

Inspiring Spaces

From concept to completion, **Lee Stahl's** The Renovated Home reigns supreme in grounded, high-end home renovation.

Honesty, timeliness and family values are not easy to come by in the world of home renovation, but Lee Stahl, owner of The Renovated Home, has turned these qualities into the core of his successful Manhattan-based design/build firm. Stahl's company transforms the renovating process into a collaborative effort between client, designer and contractor. With his keen sense of luxury, well-honed sensibilities and elegant aesthetic, the results are one of a kind.



HAMPTONS: How does the fact that you are a family business affect the way the company functions?

LEE STAHL: My mother and I started this whole thing, and we have lived in the neighborhood where we have done all of our work for the past 20 years. When we design and renovate a space for a family, we design and renovate it with their needs in mind, not ours.

H: When people decide they want to renovate their home, where do they start?

LS: They start by making a wish list and a “must” list, and by always keeping their time frame and budget in mind. But I'd say the number-one thing people can do as they are beginning the renovation is to hire people they would want to have dinner with. I am completely serious. They are going to live with these people for months, and it is as much about crafting a successful relationship [with their builder] as it is about someone's ability to design and install a quality piece of crown molding.

H: How would you describe your company's philosophy?

LS: The company philosophy has always revolved around the word “commitment.” If you tell somebody Tuesday, it needs to be [done] Tuesday; Wednesday is not even an option. In my experience, fewer and fewer people these days actually say what they are going to do, put themselves on the line and then actually do it. It is rare in life; it is almost unheard of in the designing and renovating field. The second [part] of the philosophy is helping clients engineer a budget—it is my job to get the most out of that budget. Number three comes back to the other question about family, which is to build every project as if my daughter's going to live in it. When it is good enough for her, that is the benchmark of quality for me.

H: What makes working in the Hamptons unique?

LS: It's a whole different world. When I'm in Manhattan, the average workday is seven hours a day, 35 hours a week. When I'm in the Hamptons, it's double that. And we're just giddy because we can accomplish so much in a given workweek, so working out in the Hamptons is a blast for us.

H: What has been your most exciting project to date?

LS: The project we just finished, a gut-renovation of a duplex apartment, 7,000 square feet, which we did in seven months and three days (including the installation of a three-story private elevator). We were able to build a home for a client who told me that when he walked into the completed space, tears came to his eyes. The architecture and the elements of it are spectacular, but most important, it is exactly what he wanted. Then he, my project manager and I all went out for tacos and beers. That is my idea of a successful project—a home run.

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