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ISSUE

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SCOOP

BUYER BE THERE! Lee Ann Sauter at the Marea boutique in Palos Verdes

Hotel Boutiques Get Hip

"On vacation, you always *have* to buy something for the memory—but then it sits in your drawer with the tag on because it's not something you'd normally wear," says **Lee Ann Sauter** of SaMo, who now combats this problem one fab five-star resort at a time with her company **Seaside Luxe**.

For Sauter, a former exec at both Guess and Gap, her strategy involves tapping local, savvy, on-the-ground tastemakers to help tailor what's in store. That's why, in the recently opened **Marea** boutique at Palos Verdes' Terranea Resort, you'll find vintage Chanel

jewelry and Loeffler Randall shoes instead of the expected Hawaiians and sunscreen.

Designer exclusives such as James Perse UV-blocking T-shirts and SaMo-based Tim Clarke's custom interiors (light fixtures and furniture are also available for purchase) are prompting guests to visit for more than just an obligatory souvenir. "Our clients tell us they wish they had boutiques like ours when they're back home—they're that special to them," says Sauter, who was invited to open her first shop at the Four Seasons Hualalai in early 2008, and is looking

next to expand her hospitality client roster into the Caribbean. Sauter is also collaborating with designers such as CFDA nominee Gregory Parkinson on pieces like a custom-dyed tunic unique to her stores.

"We sought out Lee Ann because we knew she would embrace our vision and craft something unique to our resort," says Terranea's Managing Director Terri Haack. "The shop is also the first thing that sets the tone of the experience you're going to have since it's right in front—and that's exactly what it does."
—Caroline Cagney