



## Design blogger asks fellow style scouts to share favorite haunts in 'Show me your Dallas' series

By JAMIE KNODEL

Staff Writer

[jkodel@dallasnews.com](mailto:jkodel@dallasnews.com)

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With a thriving design scene, luxury lifestyle blogger Franki Durbin just knew that Dallas was where she wanted to be. But what she didn't know was where exactly in North Texas she needed to be to find the best treasures and scope out new trends.

So when the 30-something interior designer, her husband and 3-year-old daughter moved from St. Louis to North Texas late last year, she called on the acquaintances she had made from years of blogging and tweeting.

Durbin, who in addition to blogging offers a full range of interior design services, is counting on those fellow designers to help her discover her new city in a way that only a local can.

"I asked them to show me what Dallas is to them," she said.

Since 2006, Durbin's been sharing sources, inspiration, tricks and more with thousands of blog readers. So of course, she's putting all she's learning from her local ambassadors on the blog, [www.lifeinaventicup.com](http://www.lifeinaventicup.com), in a Show Me Your Dallas series.

"Truth be told, the 'good stuff' isn't usually in a guidebook. Smart locals save that for themselves. Who can blame them? But I consider myself a local now, or at least a girl who plans to make Dallas her permanent home. So I want to know it all. I want to see it all. I want to experience it all," she wrote on her blog when she introduced the series to her readers.

After reaching out to a dozen or so online friends, Durbin's calendar started filling up with one-on-one dates to galleries, boutiques, trade shows, consignment shops and more. She's thrilled to be finding insider spots she wasn't likely to find on her own for some time.

"There are so many places to go in Dallas, it's easy to miss something," she said. "Everyone has been very generous with sharing their information and contacts with me."

Durbin, whose blog is full of interiors, fashion and fabulous getaways, has been spending her days traipsing across North Texas with design-minded friends.

"This is forcing me to get off the Tollway, out of the [Park Cities](#) and out of my comfort zone," she says.

She and her local hosts, including bloggers Elaine Williamson, Shay Geyer, Emily Johnston and Beth Dotolo, have been to the Dallas Design District, making stops in Ceylon et Cie and Samuel Lynne Galleries. They've hit up East Dallas' Garden Cafe and Little Bean boutique. And up north in Collin County, Durbin's had guided tours through Frisco's IBB Design and Dimples and Dandelions. There have also been outings to [North Dallas](#) and the Park Cities.

It's not just Durbin who is learning something from the adventures. Because she's sharing the details and lots of images from her dates on the blog, others are being introduced to new spots.

"I'm discovering things I've never known before — and I've lived here my whole life," said Geyer, who spent a day showing Durbin her favorite design sources, which included a tour through her family's IBB Design and 40,000-square-foot store and warehouse loaded with moderate to high-end home furnishings.

During their visit to the [Frisco](#) store, Geyer, a regular on *Good Morning Texas*, was sure to point out a glamorous four-poster Vanguard bed dressed in soft blues to Durbin, who was crazy for the look.

"I've read Franki's blog for yours," Geyer said. "So I know what tickles her fancy."

Whether it's been a launch party at Stephanie Anne in Highland Park Village or digging through bead, rock and fossil collections at Rock Barrel in far northeast Dallas, every stop has been a success, Durbin says.

"I've seen a wealth of beautiful shops. They have blown me away. These will be regular stops."

And beyond finding new haunts, Durbin has found new friends, she says.

"I'm building a posse of girlfriends at the same time I'm getting to know my new city."

Her guides

Franki Durbin is discovering Dallas and North Texas through the eyes of other designers and bloggers. She's got more dates in the works, and will [no doubt](#) chronicle those on her blog, [lifeinaventicup.com](http://lifeinaventicup.com).

Elaine Williamson, [www.elainewilliamsondesigns.com](http://www.elainewilliamsondesigns.com)

Shay Geyer, [www.ibbdesign.com/blog](http://www.ibbdesign.com/blog)

Kyle Knight, [knightmovesblog.blogspot.com/](http://knightmovesblog.blogspot.com/)

Sandra Evans, [twitter.com/sandrajevans](https://twitter.com/sandrajevans)

Beth Dotolo, [www.hellosplendor.com/](http://www.hellosplendor.com/)

Emily Johnston, [materialgirlsblog.com/](http://materialgirlsblog.com/)

Erin Davis, [www.littlekd.blogspot.com](http://www.littlekd.blogspot.com)

Abbe Fenimore, [studioten25.com/blog](http://studioten25.com/blog)

Haley Schultheis, [www.nonsensesensibility.com/](http://www.nonsensesensibility.com/)

Franki Durbin's Favorite Finds

Blogger Franki Durbin shares her favorite places she's discovered in her Show Me Your Dallas series with other North Texas designers and bloggers.

**Leslie Taylor Home**, 1404 Slocum St., Dallas; [www.leslietaylorhome.com](http://www.leslietaylorhome.com)

This showroom is by far my favorite discovery in the Design District. Elegant French, Italian and Swedish antiques & reproductions: they've nailed my aesthetic. A must-see for those with a love of European craftsmanship and design.

**Dimples & Dandelions**, in the Shops at Starwood, Lebanon and North Dallas Tollway, Frisco; [www.dimplesanddandelions.com](http://www.dimplesanddandelions.com)

If I owned a children's boutique it would be very similar to this lovely little Starwood shop. Hard-to-find lines and handcrafted custom furnishings as well as frilly, fussy, pretty things that make lovely gifts. Owners and staff go out of their way to accommodate you and your little ones.

**William-Christopher Design**, 2933 N. Henderson Ave., Dallas; [www.w-cdesign.com](http://www.w-cdesign.com)

Owned by two incredibly talented residential designers, I fell hard for this well-edited Henderson Avenue boutique. Take special note of their remarkable candle selection and custom furnishings as well as some of the most gracious hospitality in the city.

**Stephanie Anne**, 2 Highland Park Village, Dallas; [stephanieanne.com](http://stephanieanne.com)

Owned by a St. Louis-born interior designer who relentlessly follows her passion, this Highland Park Village shop boasts her extensive line of home accessories and custom furnishings — and now — a new jewelry line and fashion collection. Stephanie Anne is a girl after my own entrepreneurial heart!

Ceylon et Cie, 1319 Dragon St., Dallas; [ceylonetcie.com](http://ceylonetcie.com)

Michelle Nussbaumer's Dragon Street showroom is like a journey around the globe. Expect the unexpected at every turn and leave your preconceived notions of interior design at the door. Ceylon is an unrivaled source of inspiration.