

2012 SKYLINER TOURNAMENT: PEYTON WARREN SHINES AT SPRUCE

AUG/SEP

# HORSE & style

M A G A Z I N E



FEATURE

## ARIAT • BEHIND THE BRAND

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: Style Rider,  
NorCal Corner, Our Olympians

2012



# Amanda Shoemaker Teal

by Tanya Zilinskas Naouri

Amanda Shoemaker Teal's storied equestrian background has shaped her current career as an interior designer in more ways than one. Much like one of her interiors, her path in life has seamlessly blended seemingly unrelated elements and experiences for a beautiful final result.

As the daughter of Bill Shoemaker, a legendary Thoroughbred racing jockey, Teal grew up with horses in her blood. Raised in the city of San Marino outside of Pasadena, California, some of Teal's fondest memories were weekend mornings spent at the track with her father during morning workouts, something she far preferred to the afternoon races themselves.

"In my opinion, that is when the track really comes alive," explains Teal. **“The backside is the heart and soul of a racetrack.”** For a few summers Teal even pitched in, working as a stall cleaner and hot walker during the Del Mar racing season and relishing her time spent with the horses.

### From Track to Arena

After the track, Teal would head to the barn, where she trained with National Show Hunter and Show Jumping Hall of Fame inductee Marcia "Mousie" Williams at the San Pascual Stables in Pasadena. Williams would have her clients do their own grooming and general equine care, something that came naturally to the hands-on Teal. Teal still considers Williams to have been a major influence.

"I feel so blessed to have ridden with Mousie," Teal states. "She taught me how to be a horsewoman, not just a rider."

In 2002, Teal left the familiar home of her youth, making the move to Northern California to work for Millennium Farm in Menlo Park. After several years at Millennium, Teal transitioned to working at other Northern California barns, including for notable hunter jumper trainers Lenny Marconi and Debbi Sereni.

Interestingly enough, it was her love of horses that ended up leading Teal to her current profession as an interior designer. While working at the Portola Valley Training Center, Teal befriended fellow rider Rebecca Bradley, the owner and founder of a well-respected San Francisco interior design firm. They quickly bonded over their shared love of horses and design, something that Teal had developed an interest in at an early age while exploring her grandmother's antique-laden house.

### A New Path

It was through Bradley that Teal realized that she could actually have a career in design, and upon Bradley's recommendation she started taking classes at the Academy of Art University San Francisco to obtain a degree in design. Bradley also gave Teal an internship at her firm to help give her a leg up in the business. Teal immediately knew she had found her true calling.

Teal went on to earn a degree in Interior Design and Architecture from the Academy of Art, and



# Determination by Design

This page, from top: A classic place setting styled for a Matchbook Magazine tabletop shoot is filled with personal touches; Amanda Teal; Under Teal's inventive eye, a functional and well-styled bookshelf provides ample opportunity to display more than just paperbacks.





further honed her education by studying the History of Decorative Arts at Sotheby's in London. By the fall of 2010, Teal was ready to strike out on her own and launched her own eponymous design firm, Amanda Teal Interior Design .

Teal's work in interior design has been lauded as fresh, warm and subtly striking. Her interiors encourage the eye to travel and follow the story of a room rather than being overwhelmed by it. Instead of following fleeting trends, she embraces the more timeless elements of both traditional and modern design that will continue to complement a space for years to come.

### Classic Makes Courant

Given Teal's design philosophy, it's no surprise that she champions details that hold a certain understated originality. Her recommendations for sprucing up any interior with au courant items while keeping it classic? "The current trends that have staying power are grey painted walls and kitchen cabinets, brass hardware, orange decorative accents and graphic wallpapers," says Teal. For those looking to refresh their homes with a little retail therapy, Teal's favorite Northern California shopping spots include HD Buttercup, Big Daddies Antiques, Summerhouse, Sue Fisher King, Antique and Art Exchange, Tony Kitz Gallery and Heath Ceramics.

Despite her horse heavy background, don't expect to see too many equestrian items in a signature Amanda Teal interior. "I am not a big

fan of anything themed," explains Teal. "It will look tired and dated really quickly." Instead, she recommends bringing in a few suggestively equestrian items into each room. "Hang a framed Hermes scarf, create a conversation area with two old leather chairs, or style a bookcase or side table by adding some antique riding paraphernalia."

### The Balance of Symmetry

To remedy the typically cluttered tackroom or horse show set up, Teal advocates a minimalist approach. "I think the most important thing when decorating your tack room is to approach the whole set up with an editing eye," she says. "Adding too many elements can end up looking messy and overdone. Symmetry and simplicity rule."

Though currently taking a break from riding in order to start a family, Teal does plan to return to the ring soon. While her path may have diverged from the one that seemed inevitable given her family connections, Teal is quick to credit her equestrian background for her success in the highly competitive world of interior design.

"Every important life lesson I have learned has come from my experiences with and around horses," Teal says. "Riding has taught me me a lot about discipline, determination, empathy and gratitude. It has given me the ability to believe in myself and the confidence to take on challenges I don't think I can overcome."

Opposite page, clockwise: Teal with her father during a riding trip he took to Australia in 1988; A recently completed Teal designed kitchen is warmly modern; This stylish nursery has an irresistible sense of whimsy; Teal's attention to detail includes the addition of floating shelves and a marble mosaic back splash to give even basic storage a special charm.

This page: Teal riding Victor (owned by the Pinnacle Equine Group) in Pebble Beach. Bright pops of coral lend eye-catching appeal to a bedroom.