



EASY RIDER
Author Holly Peterson sporting a casual-chic look on Old Town Beach in Southampton

DID YOU GET THE STYLE MEMO?

Writer **Holly Peterson**, whose latest book, *The Idea of Him* (\$15, William Morrow Paperbacks), was released this past spring, ruminates on who “gets it” with the help of *Elle Décor* Editor-in-Chief **Michael Boodro**.

I've always been convinced that there's a memo out there—some kind of secret society mailing list that only the superstylish receive—that decodes the coolest, chicest, most stylish items to wear or place around a home, which they then carry off, *bien sûr*, as if they'd thrown it all together at the last minute.

My pal Michael Boodro, the editor of *Elle Décor*, agrees: “Some people just get it, and the rest of us try and keep up. And some people will never get it.”

It's that elusive yet continual effort to “try and keep up” that most of us relate to. We know what we like, we're just not sure we're on the mark when we do it on our own.

It's those people who “just get it” who interest me the most. They have an eye for detail and order and elegance that takes over the moment they enter a room. One friend of mine recently sat down for tea, then interrupted me and marched across the library. “I can't even have a conversation with you until I move this table over 4 inches. It

makes the whole room just off.”

What exactly was he seeing that I'd never noticed? My table had been placed in that spot for years and, yes, it does look better 4 inches over.

Then there's my friend Michael, who can run a huge magazine and execute the right looks, but also acknowledges his limitations. “I can recognize excellence, what's good and what's bad, or the fact that this building is unique—but I can't actually do it myself. That's what stylists, great salespeople, designers and beyond-chic friends are for.”

Well, that's the crux of the issue. Why can some people do it and some can't? It must be a right-brain creative aesthetic that arrives when your genes fuse in the womb. Michael is as schooled as anyone in what works and what doesn't. “The simpler it is, whether it's an outfit or a room, the more pristine it is, and, in fact, the more work it takes,” he says. “With clothes, the tailoring, the finishes all count so very much. You may think it's silly that a quarter-inch makes a difference, but it absolutely does. It's all about

refining your eye, which is something I continually work to do.”

Well, I, for one, work hard on my home and, specifically, my closet, to make everything look and feel comfortable, elegant and up-to-date... but no matter how much I refine my knowledge/desires/personal quest for that French woman's casual *je ne sais quoi*, it just never feels remotely effortless. I'm often flummoxed, and want to check in with others, even though I do know instinctively what I like. On the Who Got the Memo? meter, I figure I fall somewhere in the middle—not an expert by far, but not a clueless neophyte, either.

Michael tells me that, even if I'm possibly at the lower end of the meter and far, far away from ever “getting it,” even those with zero idea and zero access to the memo are actually fine.

“If you don't get the memo at all and you're hopeless, then embrace being a nerd,” he says. “It's all great because, if you're an extreme nerd, you're fashionable anyway!”

BEACH HOUSE



THE LIVING ROOM

"We live near the ocean all summer, so I wanted my home to be a bright Caribbean Sea-blue color to reflect that. I used to have a typical muted-tan Hamptons home, but the mix of bright colors and coral makes us all much happier, and feels much more fitting to our lifestyle. The wave photograph was taken by local artist and surfer John Margaritis."

RHAPSODY IN TEAL

The living room features a sofa by Calypso Home; slipper chairs reupholstered in "Mavis" fabric from Prismatek; a driftwood coffee table by Sylvester & Co.; a rattan sofa reupholstered in a Calvin Klein fabric from Kravet; an Orkney Island chair from Mainly Baskets; Sea Urchin lamps (on mantel) from Williams-Sonoma; and draperies made from Strata fabric from Hinson and Company.

COLOR THERAPY

Holly Peterson takes us inside her multi-hued Southampton abode—styled by interior designer Kimberly Hall (kimberlyhallcreative.com)—where every room is a place of inspiration.

THE MEDIA ROOM

"Kim and I wanted to do a room in hot green, apple green and sea-glass blue—we loved the electricity of those colors together. The artwork is done by my children, and that's my 11-year-old daughter, Eliza."

APPLE OF HER EYE

The family room is dominated by a 12-by-5-foot sofa custom-designed by Kimberly Hall Creative and covered in fabric by Designers Guild, with wave-motif throw pillows from Marimekko.



ELIZA'S ROOM

"What's more fun than a swing in a girl's room? And Eliza surfs a lot so we thought the colors of the blue sky and the yellow sun would make for a really happy room."

ON CLOUD NINE

Peterson's daughter's room features a swing by The Floating Bed Company, with mattress fabric by Quadrille and pillow fabrics by Holland and Sherry, Seacloth, Elitis and Designers Guild; and a custom-made white sheepskin rug from Bowron.

THE MASTER BEDROOM

"Purple has been my favorite color since I was 4 years old. It's feminine but it has punch and panache—perfect for a mom on her own. Kimberly was able to find different hues of purple that fed off each other."

PLUM LIFE

Peterson's master bedroom features a pendant (over the desk) and a mother-of-pearl chandelier, both by Oly; the bed, by Charles P. Rogers, was customized with an Indian-inspired canopy; the desk is skirted in ikat fabric from Quadrille; the wallcovering at the desk area comprises purple-tinted mother-of-pearl tiles.