

SPECIAL HOME ISSUE

PLUS
20 COZY
DESIGN IDEAS

Town & Country

ESTABLISHED IN 1846

DESIGNS FOR FAMILY LIVING

L.A.
KEEPING
IT NATURAL

DALLAS
LOVING
THE MODERN
LOOK

**NEW YORK
CITY**
COOKING
FOR A CROWD

BERKSHIRES
RENEWING
A FAMILY FARM



OCTOBER 2009 \$4.50

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L.A. interior design
Alexandra
Michael Misczynski
with son M

The essence of Italian beauty



SH

STEFAN HAFNER



OPERA JEWELS LLC

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PEARLY GREATS

The natural iridescence of pearls is especially radiant when showcased in a bold ring. Clockwise from top right:

MIKIMOTO 18k white gold, diamonds and baroque white South Sea pearl (\$30,000), 888-701-2323. **CHANEL FINE JEWELRY** 18k white gold, diamonds and pearls (\$6,850), 800-550-0005.

STEFAN HAFNER 18k white gold, diamonds and South Sea and Tahitian pearls (\$15,282), at Paul Carter Jewels, Houston, 713-627-7495. **JACK KELÉGE** platinum, diamonds and South Sea pearl (\$9,950), 877-653-5343. **MASTOLONI PEARLS** 18k white gold, diamonds and Tahitian pearl (\$3,500), 800-347-

3275. **JAMES DE GIVENCHY FOR TAFFIN** platinum, black lacquer and freshwater and South Sea pearls (\$50,000), 212-421-6222. Center: **YVEL** 18k white gold, diamonds and baroque gray South Sea pearl (\$11,079), 866-983-5583.



Opera Jewels

How do you define the Stefan Hafner look?

Melissa: I was introduced to Stefan Hafner many years ago before we even opened the store in Denver, and I fell in love with it—I think I tried on every piece. It feels so feminine on; it is one of sexiest jewelry lines on the market. It's not stiff and conservative—it flows and moves with the body. I think it has always been a trendsetting collection in the industry that a lot of people copy.

Massimo: It's definitely a trendsetter. The three-woman design team worked with Stefan before he sold the company in 2000, so his spirit remains. They are still a part of this beautiful dream that every one of us is producing. The beauty of Stefan Hafner is, rather than seeing the gold settings, you see the stones, and they have movement. It's very sexy and so natural and comfortable to wear.

Melissa: When you see Stefan Hafner, you know it, because it has a distinctive look. The design team is revolutionary in creating air and space in jewelry. And they have perfected the weight, so it can be a huge necklace, but it looks and feels so light. I got married in one.

Is quality becoming a higher priority today?

Melissa: People are seeing the value in jewelry because it lasts forever. Still, they are more discerning and careful about how they spend their money, so quality is paramount now. I look for quality finishing, particularly underneath, which is what I look at first. You know the designers who take the time to polish underneath and finish the piece with a cage. Polishing, finishing, weight, and clarity of gemstones are all important. I look for fire and sparkle in the stones. When you put on a piece of Stefan Hafner, it illuminates the face.

Massimo: Everything is very well made and thought out. Before coming out with a new piece, the designers have many meetings. They think of changing the colors or the shapes of stones to make it very beautiful. There was one pendant with 282 diamonds, yet it was not that big—just imagine all the work that went into that.

Is Made in Italy important?

Melissa: It matters a great deal that it's Made in Italy. There is such a difference in quality—you can put it in your hand and see it. Some customers have a trained eye, and others don't, so we choose for them.

Massimo: It would be easy to do production in Asia, and we could drop the prices 30 percent—but then it would no longer be Stefan Hafner, that's not our style. So it may be more expensive

Massimo Zerbinì of
Opera Jewels
(distributor of
Stefan Hafner) and
Melissa Oster
of Oster Jewelers

Oster Jewelers



and therefore exclusive—we do not want to be in 500 stores. We want to offer the customer quality and exclusivity. When you buy a piece, you know there are not thousands of them out there.

What are the most important looks for fall?

Massimo: This year we came out with a new collection named Ortensia, it has lots of colors using sapphires, rubies and diamonds, and all the stones appear to be floating. Fall this year is definitely about the flower—all in diamonds, from brown to white to colored to black. There is a lot of black this season.

Melissa: There is a lot of black and gray, for sure. We've always done really well with Stefan Hafner's black diamonds; they are timeless. A lot of our customers live in the mountains or at the beach, and they want a funky, cool, chic, casual look. I'm also seeing people drawn more to color now; I think it's to lighten the mood.

Massimo: Yes, we're seeing red gemstones—rubies, rubellites—and yellow and pink gold again.

What makes something a conversation piece?

Melissa: It's one piece that really stands out. It's definitely a strong design that is easily recognizable. At Stefan Hafner they come up with a big runway-type piece and then graduate the design down for every woman.

Massimo: When you wear a conversation piece, everyone asks you about it. Or they can tell you what it is because it is immediately recognizable. It also involves *how it's made*, *how it feels on your body*. Like a woman, a conversation piece evokes sweetness, beauty, passion—they all come through. It should have sensuality.

PROMOTION

Opera Jewels

Stefan Hafner pendant from
the Astrakan Collection
hanging on white gold
necklace with
white diamonds.

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