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The Outback

DESIGNER ANTHONY SPON-SMITH CHATS ABOUT HIS COLLABORATION WITH RH AND HIS AFFINITY FOR OUTDOOR SPACES.

BY SPOORTHY SATHEESH

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRAND

Which places inspire you the most? I don't think you can beat anywhere on the European Mediterranean during the summer. My theory is that most parts of the world try to emulate in some way the wonderful lifestyle or style that the Europeans have: the fashion, the interiors, the food, the culture. It might not work economically very well, but life's not all about money... and they know it.

How does your aesthetic blend with the Hamptons style? The Hamptons style is something that is loved all around the world, and in Australia we have the large coastal properties that allow us to mimic that perfectly. My design style has always played to that blend of classic, coastal and contemporary that I believe fits in the Hamptons perfectly.

What drew you to interior design? My father. He's always been very artistic and worked in the furniture industry. When I left advertising, I went into business with my father and got the bug for furniture, which led me to study industrial design.

Your design ethos? When designing furniture, I don't tend to think about the exact setting but how I can make something simple yet different. If you can achieve both, you have the opportunity at a classic that lasts the test of time and defines any context it is placed into. I love outdoor design because I feel like there is so much uncharted territory compared to interiors. The outdoor space, or setting, is a relatively new luxury, no longer an afterthought. I want to create an architectural statement with the outdoor space and furniture that upstages the indoor one. As such, I still feel like there is a lot of opportunity from a design perspective.

How did the RH collab come about? I think that RH only works with the most passionate and inventive furniture artisans. Also, I think that my Australian heritage is something that gives them an international design perspective, especially for my outdoor collections. I am very excited to see it on display at RH East Hampton. 69 Main St., East Hampton, restorationhardware.com



From top: Designer Anthony Spon-Smith with pieces from his new outdoor collection for RH; Prado collection in teak, from \$1,395; Capri teak armchair, \$995.