

In the studio with...

GIL WALSH

OWNER AND PRINCIPAL DESIGNER

BY ROBIN HODES

Interior designer Gil Walsh is acclaimed for giving clients the style they want in their homes; in fact, at her firm in West Palm Beach and Martha's Vineyard, the slogan is, "where style lives." Walsh and her team take great pride in evoking insight from a discerning clientele, then superimposing their own knowledge, experience and panache to achieve stylish spaces that are both visually pleasing and purposeful. "We never stop reminding ourselves that style is nothing without function," Walsh says. The accomplished designer partners with many notable South Florida brands (as evidenced in her Worth Avenue pop-up shop) and was entrusted to replicate—as authentically as possible—famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece "Fallingwater." She also proudly sits on an advisory committee for preservation of the historic home.

What is your definition of luxury? My version of luxury has an aspect of extreme comfort and convenience, but that means different things to different people. It could be a quality mattress, linen bedding, or fabrics that can handle wear and tear while still being luxurious. Because it's subjective, I recommend curating what a luxury lifestyle means to you personally.

What would you identify as "trending" right now? Since we are spending more time and doing more things at home, functional considerations are of greater importance, thus triggering the need for better practical solutions including the use of the right materials... often with an eye to longevity. In short, I'd say that although it's a "perennial" trend, finding the perfect balance between form and function is the "hottest" trend.

What steps do you take to make your designs sustainable and eco-friendly? Whenever appropriate, we like to incorporate reclaimed woods, bamboo and recycled metal into the mix of materials we use. I also opt for environmentally conscious finishes with low VOCs and nontoxic paints.

You've stated that art is your passion and an important aspect of your work. What is one of your go-to local art galleries? I have a wonderful relationship with the Holden Luntz Gallery in Palm Beach, which specializes in artistic photography, from classical to contemporary.

If you were to name a "dream piece" for your own interior—regardless of budget—what would it be? Original art by Picasso or Thomas Moran, and sculptures by masters from Henry Moore to Edgar Degas.

Who is the design legend that most inspires you and why? I have always been inspired by American designer Michael Taylor's work, often referred to as the "California look." The effects of airiness and lightness he achieved is particularly appealing to me. The many wonderful ways he brought the outdoors in—some 50 years ago—is still a trend.

How do you manage to achieve a seamless transition from interior to exterior in your design work here in South Florida? One of the best ways to create a smooth flow is using the same materials for both indoors and outdoors wherever possible. Linking indoor and outdoor spaces also helps the interiors feel larger. When the interior of a home is connected to the exterior, your eye sees farther and your space appears larger.



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– Gil Walsh



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