

## GETTING PERSONAL

*With a style that's easy, breezy, and bold, this California designer will brighten your day.*

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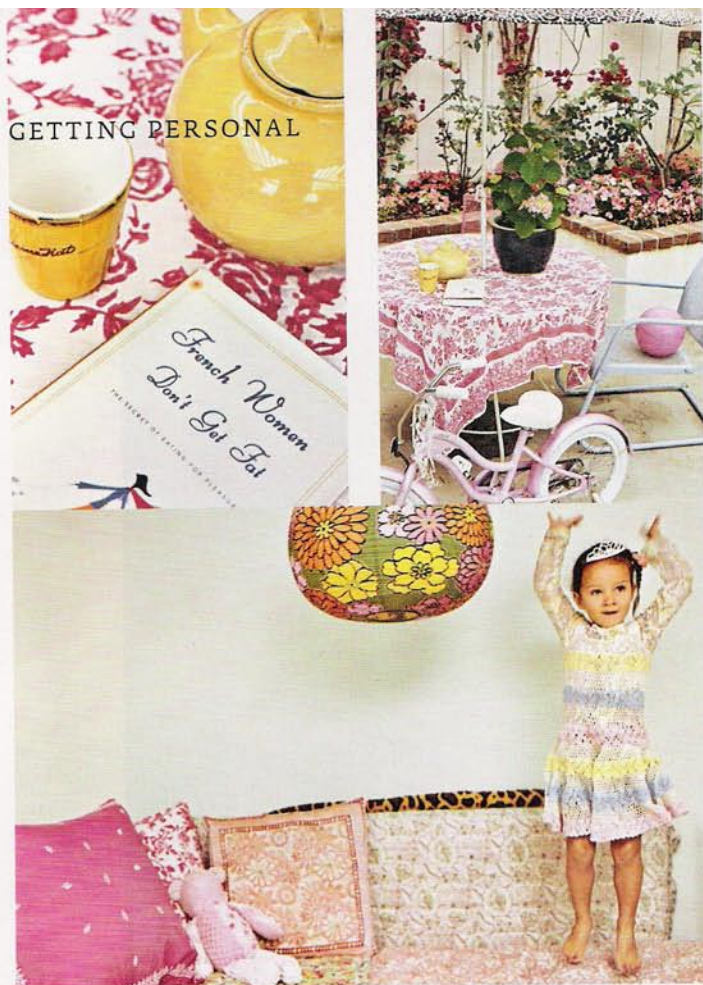


KERRY CASSILL HAS JUST ONE RULE IN HER LAGUNA BEACH, CALIFORNIA STORE: COME AS YOU ARE. It's an apt reflection of her aesthetic—equal parts beach and bohemian, infused with a bit of India and vintage-chic style. Kerry combines color and pattern in a way few else do. It's a gift that led her from design school to hat-making and finally to fabric, clothing, and furniture designs of her own, resulting in her own store, Lala. The smell of saltwater fills the air, but inside the store, the floor space overflows with her collection of resort-inspired wear, yummy bedding, home accents, furniture, and loads of ultra-hip fabric. From the land where the sun always shines, and with her 4-year-old daughter, Dean, in tow, Kerry has found her very own California dream. "I get to do what I always wanted to do," Kerry says.

*Kerry Cassill's vintage-inspired fabrics look perfect against the easy, flowing lines of dresses from her clothing line. Kerry creates four collections each year but is finding her future interests turning toward furniture and home accents.*



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CLOCKWISE (from top left) A mustard yellow teapot rests against one of Kerry's tablecloths and a current favorite read. Kerry and her daughter, Dean, relish the California sun on their patio, filled with iron furniture and Dean's pink bicycle. A midnight blue wall wraps from the living room to the bedroom; Kerry's home style is eclectic, mixing family heirlooms, such as the Italian desk, with pieces upholstered in her own fabric. Dean romps in her room, wearing a tiara befitting a princess; the bedding is a Kerry design, and the lamp is a vintage 1960s flea-market find.

**YOU STARTED OUT AS A MILLINER. HOW DID YOU GET FROM HATS TO FURNITURE, FABRIC, AND FOUR COLLECTIONS A YEAR?**

I had my own hat shop in Seattle, and I had worked with a great colorist—I was always interested in color. Then I went on a trip to Paris and got really turned on by the Indian textiles there. So I started traveling to India and eventually began manufacturing my own prints in a really small production there. Around the same time, I opened my store, Lala. It's named after the brother-in-law of the woman I work with in India. I think Lala is a great name—the way it's written is beautiful, and it's easy to remember.

**YOU MOVED YOUR SHOP FROM SEATTLE TO LAGUNA BEACH. WHAT'S TO LOVE ABOUT YOUR LOCATION?**

I grew up in Seattle, but I had lived in California in the 1980s. Laguna is an easy town. My house is two blocks from the beach; my store is a half block from the beach. I bought the building next to my store to expand, along with the vacant lot, which has a crazy good view of the ocean. I think

about opening stores in Los Angeles or New York City, but Laguna is a one-mile town, and I like that.

**WHAT DO YOUR CLOTHES FEEL LIKE?**

My collection is what you really would put on at the beach—sweats and a skirt over a swimming suit, light little dresses, things like that. We also have bedding, furniture, ottomans, benches. We put a paisley symbol on everything I design in India, that's the symbol of learning, and ironically, it's also pronounced "kerry."

**COLOR CAN BE INTIMIDATING. HOW DO YOU MAKE IT EASY?**

Find a fabric, a rug, or a towel you love. Pick a color from it and start painting walls. Choose colors with lots of depth and more pigment, and you'll have good colors. Or pick up some yardage—we sell our fabric that way—and use some beautiful material to upholster a piece. I go from colors and my instincts. I'm always looking at magazines, dishes, shoes, art, and nature.



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### WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR BEST IDEAS?

From my travels. We're pool people, so our favorite places to go are Mexico and Hawaii. Last year we went to London, and it really confirmed the direction of my new store, which is a bit more modern, with steel and glass.

### WHAT'S YOUR INSPIRATION? WHAT DIRECTION ARE YOU GOING?

I'm really into rich smoky colors, watery blues, and deep cherry. I'm feeling feminine, with ruffles, bustles, and lots of dresses—very *Here Come the Brides*, the late-1960s TV show with Bobby Sherman, which I loved. It's a saloon-girl vibe, with country-western updos. I also like Asian- and vintage-inspired florals with new rhythms and special patterns. After I finish my 2007 resort collection, I'm going to turn back to my furniture making and lighting.

### WHAT'S ALWAYS IN YOUR HOUSE?

Wine, cheese, fruit, and salads are always in the fridge. And we have a lot of music and crafts going. There's a lot of glitter

and glue in my house. My daughter has great style and likes to mix it up. I still decorate her room, but she "decorates" online at [www.Barbie.com](http://www.Barbie.com).

### WHAT'S IN YOUR CD PLAYER?

We're doing French tapes in the car, but at home I have loud, moody, hotel-lounge music, like Madeline Peyroux.

### YOU LIVE A STONE'S THROW FROM THE OCEAN. WHAT'S YOUR PERFECT DAY AT THE BEACH?

It's Dean and I with friends, with temperatures in the mid 70s, and the water just right. We have sandwiches, fruit, and water, and get there at 11:00 and leave at 5:00.

### WHAT'S YOUR BEST CHILDHOOD MEMORY?

I have two: My father and I would always go on drives in his restored vintage cars. And my mom let me pick out fabric for this great dress—an aqua shift with white daisies. Maybe that's what prompted me to go to design school and become what I am. ☼

LEFT In Kerry's dining room, a wall hanging of her fabric adds pattern to the clean-lined space; her house is best described as mid-century cottage. RIGHT Collected in drawstring bags, Kerry's luscious bedding fills shelves: quilts, duvets, sheets, pillowcases, beach blankets, and throws. Kerry's store, Lala, is located at 1145 South Coast Highway, Laguna Beach, California; 866/524-5252; [www.kerrycassill.com](http://www.kerrycassill.com).

