

MODERN LUXURY

# INTERIORS

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## Heritage BLOOM

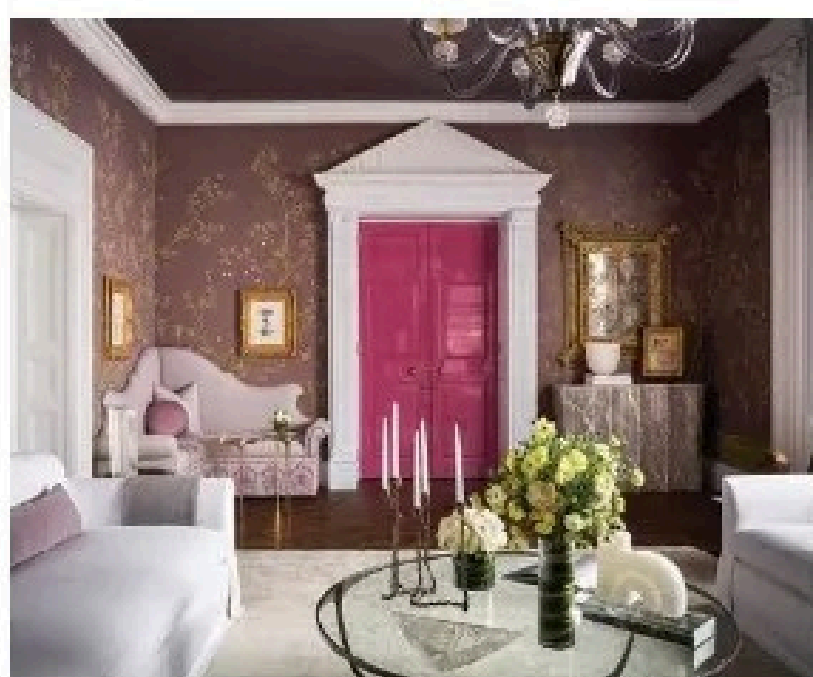
Aerin Lauder's  
Palm Beach Paradise

THE OUTSIDERS:  
THE PEOPLE, PROJECTS & PRODUCTS TO  
INSPIRE LUXURIOUS OUTDOOR LIVING



# Design Doyenne

With L.A.-based designer Mary McDonald stepping up to serve as honorary chair of the Lake Forest Showhouse ([lakeforestshowhouse.com](http://lakeforestshowhouse.com)), the star of Bravo's *Million Dollar Decorators* and frequent Schumacher collaborator shares how she got involved with the buzzy event and what design news we can expect from her next. *by J.P. ANDERSON*



Clockwise from top: Lake Forest Showhouse honorary chair Mary McDonald; the Showhouse's cabana, designed by Meghan Jay; the salon by Joey Leicht Design.



**How did you get involved with Lake Forest Showhouse & Gardens?**

I have always loved Chicago and especially Lake Forest and its beautiful classic architecture, so when Schumacher and the Showhouse Committee reached out to invite me to be the honorary chair of [the event's] 20th production, I said yes immediately. I am really excited to see what the designers create in each space—inside and out.

**What's the appeal of a showhouse?**

I love showhouses mainly to see what designers create when they are their own client. Designers have so many visions in their head that they aren't able to act upon fully because of their particular client's project goals and parameters. In a showhouse, you can really see designers express their own unique unaltered vision. I love how all the spaces are different from the next. The creativity is exciting.

**What aspect of the event are you most excited about?**

I cannot wait to see the rooms reimagined of this incredible estate from 1895. I am

honored that my Schumacher Greek Key wallpaper is going in Cynthia McCullough's entry foyer. Frances Elkins once papered this same space, so it's thrilling to have one of my designs represented.

**Like so many, you have been impacted by the LA wildfires. How is your design work helping you through this time?** Unfortunately, I lost a property [that had been] in our family for years, but the constant change and renewal aspect to design helps you realize life is full of change and renewal, which is important to recognize in loss.

**What news can we look forward to from you for the remainder of 2025?**

I always continue to add to all of my existing licensing lines and am constantly designing new homes and products for the future. I have a few projects being photographed for publication right now to be seen in the next year or so. I am also in the throes of collecting and sorting photos for my next book which is long overdue! I live half the time in the Hudson Valley and at some point I will work on a book about that journey as it develops more.



From left: Ablaze Design Group turned out a stunning kitchen; JenMarie Interiors created a mudroom that encourages lingering.

*"I love showhouses mainly to see what designers create when they are their own client."*

—MARY MCDONALD



From left: White Couch Design's mahjong room is playful yet chic; the first floor hall and stairwall exude charm thanks to Lauren Collander Interiors.

