

## Ritz-Carlton interiors guru Sherry Hayslip gives us a peek at 5-star style

Interior designer Sherry Hayslip offers nothing less for Dallas' new Residences at the Ritz-Carlton

Thursday, September 13, 2007

BY CHRISTOPHER WYNN / Staff writer



*Photos by TERRI GLANGER / Special to The Dallas Morning News*

Hayslip won an ASID design award for this Ritz-Carlton model residence. Kevin Austin fabricated the Regency-glam mantel topped with rock crystal. Hayslip and artisan Michael Stallings crafted the glass-and-metal coffee table and matching tree tables of marble and silvered plaster. The hand-carved gilded mirror was a find at Hermitage Antiques, and the J. Robert Scott chair sits atop an Indian rug from Renaissance Collection. Succulents in a green rock crystal vase from urban Flower at Stanley Korshak are a finishing touch.

Designer Sherry Hayslip does not do fads. Especially when it comes to interiors for Dallas' pre-eminent new address: the Residences at the Ritz-Carlton.

With more than 30 years in the business, studies everywhere from SMU to Parsons in Italy, and a slew of design awards to her firm's name, Hayslip follows her instincts first. "It's almost impossible not to be afflicted – not affected, but afflicted – by whatever the latest, greatest, hottest and hippest trends in design are at any given moment," says Hayslip. "

Or if you're of a more traditional bent, then the distraction is what's most impressive. But I believe in finding your design center and going with what you respond to on a deeper level."

And that gut response is a palette of refined neutrals and opulent materials for her grandest project to date: the Ritz. Architect Robert A.M. Stern's esthetic for the high-rise project inspired the Hayslip team's design.



*Sherry Hayslip*

"The style is Regency," she says, "but as it was reinterpreted through the great New York apartment buildings of the '30s and '40s."

That translates into touches such as detailed custom moldings, rich wood paneling and built-ins, Venetian plastered walls and, of course, showpiece fireplaces.

"Every residential mantel in the Ritz is hand-carved marble – and some of the homes have three of them," says Hayslip. The building's classical design elements made it easier to use proportion, scale and detail to cozy effect. "This is a high-rise, but I still wanted it to have a sense of house and not just be about the views. It needed to still feel like a nest." A very chic nest.

Hayslip's respect for the bones of the building and its history comes naturally: Her husband is Dallas architect Cole Smith. "I think there's not a breath we take that isn't connected somehow to each other or design," she says of his influence.

In addition to creating the foundational interior elements for the city's hottest new address, Hayslip is also working with numerous homeowners to extensively personalize their spaces here.

"One of my clients is pairing cream-colored walls with black marble floors and hanging Baccarat black crystal chandeliers," she says. "Another client is opting for colors of beautiful crimson and emerald, and filling the space with antiques. Still another wants to create an Italian villa in the sky."

A few clients are even stripping down the details for a clean, contemporary space within the traditionally styled Ritz. "They've tended to be guys," she observes.

The customization is just fine with Hayslip, who prefers not to work in a single style. "I find that stultifying," she says. "I don't want to be the modern-this or period-that lady. I like the range. I guess it circles back again to my basic decorating advice: Choose what you love."

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## *RITZ BITS: HAYSLIP'S TIPS TO BRING HOME THE LOOK*



Marble and granite are the elegant building blocks of Hayslip's Ritz palette, softened by decadent silk and velvet for upholstered pieces.

Add shine. "I love the sparkle of minerals," says Hayslip, who used decorative rock crystals as glam accents for many Ritz interiors, including rock crystal logs to dress up an unused fireplace. A favorite source is Mineral Hunters on Cole Street, 214-752-8662.

Go natural. The designer admits to having a "fascination with anything natural" and says to look for opportunities to incorporate nature into design. For the Ritz, she and artisan Michael Stallings designed marble side tables supported by real branches cast in silvered plaster.

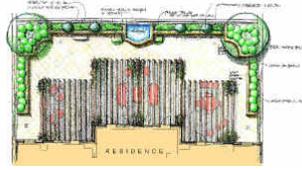
Play up texture. From a Venetian plaster finish to wallpaper, add texture to rooms for more depth. "I tend toward either a subtle effect or a big, bold graphic element that brings drama to a space." A favorite source is Ralph Murphy of Artisan Wall Finishes on Daytonia Avenue, 214-321-0099.

## *HIGH-RISE GARDENING*



How do you create the look of an elegant French garden atop a sky-high balcony? For one Ritz residence, Sherry Hayslip turned to Paul Fields of Lambert's Landscape Co. Fields, who also serves on the board of the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Society, says it's all in the details.

"The focal point of the space is a mid-19th-century French cast-iron fountain backed by painted French architectural treillage," says Fields. "We also created raised planters of cut limestone filled with simple, lush plantings, boxwood topiaries and roses." His team plans to furnish the space with pieces ranging from the Agresti handmade terra cotta vase (left) by Seibert & Rice, to the indoor-stylish, but outdoor-sturdy Louis Soleil armchair in weathered teak by Sutherland.



Urban flowers: Lambert's design for one client's Ritz Residence balcony garden

For any high-rise hot house, Fields says plant choice is key. "Shallow-rooted plants such as grasses, groundcovers and succulents are good choices because they can withstand windy conditions and drastic temperature changes." He also recommends the use of windbreaks, such as holly hedges or bamboo.

For existing terrace gardens, Fields says, September is a great time to replenish soil nutrients with fertilization or compost. By midmonth, start changing out containers to fall seasonal plantings. He says the three most important things to remember at all times are "good drainage, good soil and good irrigation."