

# TREND *watch*

By Beth Anderson



Sharon Adler's knowledge of merchandising spans over 30 years, including 8 years with Associated Merchandising Corporation (AMC), the preeminent overseas sourcing and product development arm servicing the leading department stores in the U.S. and Europe.

Adler spent seven years sourcing and developing product for 2 leading seasonal wholesalers, the Director of Product Development for Santa's World (Kurt Adler) and Department 56 Inc. After leaving Department 56 in 2002, Sharon joined Li Fung, the world's largest global sourcing company, as Director of Trend and Color overseeing the art department and all products of home merchandise. She attended seminars and trade shows globally and produced color and trend reports for major wholesalers and retailers in all categories of home furnishings. Sharon is currently consulting in trend, color, product development and global sourcing in the home furnishings industry.

"TROPICAL DELIGHT seems to have a very broad in appeal. "

## AS WE WELCOME SPRING AND SUMMER AT OUR SPRING MART WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY THEME CONCEPTS?



I attended several of the key trade shows in Europe and the US first

previews of the year's introductions. One of the trends from the many shows for Spring-Summer businesses that is fresh as well as salable for the retailer is TROPICAL DELIGHT.



## WHAT MAKES UP THIS THEME CONCEPT, THE ICONS AND COLORS IN IT?

Last year we highlighted the opening relationship with Cuba and the influence it was having at retail with color and imagery. The theme TROPICAL DELIGHT is influenced by all this attention using bright colors and being a trend for indoor and outdoor decorating having many fun icons in this trend concept.

## TROPICAL AS A THEME HAS BEEN SEEN MANY TIMES. WHAT IS DIFFERENT THIS TIME?

The TROPICAL DELIGHT trend can be merchandised in two different directions. The first is a 1930's vintage look using prints and patterns that have a retro feeling. The artwork is seen on textiles, framed prints, stationery

and other categories.

The icons and colors are gathered from references as in archival prints and not the novelty summer outdoor



living trends from other seasons. This season's updated direction can be seen on home décor furnishings in a sitting room or bedroom as well as outdoors entertainment area. It offers



a broader usage to attract a wider customer base.

This is not to say you can't merchandise and select a more novelty kitsch direction that is fun and would appeal to Gen Z customers but it offers an alternative way of presenting this concept.

The colors can be primary brights or bright midtones, either palette is trending. Icons used in this theme are the FLAMINGO bird and all colorful exotic birds such as the Macaw, Toucan, Crowned Crane, and Cockatoo for example. The PINEAPPLE returns as the lead fruit icon seen in metal or ceramic sit about's and on throw pillows but bananas are also seen. As FLORA, it uses all types of tropical greenery leaves, banana leaf, fan palm, Bird of Paradise leaf, and cactus continues to be popular. Exotic creatures such as the IGUANA, MONKEY and BUGS were seen at the shows as well as BAMBOO furniture bent into a retro shapes.

Merchandise is available in all categories from throw pillows, dinnerware, wall paper, framed artwork, stationery, melamine, party goods and outdoors items.

TROPICAL DELIGHT seems to have a very broad in appeal.

#### WHAT ELSE DID YOU SEE FOR MARKET?

SUPERMAN and WONDER WOMAN go beyond Mother's Day and Father's Day and becomes an everyday theme for any male and female as gifts for any occasion. The comic script Super Hero's TV shows, movies and postage stamps make this a fun theme to merchandise. You don't have to be literal and

have the comic characters but theme the area under those titles.

For the SUPERMAN in your life there are many more gift items than before from the



vendor Men's Society as well as others. There are kits focusing on shaving, cleaning sports shoes, grooming aids, bike repair and more items related to grilling. Also a lot of new and

fun bar merchandise such as displayers for someone's collection of artisanal beer bottle caps, collapsible shot glasses and fun flasks. For the gardening WONDER WOMAN a range of gardening tools with screen printed handles and for the glam girl wonderful beaded or printed cosmetic purses bags, throw pillows and organizational items for jewelry and your glasses. It's beyond Mother's and Father's Day, it's now anybody's gift getting day such as like BOF and BRO.



#### ANY OTHER FOCUS FOR THE RETAILER GOING TO MARKET AS A CLOSING TIP?

Noted at the shows were sculptural wall décor, and archival prints that are framed. The framed art mostly taken from Flora & Fauna prints and the sculptural wall pieces are wire pieces and or wire verbiage for wall mounting. Some wall mounted pieces are to hold wine bottles but can be seen as sculpture.

More to come as the season heats up!

Images compliments of Sharon Adler.  
To find more information on trends and trend forward themes, contact Sharon at [Sfa190@yahoo.com](mailto:Sfa190@yahoo.com) or 718-464-1882.

