

West Palm Beach designer brings her vision to high-end interiors

© 4:50 p.m. Thursday, April 7, 2011

When Katherine Shenaman would get grounded and sent to her room as a young girl, she had an unusual way of dealing with her punishment.

"I would re-arrange the furniture in my room," she said, laughing. "At least I was being productive."



Interior designer Katherine Shenaman has worked for clients in Palm Beach, Wellington, New York City and The Hamptons.

Little did she know, a career was born.

Some 25 years later, Shenaman is now an accomplished interior designer who specializes in high-end interior designs with an emphasis on fine and decorative arts.

For the past six years, she has owned and operated her own interior design firm in West Palm Beach. She has three employees (one full time, two part time) and about six residential clients, three of whom live in Palm Beach.

Shenaman has a master's in British and French decorative arts and historic interiors from the University of Buckingham in England. She said her interest in design runs in the family. "My grandmother has always really enjoyed decorating, and my aunt loved design and I used to shopping with her," Shenaman recalled.

With more than 10 years of experience in the business, she has worked on everything from Palm Beach estates to pre-war apartments in New York City. She has also worked in London, the Bahamas and the Hamptons on Long Island.

The key to being a good designer, she said, is to building a close relationship with the client.

"You have to make sure you understand your lifestyle and how they live," she said.

But that doesn't mean Shenaman, [with 10 years of experience, \\$150 to \\$250 per hour](#), and her clients always agree on a project. One Wellington woman, for instance, didn't think turning a screened-in porch area into an indoor/outdoor room would work and told Shenaman so.

"Now she thinks it's the best room in the house," Shenaman said. "Being a designer is about having a vision."

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL STYLE?

'Getting simpler and simpler. Personally, I'm pulling away from lots of patterns and bright and bold colors.'

What's your idea of the perfect getaway?

'Tuscany. I was there two years ago, and there's something magical and moving about Tuscany.'

What item is always in your purse?

'A tape measure. You never know when you need to measure something.'

How many pairs of shoes do you own?

(laughs) 'I don't know, a couple dozen.'

If you were a 'Sex and the City' character, who would you be?

'My friends all tell me Charlotte. I've never been the overly glamorous, overly chic character. I like things that are classic, timeless and quietly elegant.'