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## Lifestyle

### TV show puts her style in spotlight

By **ROD STAFFORD HAGWOOD**  
Staff writer

It's not like her appearance on TLC's "Four Houses" will be Katia Bates' first time in the interior design spotlight.

After all, the Fort Lauderdale resident re-did the Versace mansion in South Beach — twice.

But doing the reality show competition — where the contestants visit each other's homes and judge how much of the homeowner's personality is reflected design-wise — was an opportunity to focus specifically on her design style. She will be part of the episode airing 10 p.m. July 30.

"I thought it would be good to show a designer's work in a different way, to show what you do for yourself," says the Italian-born Bates from her home in Las Olas Isles. "So often it is what I do for other people's spaces. Our home is very Venetian. There is a huge influence from my background. And I thought it would be great promotion for

Please turn to **BATES, 4G**



CRAIG DENNIS/COURTESY

Katia Bates gained international fame for her design renovations at the Versace mansion on South Beach.

### BATES

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my work."

The series, which is from the same producers as "Four Weddings," premiered July 2. Each show features design-obsessed homeowners vying for a \$10,000 prize as well as an opportunity to be featured in *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine.

The South Florida episode also features local notables such as Bay Harbor's man-about-town and restaurateur Fabian Basabe; Miami's tanning tsarina Zurami Pascual and Coral Gables' marketing honcho Patricia San Pedro.

Just four years after creating her interior design firm Innovative Creations in 1996, Bates was picked to redo the Versace house. Telecommunications tycoon Peter Loftin had purchased the 1930s villa, renamed it Casa Casuarina and turned it into a private club.

Bates said her firm has other high-profile clients, but that they often insist on confidentiality.

"We have other celebrities. Of course, I can't disclose anything," Bates says. "But Versace, that really gave us international attention. I think they chose me because of my Venetian background."

When that private club was later redone as a hotel/restaurant/event space, she was called upon again. But involvement by Ponzi-plotter Scott Rothstein eventually ended Loftin's ownership, and the space is now known as The Villa by Barton G.

Bates and her husband



CRAIG DENNIS/COURTESY

The master bedroom in the Bates home in Las Olas Isles.



CRAIG DENNIS/COURTESY

The street entrance of the Bates home.

Tom — a Broward County native in the commercial/industrial real estate business and co-owner of the design firm — live in a palatial waterfront mansion

with their two teenage children. But when the show was taping, none of them could be home since the idea is that the competition gets to wander

"I think they chose me because of my Venetian background."

Katia Bates,  
designer

through giving their unvarnished and catty-for-the-camera opinion of the decor:

"It was a total of five super-full days," Bates recalls. "The three other contestants and I have completely different styles and lifestyles. But I was the only European, so I think I came across kind of different."

"I think I came across a little bit more ... how can I say ... more fashion-oriented."

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