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## NEW AWARD

Danish Ship of the Year

## THE AMERICAN DREAM

Shores of Denmark

## SMM 2014

Big Danish Footprint





BY JENS NØRGAARD

# THE AMERICAN DREAM IS BEING LIVED BY A DANISH WOMAN

**You have to get up early to keep up with the 50-year-old Susan Sadolin, who is on 24-7. According to her, will-power and hard work is the recipe for success. She is living the American dream with design studio and production as well as residency in Miami and her boyfriend in Denmark. This is something that the male-dominated cruise industry can understand.**

**H**ere, from the top of skyscrapers, managers can look down at their fleet of white liners, often with colorful ornaments, preparing for the next trip into the Mexican Gulf or the Caribbean. The cruise ships are like pearls on a string, where thousands of guests are exiting the ships or waiting to come on board, for what is most likely to be their dream holiday.

For the most part, the success of the trip depends on the variety of entertainment and the sporting opportunities such as climbing, fitness and tennis. There are also country hosting cultural events or just relaxing on board.

High demands for decorating

This calls for high demands on design such as furniture, fabrics, carpets, color and especially durability. In addition to this, the guest must feel welcome as they step into the wonderful world of the cruise voyage.

To engage in the industry where even small details can make or break a designer - decorating requires a tough person. The shipping managers' judgment can be unforgiving and compensation claims regarding incorrect deliveries are sky high in the United States. They can make it really hard to resurface

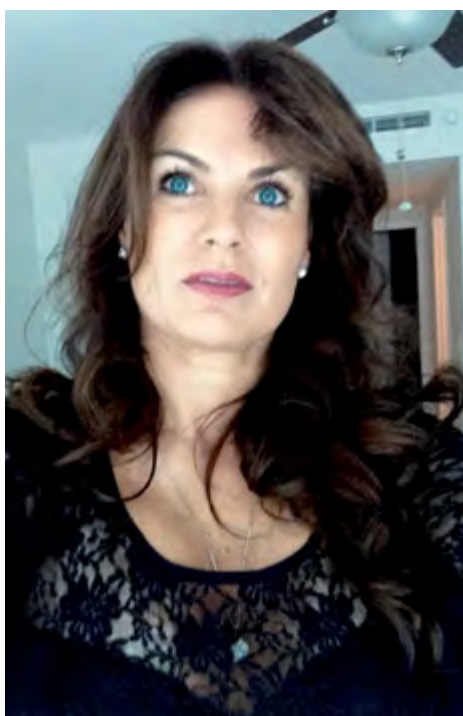
again, but not Susan Sadolin.

She was born in the Danish town Odense, and raised in Kerteminde. She has had her ups and downs on her way and in 2010, it almost went wrong. The global economic crisis that struck in 2008, also affected the cruise lines. They totally closed down for new investments, and that, combined with errors in product deliveries, was close to ending the designer's career.

## NATIONAL CHAMPION IN THE RACE

Susan had no money. The debt was huge, but she had kept her good brand "Shores of Denmark", the will and the strength, and got her best employees together. She cleaned up and she was once again respected as the tenacious woman who reopened the doors to the decision makers in Miami. Americans love success, especially when it is based on the American dream. Today, the designer employs 20 people.

When she was 16, Susan Sadolin moved to Aabenraa in southern Jutland with her parents. The family had acquired the internationally known sail loft Elvstrøm Sails. Here, like her two brothers, she helped her parents with the sail loft. She was apprenticed at Sydbank as a bank trainee and helped to open the bank's branch at Kongens Nytorv in 1986.



You have to get up early to keep up with the 50-year-old Susan Sadolin, she is on 24-7.



Susan Sadolin also got a degree in international marketing from the Copenhagen Business School.

Even as a young girl, she went her own way. While the rest of the family was internationally noted for boating, Susan ran instead. She obtained 13 Danish championships in 1,500 meter, 3000 meters and 10 km and Cross. The first race she ever participated in was at Nyborg Vold. Today, her runs take place on Miami Beach when there is time for it.

#### HOME TO THE BOYFRIEND

The designer does not hide that she is in good physical shape. It almost goes without saying, because when Maritime Denmark had to pick up Susan, she sat between 10 and 12 kilometers up in the air on the way from Miami to Las Vegas, to present a new collection of furniture and fabrics for hotels, which is a new business area for her. This took place on Wednesday,

and on Thursday, there were meetings in New York in the Danish General Consulate and later that afternoon she was on a SAS plane from Newark to Copenhagen, to see her boyfriend in Nordborg.

She reveals no fatigue, but the 50-year-old designer admits that it is hard to navigate between residence and business in Miami and Nordborg. Much can be arranged over the phone and computer, but when everyone else goes to bed in Als, her day is just starting.

The path to the current success has been a bumpy one. Once her apprenticeship at Sydbank was completed, Susan sold sailing clothes in Italy.

- I made my own design with a Scandinavian touch under the brand name "North Wind" says Susan Sadolin. I settled in Flensburg on the other side of the Danish-German border

and established nine stores in Denmark and northern Germany.

#### USEFUL YEARS

- It was a learning period of about 20 years, where I got into the adequacy of the technical material within the retail fashion, that can be used on the water. During that time I met my ex-husband. He sold carpets to the cruise lines in Miami, for the Herning-based carpet manufacturer Danish Wilton A/S.

- We moved to Miami and ended operations in Denmark and Germany. My then-husband was busy selling carpets and for a short period of time I was a home mom, I enjoyed the sun and watched the many cruise ships that sailed past our windows in Miami Beach.

- This was where I got the idea of designing furniture and fabrics for the cruise industry. It was the fire at the "Scandinavian Star" and in "Princes Cruises" that gave me the push.



We were the first who made outdoor furniture for cruise ships after the new IMO requirements.

#### NEW CLAIMS AFTER CATASTROPHIC FIRES

As a result of the two catastrophic fires with many casualties, the UN's International Maritime Organization IMO made new rules for the use of non-combustible materials for indoor and outdoor applications. The demands were high on designers, manufacturers and shipping companies.

- For my part, I started working with outdoor furniture in close cooperation with designers from the Royal Caribbean, Susan Sadolin continues.

It was during the planning period for what would become the world's largest cruise ship "Adventure of the Seas" and "Allure of the Seas" both delivered from STX shipyard in Turku in Finland in 2009 and 2010. The planning began in the early spring of 2000.

- It was my luck - Shores of Denmark - we were the first who made outdoor furniture for

cruise ships after the new IMO requirements. It was not without its problems and on top of it all, the international economic crisis hit like a "bomb". Due to the long planning phase of the cruise line we were first struck in 2010/2011. But trouble or not, the orders were executed and the furniture had to not only look good, they should also be able to endure. The passengers are on board the cruise ships for 24 hours, 7 days at a time. The materials and products used must be of a very high quality. They must be able to withstand the salt water and sun in the Caribbean areas.

#### COSTLY MISTAKES

- Claims kept rolling in from the shipping companies. I rushed around to cruise ships to save what could be saved. It was "Learning by Doing". Today, the Shores of Denmark is respected in the industry. We have created mesh and wicker furniture in China for sun loungers, tables and

chairs. Teak is produced in Indonesia and in the United States we produce cushions in our own workshop.

- My Subsidiary "SHORES INT." is just now entering the hotel business. So far, it is only in the United States and the Middle East. The design we present is of a very high quality and inspired by the cruise industry. The hotels are not used to this. We are very excited about the final reception, and just now they are having a viewing preference to a select group of international hotels in Las Vegas, says Susan Sadolin. They also say that she is trying to break new ground with the use of materials. It's about being innovative and cost-effective in this industry.