



DESIGN DARLING

## SUZANNE COSTA'S PHILANTHROPIC TOUCH

The respected designer spearheads the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southwest Florida's Project Design, which creates cheery lodging spaces for pediatric patients and their families.

HOME + DESIGN  
PROFILE

Interior designer Suzanne Costa has always had a giving spirit. The daughter of jazz legend Eddie Costa and a fashion designer, she grew up surrounded by creativity. Tony Bennett, Zoot Sims and Coleman Hawkins were some of the famous faces that would wander in and out of the family’s New York City apartment when she was a little girl.

Now a master creative herself (Costa is highly regarded for her award-winning restaurant design, including Naples’ La Colmar and the former Timeless, An MHK Eatery), she likes to pay it forward.

Through her friendship with the Kravet family, who own the namesake furnishing empire, she joined the board of directors of the Ronald McDonald House of Long Island, chairing its 2013 inaugural New York Project Design. The collaboration was created to revamp and remodel the house for families to have a warm, inviting place to stay while their children were being treated at the hospital.


Shortly after Costa established her presence in Naples, she visited the closest RMH, in Fort Myers. She planned on just making a donation. “I took a look at the place and I went, ‘You don’t need a donation. You need a complete makeover,’” she says. Costa introduced the Project Design idea, and the team immediately got on

board. For the first round, she gathered area designers to redo 20 spaces in honor of the organization’s 20-year anniversary.

Since then, RMH and the designers have privately raised millions of dollars to add an extension to the building. “We decided to take the new 10 spaces and do the same thing, gift the interior design.”

For this next project she’s serving as co-chair, along with Jeffrey Fisher. Other heavy-hitting collaborators include Alexis Marie Interiors, California Closets, Dwayne Bergmann Interiors, Ficarra Design Associates, Jett and Company, Judith Liegeois Designs, Pamela Durkin Designs, Renee Gaddis Interiors and Republic of Decor, among others. They’re all donating their services to design six new bedrooms, two offices and a couple other shared spaces within the nearly 4,000-square-foot expansion.

Outside of the design realm, Costa has been an equestrian most of her life and has also volunteered in Naples with the charity Track to Trail, which rescues and rehabilitates race horses through a variety of programs, including several aimed at connecting children with the animals.

Wherever she goes, Costa’s talents and generosity find worthy outlets—and that’s the kind of spirit we can all get behind. —*M.K.* 



As co-chair of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southwest Florida’s Project Design Phase II, Costa leads a pack of high-profile designers in updating the recently expanded campus near Golisano Children’s Hospital. The designer is shown here with her dog, Miss Meadow.

Brian Tietz