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FRETTE BOASTS MORE THAN SEVEN FREE-STANDING STORES IN THE UNITED STATES AND HAS BOUTIQUES ON THE MOST FAMOUS SHOPPING STREETS AROUND THE WORLD.

BETWEEN THE SHEETS

From the Vatican to private yachts, Frette is fast becoming a household name.

KAREN W. BRESSLER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM COUTURE

Forget about thread count. When it comes to quality in bedding, you have to touch it to feel the difference. And you'll have to pay for it, too. A cashmere-backed chinchilla throw for \$45,000 or a deerskin throw for \$12,000 may seem extravagant, but their value is obvious to Cristina Azario, creative director of Frette, the world-renowned luxury home empire. Since 1860, the company has pampered international aristocrats and their families, as well as wealthy clients of acclaimed hotels like the Paris Ritz, Claridge's in London, Venice's Hotel Cipriani and the Hôtel Plaza Athénée of New York—not to mention first class railways like the Orient Express. Now Frette boasts more than seven free-standing stores in the United States and has boutiques on the most famous shopping streets around the world. Here, Azario gives us a glimpse of the world of Frette between the sheets...

Q: How did you become interested in design?

CA: I was born into design. My parents had a fabric company that produced couture fabrics throughout the '60s, so I grew up around it. I started working in fashion for friends of the family right after school; then, I worked for Donna Karan for 14 years in design. I was responsible for all the development for color and fabric.

Q: What did you learn from Donna Karan?

CA: How true and how real design is. Although your ideas and designs evolve, you have to keep true to yourself and you have to maintain the integrity of design. It's what keeps the product you develop yours and what makes it recognizable.

Q: Why are you so drawn to designing for the home?

CA: Home is where my passion is. I love colors, candles, flowers and anything that brings a sense of home in some way. The world of home is not only about objects but about fabrics, colors and textures. Since that's really where my strength is, home seemed to be the right place to apply it.

Q: Why did you want to be part of the Frette empire?

CA: Frette was a brand with strong roots in the past that had made its way into the future. From the beginning, it always dealt with the very best: high quality and attention to detail in luxurious linens like cotton sateen jacquards, natural linens, poplins, cashmeres and silks. Jacquard is basically a form of weave that creates a pattern and part of the history of Frette. Frette used it to design emblems of royal families around the world and [for] exclusive hotels like the Orient Express. As creative director, my goal is to create a new way to look at linens. Also, I have always taken the brand a step beyond, making Frette a brand that deals with all aspects of soft furnishings



Frette Creative Director Christina Azario