says. (She also decorated her bedroom from stem to stern in Marimekko that same year.)

More recently, white served as the guiding light not only for her all-white spring 2014 collection, which riffs on tennis dressing, but also for the design of the 6,000-square-foot house that she and her husband, Richard, a financier, acquired in Palm Beach in 2011.

Overlooking 145 feet of Atlantic Ocean beachfront, the house was built on spec in 1985 by Robert Gottfried, a prolific Florida architect and developer; before he died in 2007, Gottfried had designed more than 500 houses in the vicinity. "Gottfried Regency" is how *Time* magazine once described his style. His extensive contribution to the Palm Beach landscape, according to social historian Augustus Mayhew, was to create "modern interiors designed for conveniences rather than antiques."

Although the previous owners took great care of the property and the house was in fine shape, the interior was in no way the crystalline, clean-lined place the art-collecting Perrys craved. "The inside was so fancy. The walls were silk brocade," says Perry. "I told our architect,



Christine Harper, to take everything down and make it into a white box. When I saw the house all white, I was finally able to breathe. I think people thought I was crazy.”

Harper didn't. An alumna of the cutting-edge New York firm I100 Architect, she and her contractor husband, Ryan, launched their own company, Harper Design Build, and have worked on almost a dozen projects with the Perrys, including their penthouse apartment in Manhattan and their waterfront property in Sag Harbor. “Each place is different,” Harper explains. “The penthouse is ultra-modern, Long Island combines the old and the new, and Florida is,” she pauses, “just cool. There’s a breezy feeling—nothing is over-thought.”

Palm Beach may be known for its stuffy ways, restricted clubs, gin-soaked heirs, diamonds on sunburns, and zillionaire conservatives,

but there’s also a new breed of culturally minded designers, artists, and art collectors who are spending their winter weekends in the resort town, which has spread out to include the hipper environs of West Palm Beach. They’re attracted to the adventurous architecture, clean streets, sporting life, and overall bonhomie, not to mention a conveniently located international airport.

The Perrys vacation there often with their two children. “Palm Beach feels very European to me, plus I’m a palm-tree freak,” Perry says with a laugh. In 2005, they bought an apartment in the retro-chic Palm Beach Towers, with its half-moon terraces and groovy, geometric facade. “But at some point, I no longer wanted to be on vacation in a doorman building,” she adds. “On one of our bike rides, we started looking for a modern house right on the water. I called a

TREND ALERT

PAGE 64: Cara Check cotton, #J692F-04, by *Jane Churchill*, to the trade from *Cowtan & Tout* (212-647-6900; cowtan.com). **Megeve wool-polyester**, #10294-85, to the trade from *Nobilis* (800-464-6670; nobilis.fr). **Beckett shoulder bag**, \$1,680, by *Stella McCartney* (212-255-1556; stellamccartney.com). **Fringed wool throw**, \$98, by *Pendleton* (800-649-1512; pendleton-usa.com). **Precious tartan cuff**, \$2,050, by *Chanel* (800-550-0005). **Rachel Reid serving plate**, \$83, by *Anta* (011-44-18-6283-2477; anta.co.uk). **Chocolate**, \$8, by *Mast Brothers Chocolate* (718-388-2625; mastbrothers.com). **Eu/phoria chairs**, \$260 ea., by *Paola Navone for Eumenes* (011-39-2-3664-7900; eumenes.it). **Troutbeck lambswool**, #890008-02, to the trade from *Rogers & Goffigon* (203-532-8068). **Skate Check shoe**, \$690, by *Céline* (310-888-0120; celine.com). **Wilde Ember wool**, #DE12922, to the trade from *Holland & Sherry* (212-355-6241; hollandandsherry.com). **Highlander salad set**, \$74, by *Sabre from Didriks* (617-354-5700; didriks.com). **Sir Rouge pillow**, \$300, by *Jean Paul Gaultier for Roche Bobois* (212-889-5304; roche-bobois.com). **Giant jacquard check coat**, \$4,250, by *Céline*.

SHORTLIST

PAGE 66: *David Yurman* (davidyurman.com). **Razor-point pen** by *Pilot* (pilotpen.us). **Notebooks** by *Moleskine* (moleskine.com). **Giorgione** (212-352-2269; giorgionenyc.com). **Rising from the Plains** by *John McPhee from Macmillan* (macmillan.com). **Cowboy Cut Original Fit jeans** by *Wrangler* (wrangler.com).

ART SHOW

PAGES 78-80: *Julia Dault* (juliadault.com).

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

PAGES 83-92: Interior design by *Alessandra Branca of Branca* (312-787-6123; branca.com). **PAGE 83:** Easton armchair to the trade from *Anthony Lawrence-Belfair* (212-206-8820; anthonylawrence.com), upholstered in *Alexander Tartan linen-wool*, #68320, and ottoman upholstered in *Sofia Diamond linen-cotton*, #68300; both by *Alessandra Branca*, to the trade from *Schumacher* (800-523-1200; fschumacher.com). **Lattice Globe lantern** by *Jamb* (011-44-20-7730-2122; jamblimited.com). **Reinforce** by *Athos Zacharias from Gerald Bland* (212-987-8505; geraldblindinc.com). **Photograph** by *Candida Höfer from Sonnabend Gallery* (212-627-1018; sonnabendgallery.com). Walls covered in *Faux Bois cotton*, by *Alessandra Branca*. **Ponti Red rug** by *The Rug Company* (212-274-0444; therugcompany.com). **Vintage sheep sculpture** from *David Duncan Antiques* (212-688-0666; davidduncanantiques.com). **PAGES 84-85:** Antique center table from *Gerald Bland*. **Banquette** upholstered in *Andrea Velvet Strie viscose-cotton*, #68332, bergères upholstered in *Elizabeth cotton*, #175500, and stools upholstered in *Andrea Velvet Strie viscose-cotton*, #68331; all by *Alessandra Branca*, to the trade from *Schumacher*. **Photograph** by *Lawrence Beck from Sonnabend Gallery*. **Hollis side table** by *Arteriors* (800-338-2150; arteriorshome.com). **Astro light fixture** by *Crystorama* (516-931-9090; crystorama.com). Walls painted in *Advance High Gloss*, in *Stone Hearth*, by *Benjamin Moore* (855-724-6802; benjaminmoore.com). **PAGE 86:** In dining room, lamp covered in *Marmo silk* by *Alessandra Branca*. **Edgar decanters and Wade bar cart** by *Arteriors*. **Cadman sisal rug** to the trade from *Stark* (212-752-9000; starkcarpet.com). In mudroom, **vintage console table and stools** from *Maison Gerard* (212-674-7611; maisongerard.com). Walls covered in *Echo Flame leather* to the trade from *Moore & Giles* (800-737-0169; mooreandgiles.com). In entry, **antique armchair** from *David Duncan Antiques*, upholstered in *Elizabeth cotton*, #175500, by *Alessandra Branca*, to the trade from *Schumacher*. Walls painted in *Ultra Spec 500 Flat*, in *Steam*, and *Aura Eggshell*, in *Stone Hearth*; both by *Benjamin Moore*. **Faux Ivory console** to the trade from *The Alpha Workshops* (212-594-7320; alphaworkshops.org). **Bowl** by *Aerin* (866-647-3330; aerin.com). **Spider's Nest stool** by *Tucker Robbins* (212-355-3383; tuckerrobbs.com). **PAGE 88:** Closet fitted by *California Closets* (888-336-9707; californiaclosets.com). **Stool** by *Carol Egan from Maison Gerard*. In daughter's bedroom, **Romano lamps**, to the trade from *Christopher Spitzmiller* (212-563-1144; christopherspitzmiller.com). **Coverlet and curtains of L'Indienne linen**, #175512, by *Alessandra Branca*, to the trade from *Schumacher*. Walls painted in *Aura Eggshell*, in *Coachman's Cape*, by *Benjamin Moore*. **PAGE 90:** In guest room, sofa upholstered in *Gainsborough Velvet cotton*, #42723, to the trade from *Schumacher*.

Solaris chandelier by *Crystorama*. **Photograph** by *Erik Madigan Heck from Lumas* (212-919-9497; lumas.com). **Nathan floor lamps** by *Arteriors*. **Damascus Blue rug** by *The Rug Company*. **Armchair upholstered in Sofia Diamond linen-cotton**, #68304, and lampshades upholstered in *Branca Stripe cotton*, #68311, both by *Alessandra Branca*, to the trade from *Schumacher*. **Headboard upholstered in Melograno linen**, #175452, by *Alessandra Branca*, and *Gainsborough Velvet cotton*, #42723, both to the trade from *Schumacher*. **Analisa bedding** by *Sferra* (877-336-2003; sferra.com). Walls painted in *Advance High Gloss*, in *Twilight*, by *Benjamin Moore*. **PAGE 92:** Walls covered in *Anna Damask linen*, #68433, by *Alessandra Branca*, to the trade from *Schumacher*. **Kempner bed** by *Michael Taylor Designs* (415-558-9940; michaeltaylordesigns.com). **Analisa bedding** by *Sferra*. **Percy side tables** by *Arteriors*. **Sofa upholstered in Amherst Satin cotton blend**, #55262, and *Gainsborough Velvet cotton*, #42723, both to the trade from *Schumacher*. In master bath, **Candide tub and Henry fittings** by *Waterworks* (800-899-6757; waterworks.com). **Subin table** by *Arteriors*.

TRUTH IN DECORATING

PAGES 94-98: *Evette Rios* (evetterios.com). *Barry Dixon* (540-341-8501; barrydixon.com).

UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM

PAGE 102: *Yotam Ottolenghi* (ottolenghi.co.uk).

DANIEL'S DISH

PAGES 106-11: *Daniel Boulou* of restaurant *Daniel* (danielnyc.com). **PAGE 106:** Square plate, in *Blue*, \$58, *Strip plate*, \$32, and *Tray*, \$130; all by *Mud Australia* (646-590-1964; mudaustalia.com). **Fusion Samoa bread-and-butter plates**, \$37 ea., by *Bernardaud* (212-371-4300; bernardaud.com). **Spheric cocktail picks**, \$120, by *Ercuis from LCR Westport* (203-221-8131; lcrwestport.com). **Albi oyster forks**, \$104 ea., by *Christofle* (212-284-5108; christofle.com). **Festival linens**, in *Grey*, \$23/set of 4, by *Sferra* (877-336-2003; sferra.com). **Simplicity linen tablecloth**, in *Celadon*, #8855-02, by *Larsen*, to the trade from *Cowtan & Tout* (212-647-6900; cowtan.com). **PAGE 108:** **Randolph cooler**, \$595, by *Ralph Lauren Home* (888-475-7674; ralphlaurenhome.com). **Glasses**, \$25/set of 2, by *Spiegelau* (888-474-3335; spiegelau.com).

BAREFOOT IN PARADISE

PAGES 114-23: Interior design by *Christian Liaigre* (011-33-1-47-53-78-76; christian-liaigre.fr). **PAGES 114:** *Filao sofa*, *Latin lounge chairs*, *Palabre ottoman*, and *sisal rug* by *Christian Liaigre* (212-201-2338; christian-liaigre.us). **PAGE 116:** **Folio armchairs** by *Christian Liaigre*. **Umut 3 Study pendant light** by *Ay Illuminate* (011-31-3-3457-1486; ayilluminate.com). **PAGE 117:** On terrace, **Estran daybed** by *Christian Liaigre*. In living area, **Boucanier side table** by *Christian Liaigre*. **PAGE 118:** On covered porch, **Haut Brion outdoor sofa** and **Hibiscus bench** by *Christian Liaigre*. In dressing area, **custom-made chest of drawers** by *Christian Liaigre*. **PAGE 119:** **Custom-made cedar dining table** by *Christian Liaigre*. **PAGE 120:** **Linens** by *D. Porthault* (212-688-1660; dporthaultparis.com). **PAGE 121:** **Sink and fittings** by *Volevatch* (011-33-1-42-22-42-55; volevatch.fr). **PAGE 122:** **Sink and fittings** by *Volevatch*.

INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT

PAGES 124-31: Interior design by *Caroline Sarkozy of CS Décoration* (011-33-1-43-79-79-19; csdecoration.fr). **Architecture** by *Laurent Bourgois* (011-33-1-43-70-61-61; lbarchit.com). **PAGE 125:** **Ottoman** covered in *Kipling Sunset leather* to the trade from *Moore & Giles* (800-737-0169; mooreandgiles.com). **Custom rug** by *F. J. Hakimian* (212-371-6900; fjhakimian.com). **PAGES 126-27:** In entry, **antique pedestal table** from *Galerie Teo Leo* (011-33-1-42-61-64-01; teoleo-galerie.com). **Sofa** by *Kaare Klint* for *Rud Rasmussen*, from *Carl Hansen & Son* (212-242-6736; carlhansen.com). **Cabinet** by *Josef Frank* from *Christie's* (212-636-2000; christies.com). In living room, **armchairs upholstered in Shaker linen**, in *Camp*, #92509-07, and **sofa upholstered in Coach wool**, in *Caraway*, #938026-05; both to the trade from *Rogers & Goffigon* (203-532-8068). **Vintage rug** by *F. J. Hakimian*. **PAGE 128:** **Custom-made dining table and chandelier** by *Christian Astoguevieuille* to the trade from *Holly Hunt* (800-320-3145; astoguyhnt.com). **Rug** by *F. J. Hakimian*. **PAGE 129:** In kitchen, **Charles pendant light** by *LB Studio*

(011-33-1-55-25-68-00; lbarchit.com). **Stove** by *Viking* (888-845-4641; vikingrange.com). **Speed ovens** by *Miele* (800-843-7231; mieleusa.com). **Sink fittings** by *Blanco* (800-451-5782; blancoamerica.com). In guest room, walls covered in *Peasant Cloth linen*, in *Dove*, to the trade from *de Le Cuona* (212-702-0800; delecuona.com). **PAGES 130-31:** In master bedroom, **curtains of Ruff linen**, in *Natural Grey*, #809001-02, to the trade from *Rogers & Goffigon*. **Beaufain carpet** by *Godfrey Hirst* (800-480-7134; godfreyhirstusa.com). In entry, **sconce** by *LB Studio*.

NOBLE EFFORT

PAGES 132-39: Interior design by *Pierre Yovanovitch of Pierre Yovanovitch Architecture d'Intérieur* (011-33-1-42-66-33-98; pierre-yovanovitch.com). **Landscape design** by *Louis Benech* (011-33-1-42-01-04-00; louisbenech.com). **PAGES 132-33:** **Sofas** covered in *Linsey-Woolsey linen blend*, in *Halva*, #92207-01, to the trade from *Rogers & Goffigon* (203-532-8068). **Jigsaw 1.5** by *Francesco Clemente* from *Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac* (011-33-1-42-72-99-00; ropac.net). **Vintage oak sofa** by *Axel Einar Hjorth* from *Galerie Eric Philippe* (011-33-1-42-33-28-26; ericphilippe.com). **Custom rug**, to the trade from *Holland & Sherry* (212-542-8410; hollandandsherry.com). **PAGE 134-35:** In master bedroom suite, **custom sofa** by *Pierre-Éloi Bris* (011-33-669-62-88-62; wandergestalter.net), upholstered in *Nova wool-mohair*, in *Natural*, #13-51, to the trade from *Chapas Textiles* (718-522-7864; chapastextiles.com). **Vintage cocktail table** by *Paul T. Frank* from *Galerie Eric Philippe*. **Painting** by *Omar Ba* from *Galerie Anne de Villepoix* (011-33-1-42-78-32-24; annedevillepoix.com). In office, **vintage table** by *Hans Wegner* from *Galerie Eric Philippe*. **Above staircase, light fixture** by *Armelle Benoit* (011-33-2-44-01-86-56; armellebenoit.fr). **PAGE 136:** **Vintage table, chairs, and buffet** by *Christen Emanuel Kjaer Monberg* and **vintage light fixture** by *Paavo Tynell*; all from *Galerie Eric Philippe*. **Portrait** by *Stephan Balkenhol* from *Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac*. **PAGE 137:** In entrance hall, **wood sculpture** by *Richard Nonas* and **ceramic sculpture** by *Michel Gouéry*; both from *Galerie Anne de Villepoix*. **PAGE 138:** In master bedroom, **lamp** by *Gabriella Crespi* from *Chahan Gallery* (011-33-1-47-03-47-00; chahan.com).

PALM BEACH POP

PAGES 140-47: Architecture by *Christine Harper of Harper Design Build* (718-832-4601; harperdb.com). **PAGE 141:** In living room, **sofa** by *de Sede* from *DDC* (212-685-0800; ddcnyc.com). **Elaidyl Alcohol** by *Damien Hirst* from *Gagosian Gallery* (212-744-2313; gagosian.com). In den, **sofa and ottoman** by *Francesco Binfaré* from *DDC*. **Artwork** by *Tadaaki Kuwayama* from *Gary Snyder Fine Art* (646-863-8234; garysnyderfineart.com). **PAGES 142-43:** In living room, **pendant lights** by *DaVIDe Groppi* from *ABC Carpet & Home* (212-473-3000; abchome.com). **Betulini** by *Damien Hirst* from *Gagosian Gallery*. In entrance, **Raimond light fixture** by *Raimond Puts* from *Moooi* from *B&B Italia* (212-966-3514; bebitalia.it). **PAGE 144:** In dining room, **Linus armchairs** by *Georg Appeltshäuser* from *DDC*. **Paintings** by *Ed Moses* from *Mark Borghi Fine Art* (561-328-9504; borghi.org). **Sakura chaise longues** by *Sifas* from *Casa & Resort* (305-456-9695; casaandresort.com). **PAGE 145:** **Pendant lights** by *FontanaArte* (212-334-3295; fontanaarte.com). Walls painted in *Regal*, in *Chantilly Lace*, by *Benjamin Moore* (855-724-6802; benjaminmoore.com). **PAGES 146-47:** In master bedroom, **bench** by *Guglielmo Ulrich* from *DDC*. **Carpet** to the trade from *Stark* (212-752-9000; starkcarpet.com). **Florio** by *Kenneth Noland* from *Paul Kasmin Gallery* (212-563-4474; paulkasmingallery.com). **Tufted bed** by *Patricia Urquiola* from *B&B Italia*. **Chair** by *Philippe Starck* for *Kartell* (212-966-6665; kartell.com). In master bath, **Adrian tub** by *MTI Baths* (800-783-8827; mtibaths.com). **Supernova** and **xTool fittings** by *Sieger Design* for *Dornbracht* (800-774-1181; dornbracht.com).

MODERN PASTORAL

PAGES 148-49: **Sofa, chairs, and side table** by *Calvin Klein Home* (866-513-0513; calvinklein.com). **PAGE 150:** **Vintage factory chairs** from *R. T. Facts* (860-927-1700; rtfacts.com). **Round Shape light fixture** by *Restoration Hardware* (866-513-0513; rh.com). **PAGE 151:** In kitchen, **Windsor chair and stool** by *Calvin Klein Home*. In living room, **Faulkner library cabinet** by *Crate and Barrel* (800-967-6696; crateandbarrel.com). **PAGE 152-53:** In master bedroom, **bed and linens** by *Calvin Klein Home*. **Nesting tables** from *Margaret Howell* (011-44-20-7009-9009; margarethowell.co.uk).