



# The Secrets of GREAT DESIGN

WE ASKED 25  
INTERIORS EXPERTS  
TO SHARE THEIR  
APPROACHES TO  
DESIGNING  
SUCCESSFUL SPACES.

*By Ellise Pierce*

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HOME," NATE BERKUSSAYS, "SHOULD tell the story of who you are and be a collection of what you love."

What keeps it from becoming a hodgepodge of cluttered self-expression? Design.

Good design is as individual as it is transformative. It breaks as many rules as it follows. It isn't

always easy to describe, but you know it when you see it.

We asked some of the top tastemakers in the Western design world about their approaches to the spaces and things they create, whether they're crafting a cowhide chair, envisioning a makeover for a historic hotel, or making a house into a feel-good home.

COWBOYS & INDIANS

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PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN HEFFERNAN/COURTESY LA FONDA

LA FONDA SANTA FE 4



## Cheryl Frey ①

ALLEY MODERN & MORE JACKSON, WYOMING

"Great design to me has to be visually stimulating, with thoughtfully placed and orchestrated objects that are personal by nature and moving to those who view them. Like great art or a great song, the composition, if done well, will stand the test of time.

"I love graphic and organic designs together, pieces that have simple lines and are straightforward—functional yet personal.

"Living in the West has given me the opportunity to explore more freely the integration between modern and ethnographic art and objects. I have a fondness for midcentury modern's cutting-edge use of materials and simplistic forms combined with graphic and colorful Native American art and objects, allowing each to have their own dialogue when put together.

"Great design does not compete with the architecture. It complements it in a cohesive blend that is pleasing to the environment." [alleymodern.com](http://alleymodern.com)

## Gina D'Amore Bauerle ②

D'AMORE INTERIORS DENVER

"Almost 98 percent of my design philosophy revolves around area rugs. That's how I draw my overall colors and balance. Without that, I feel like you're making every decision blindly. When you start with a rug, it makes sense why you would choose accent colors and colors on walls. I don't like making any decision before I know what the accent rug is going to be." [damoreinteriors.com](http://damoreinteriors.com)



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## Donnie Volkart

BOX ROAD ALBUQUERQUE

"To achieve an eclectic but harmonious and inviting look, we strive to put together functional, stylish, and beautiful objects sourced from both today's visionaries and the diverse and creative craftsmen of years gone by." [boxroad.net](http://boxroad.net)





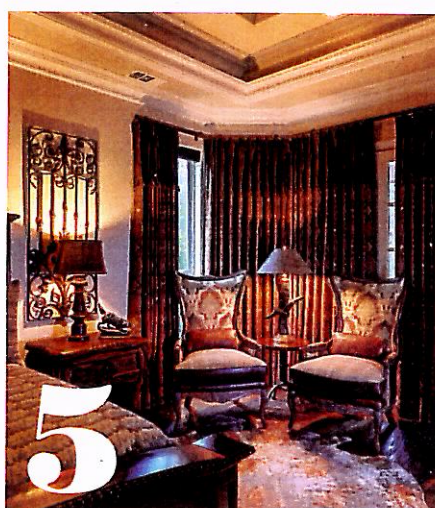
Jenny Kimball ④

LA FONDA SANTA FE

"When the Santa Fe Railroad and Harvey Hotel ran La Fonda in the 1920s, they bought and commissioned fabulous pieces of art—Gerald Cassidys are the most well-known ones throughout the hotel. Since then, we have continued to buy art, mainly from Native American artists, and to keep the collection current.

"I think the impact of the art is what makes La Fonda different. We own our art, and every chance we get, we try to hire local artisans—whether to paint headboards or guest-room numbers, or to buy art to hang in the hotel. Paying attention to the details of the design at every step of the way is key. [It starts at the entrance.] The design surrounding the door is a pattern for a Pueblo rain cloud; the door numbers are hand-punched tin and combed tile.

"Surrounding yourself with art, besides being beautiful and unique, helps you absorb the local culture. It gives a richer experience." [lafondasantafe.com](http://lafondasantafe.com)



Katherine Snedeker ⑤

THE ARRANGEMENT DALLAS AND HOUSTON

"Bedrooms should always be a sanctuary—a place away from the world. Additional seating is important because it allows you to have a space to relax and review the day. A home is about living and using the space; it's not just a place to pass through."

[thearrangement.com](http://thearrangement.com)

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Ja'Nae Adkins

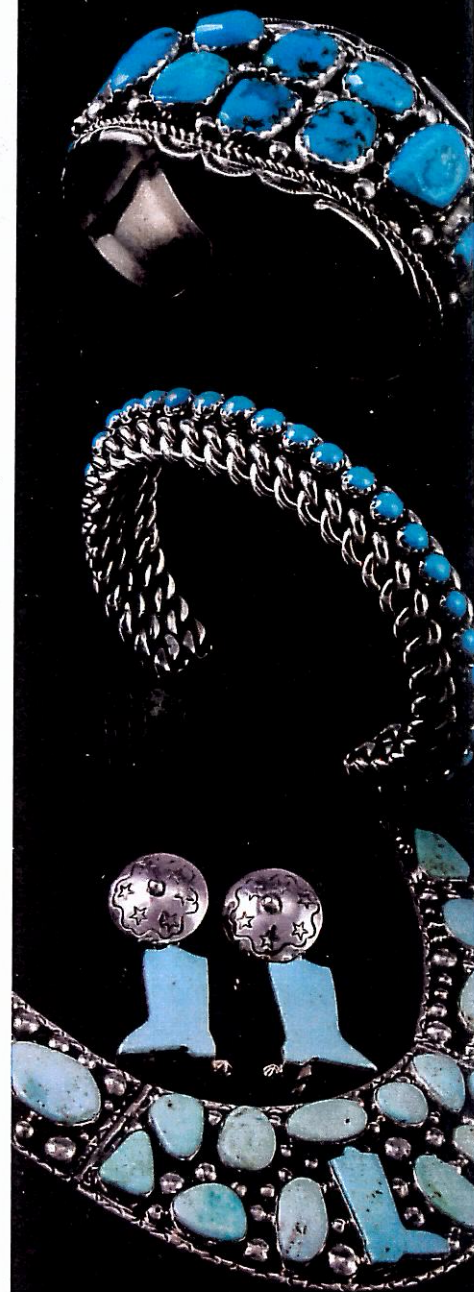
WESTERN PASSION DALLAS

"Good Western design should be sophisticated and versatile enough to mix and match for any lifestyle, yet be comfortable enough to relax with family and friends—a nice leather sofa you can sink into after a long day. Comfort always has to be in play."

[westernpassion.com](http://westernpassion.com)



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