

# CLASSIC CONTEMPORARY

With a degree in Architecture from UC Berkeley, Maria Tenaglia began her career designing retail and restaurant space both nationally and internationally. She was a Senior Designer for the retail design firm Hambrecht Terrell International and worked in their New York, London, and Los Angeles offices. She followed that up as a Senior Designer for Pat Kuleto Restaurants. Eighteen years ago, she decided to launch her own firm. Since then, Tenaglia has been earning a cult following for her fresh, modern spaces beautifully grounded with classic lines and details.



**Key Design Influencers in your life/career?** My mother, Nancy Keith Tenaglia, a talented architect and designer, and my grandfather, Kenyon Keith, an architect, builder, and developer. Being from a design-minded family, I was fortunate to gain insight into the field early on. I have fond memories of walking construction sites of homes my mother had designed at St. Malo Beach, a coastal community that my grandfather created and developed in the 1920s in Southern California.

As a teen, I absolutely loved the framing, and later, the painting stages of a home, so it became quite clear to me that I would follow in the family tradition.

When home on college breaks, I spent hours at the Pacific Design Center assisting my mother with fabrics and color palettes. The homes that I grew up in were filled with lovely French toile and chintz fabrics, which is undoubtedly one of the reasons I am comfortable working with pattern and color to this day.

### 5 Key elements to a great room?

Proportion, architectural details (either traditional or modern) that remain consistent throughout a home, fantastic contemporary art, finishes or fabrics that give a bit of drama, and well-chosen accessories. There is nothing worse than a beautiful room with terrible accessories!



**Design destinations that have influenced you recently?** The city palaces of Jaipur and Udaipur in India, the Atlas Mountains in Morocco, and Istanbul.

**In a fire you'd rescue?** A 19th-century oil painting on panel of a Madonna and Child, a blanket made from all my son's old water polo tee shirts, and family photos.

**Some of your favorite Bay Area design resources?** Cavalier, Coup d'Etat, Kneedler Fauchere, Madeline Weinrib Collection, and the SFMOMA Store

**Favorite design blogs?** Dpagesblog, Style Saloniste by Diane Dorrans Saeks and, though not officially a blog, Nowness.com

**Design books you can't live without?** *Salandino Villa* and *Lanvin* by Dean Merceron—the remarkable history of the House of Lanvin and its affect on art and design.

**Do you have a Mantra?** Try not to be-labor and over think things. Be efficient, effective, and rely on your instincts. ♦