

New Orleans

HOMES

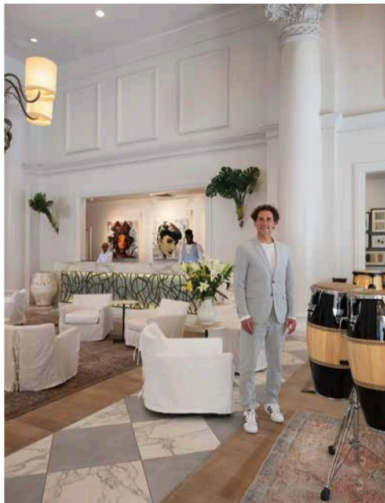
Outdoor Living

A MIDCENTURY OASIS
IN LAKE VISTA

PLUS
"SUMMER
DRESSING"
YOUR HOME

GARDENING
WITH NATIVE
PLANTS

COLORFUL
OUTDOOR
ACCESSORIES



SUMMER DRESS YOUR HOME

Q&A with Hotelier Sean Cummings

➔ Hotelier Sean Cummings believes in the power of design to lift the human spirit. This New Orleanian invests in architecture, interiors, traditions and rituals to increase the quality of life for locals and visitors, alike. Cummings' robust real estate portfolio, which includes boutique hotels International House Hotel and Loft 523, expresses different traditions to celebrate life, culture and *joie de vivre* in this city. Like every New Orleanian, Cummings recognizes New Orleans as the perfect place to celebrate: "There are five pillars that make this place unlike any other city in America: architecture, food, music, joyful culture, climate," Cummings said. One of the ways this hotelier chooses to honor and celebrate the region is with "summer dress," a local house-keeping tradition. Here are Cummings' insights on how to indulge in this light and airy summer tradition.

Pamper your home with summer dress.

New Orleans is a magnetic place that attracts generations of travelers and a big rea-

son people visit is because of the city's distinctive sense of place (it can be considered the northernmost Caribbean city, culturally different from the rest of Louisiana and the United States). Our steamy climate is one of our defining elements and New Orleanians respond to the hot, wet, semi-tropical weather in a variety of ways. Cooling off finds expression in our architecture, with our tall ceilings, whirring fans, sheer draperies and also with interior design. A signature way New Orleanians have historically cooled off is by summer dressing their homes. Our summer dress ritual begins on Easter and ends on Labor Day. Though it may be considered less imperative with the advent of air conditioning, there are several things I think everyone should adhere to in the hot summer months.

White cotton slip covers are a must.

I like to put white cotton slip covers over more formal, thick upholstery in the summer months. This allows the furnishings to breathe, while also protecting fine upholstery from perspiration during the hot days and nights of summer. You can have bespoke slip covers made, or purchase them at your favorite interiors store. If you like to dress them up, you can personalize the slip covers with colorful or more muted piping. I always opt for simple, authentic, white cotton slipcovers, which have a clean, airy feel.

Roll up your heavy rugs and replace with Seagrass or sisal.

[Many] New Orleans [residents] decorate their interiors with wool rugs and upholstered furniture. However, these materials can be heavy and inappropriate for our climate in the summer months. Trade your heavy rugs this season, for seagrass or sisal rugs. Sisal is a very durable material and is light in color, perfect for the summertime. Seagrass is also durable, stain-resistant, and reed-like in texture. An added bonus is that these rugs feel nice — like a mini massage — on bare feet.

Arrange bouquets with Caribbean flair.

New Orleans interiors and design can give a nod to the city's Caribbean [Influences] ([particularly] Havana and Haiti). When summer dressing your home, fill vases with gorgeous banana leaves, shell ginger, palms and other flora, expressive of spring and summer.

Integrate seersucker.

Find ways to use seersucker, a classic, light, all-cotton fabric. At our hotels, we work with Haspel, the 'originator' of the seersucker suit founded in New Orleans in 1909. During the pandemic, we celebrated the Haspel family by having our employees wear Haspel seersucker masks, jackets, and custom-made vests with pirate coins as buttons.

Summer dress with a drink.

Like most rituals and traditions in New Orleans, summer dressing should be done with a cocktail or an iced tea in hand. We like to make fresh fruit seasonal granitas, an iced Sicilian concoction, our nod to the snowball stands that dot the New Orleans' landscape during the summer. — EVA FEDDERLY