

Alexandra Champalimaud's Style Report

Alexandra Champalimaud, President of Champalimaud Design, shares her personal style

By: Alexandra Champalimaud

My Spas:

After I had designed the spas at [The Peninsula New York](#) and [The White Elephant](#) on Nantucket, I knew I wanted to do my own.



I set up [Charym](#) - which means beauty in Bhutanese - after a trip to the marvelous Kingdom of Bhutan with my husband, son Lopo and his wife. Charym is in Litchfield CT. I want it to be the destination spa and wellness center that women come to from all over the world. It is still evolving, and eventually it will have full preventative medical facilities headed by Deepak Chopra's former head of women's health. There is a strong ayurvedic element. The first phase consists of The East-West dynamic continues throughout: the spa, health center, and tearoom will all resemble a dzong, a traditional Bhutanese monastery, with a staff of holistic and medical practitioners.

Interestingly, I funded Charym myself but people are already wanting to invest, to take the idea further. I have business plans ready for 1,500 sq ft, 8,000 sq ft and 12,000 sq ft versions, but a spa should never be about size (who cares how big a spa is?).

My Work:

Right now I am transforming the ballroom at [The Berkeley](#), London into a plausible restaurant during the refurbishment of the hotel's dining venues. My design company is based in New York and we are doing projects all over the world - we have just finished [The St Regis Beijing](#). Whatever I do is integrated with the surroundings.

I want to be part of my environment, so in China color is extremely important. Wherever, I do fantastic bathrooms, which I think should last at least 20 years. My bedrooms have a lifetime of about 15 years, although it can be longer. The challenge is that luxury customers' tastes change. We got rid of hiding television sits in ugly cabinets to make them works of art, stuck on pedestals or

My Travels:

I am on the go the whole time. Right now I have a car in 20 minutes to take me to Heathrow to fly to Paris, for dinner and overnight at [Hotel Plaza Athenee](#) and a chance to see its Dior spa. Tomorrow I fly back home to New York, to my family. That is why a trip to Bhutan is so refreshing: we were with the most marvelous and happy people, and the high point was staying in local hostelrys.

My Life:

I am a singer, a dancer, I love life, no I adore life. I am fascinated by Africa, and by technology. I have the most marvellous family, and our home is always full of people - and I know I have a lot of wisdom to share.

My Necessities:

My comfort food could be a bowl of really great home-made soup after a day of skiing from our lodge in Taos NM. My last meal, however, would be in Ticino, with fresh white truffles grated over risotto or scrambled egg, and a full-bodied local wine. My one book would be Alexandre Dumas' Le Comte de Monte-Cristo (The Count of Monte Cristo), in French as I spent so many years of my life in Montreal.

My Clothes:

My travel gear right now, on the way to Paris, is a black sweater under an any-time, any-wear black sleeveless gym smock (does this remind me of my days at an English convent boarding school?). With this I have black tights, and comfortable mock leopard-skin pump shoes that match my bag. I am wearing tiny pearl earrings and I have a black mac in case it gets cold.

My Beauty Tips:

I use my own Charym Essential Oils, which are ayurvedic. I start at my toes and lightly massage them into my skin all the way up to my head. They complement my body type and help ease anxiety and tiredness. [Sonya Dalar](#) Red Grapefruit Wash leaves the face feeling refreshed, [D Clinical](#) Polyvitamin Serum has a vitamin C base that provides natural sun protection. I use [Laura Mercier](#) Cheek Colour and [Chanel](#) Precision Sublimage Cream is great for travel as it works morning and night.

Alexandra Champalimaud is President of the phenomenally successful [Champalimaud Design](#), based in New York. She was brought up in Portugal, but raised her two sons in Canada before relocating to the USA.

as pictures on the wall. Now some people say they do not want to see a television set, and they cover it up.

Whenever I am asked to help with a project, I must feel happy with the people, and the surroundings. I want guests staying in a hotel that I have designed to feel better as a result. I have a great respect for hotels owned by women as they have an extra sense. So few men, for instance, take spas seriously.

My Favorite Hotels:

There are many, all over world. Since I am in London right now, let me just cite two examples. Right now I am in the sensuous inner bar of [Claridges](#). My last big birthday was here. I was with my husband and there was a knock at the door. There was the General Manager, holding a bunch of the exact number of red roses and a bottle of champagne, singing Happy Birthday. On another occasion I had a little black field spaniel delivered to [The Rochester](#) so I could take it to my home in Westchester NY. When I called by, the front office manager was on all-fours playing with it (I adore that dog, when I see him leaping through the fields, his black ears rearing up with each step, that is exactly how I feel, free as the wind).