



Home With Robin:

HGTV-featured Interior Designer Robin Wilson Shares Tips for Building Healthy Spaces

BY EBONI T. THOMAS

Robin Wilson has carved her place in the “home” space. In 2000, she founded her Manhattan-based firm, Robin Wilson Home (rebranded in 2006), serving clients ranging from private owners to developers and a global-leading hotel to celebrities and White House leaders, such as Bill Clinton and the Kennedy Family. In 2011, she appeared on HGTV’s “Selling New York” show. In 2012, she began filming “Home with Robin”, a short documentary series by Nest Productions, recognized in the Hoboken International Film Festival and Women’s International Film Festival in 2014.

Robin, who holds an MS from New York University (Real Estate Finance) and a BA from the University of Texas, is the first woman with an eco-friendly kitchen cabinetry line at 400+ independent Holiday Kitchens dealers. She is the second African-American woman (after B Smith) with a textile line (hypoallergenic pillows and comforters) at Bed Bath & Beyond. Her furniture line, Nest Home by Robin Wilson, premiered at the 2013 International Contemporary Furniture Fair. Panasonic recently signed her to represent its line of home products. And her story as an African-American “History Maker” is housed in The Library of Congress.

She’s completed half of her personal/professional bucket list of 100, including riding a gondola over the Grand Canal in Venice solo and becoming an entrepreneur by age 30 – no drop in the bucket. “You know you’re an entrepreneur when you forget to pay yourself, but you still come to work and love what you do,” Robin laughed and she reflected on a low point – with \$1.23 in her account, walking 30 blocks in the cold from a Christmas team lunch she funded. High point? Generating over \$35 million in licensed product sales and helping a deserving family with over \$200,000 in merchandise for the EcoBungalow-LA project.

A first-time mom at 42, Robin grew up on healthy foods from her parents, whose furniture she loved to rearrange as a child. She cares the same for her baby girl, adopting her childhood pediatrician’s philosophy: “You can raise a sick child on strong medicine, or you can raise a strong child who occasionally uses medicine when sick.”

Why hypoallergenic? As an allergy and asthma sufferer and ambassador for The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Robin speaks nationwide on healthy home design. Her clean construction practices include damp mopping daily on job sites to avoid allergic reactions to dust, which ensures that clients come “home” and experience an eco-healthy lifestyle. “Every home has allergens and toxins,” she explained. “Your home should be your sanctuary. The items next to your face and the things in your bathroom should be clean.”

Her Rule of Three: “There are three items on which you sleep: (1) pillow, (2) zippered cover, and (3) case. Wash your zippered cover every three weeks. Wash your pillow every three months. Replace your pillow every three years, as your pillow weighs more now than when you purchased it – due to dust mites!”

Eight Under \$800 Eco-Healthy Tips:

- Free – Take your shoes off when you come home to avoid contamination (oil, dog waste, etc.).
- \$20 – Change your vinyl shower curtain to nylon, which is non-toxic and mold resistant.
- \$50 – Use Benjamin Moore’s Aura volatile organic compound (VOC) paint to be fume-free an hour after use.
- \$100 – Use carpet tiles (flor.com) that you can clean with soap and water and keep when you move.
- \$200 – Use a Panasonic Jet Force HEPA lightweight, bagless vacuum to avoid dust blowing back on floors.
- \$250 – Buy a hypoallergenic Robin Wilson Home (robinwilsonhome.com) bed set.
- \$500 – Buy furniture (furnishing.org) made with non-toxic foam.
- \$800 – Find an affordable, eco-friendly, independent kitchen dealer (holidaykitchens.com).

Hatching next: Robin’s working on a “clean design” book featuring all her work, a “Home with Robin” short film tour, hand-made artisan quilts, and hypoallergenic soaps and toiletries. **S**



Master bedroom designed by Robin Wilson for a client in California. Photo by Matt Armendariz