



# Cory and Stephanie Lake

OWNER OF AMERICAN GUITAR & BAND /  
JEWELRY DESIGNER AND DECORATOR

## HOME / A 1954 SPLIT-LEVEL IN MINNETONKA

### The Backstory /

◦ **STEPHANIE:** This was Cory's bachelor pad. Years ago, after losing touch with him after high school, I called him when I was in town from LA and met him here.

◦ **CORY:** I told my friends that I wanted a Midwestern girl with New York attitude and West Coast style, and she's going to show up on my doorstep.

◦ **STEPHANIE:** When I moved in, I got to gut everything and start over.

### The Palette /

◦ **STEPHANIE:** We didn't do much architecturally; it was inappropriate for the house. Instead we dressed it up with art, décor, and paint—lots of black and white. The painters almost refused to lacquer our woodwork and beams. When

we asked them to paint the ceiling, they looked at us like deer in headlights.

### Design Philosophy /

◦ **STEPHANIE:** I design thinking that inside every drawer should be a little treasure. Every single space becomes an exhibition for me—a little gallery installment.

◦ **CORY:** In high school, we used to make fun of Stephanie. Her sock drawer and closet were organized by color, type, and season. I used to bring my friends over and say, "Check this out."

### The Mantra /

◦ **STEPHANIE:** I amass china for imaginary dinner parties of 12 to 20 guests. You should use what you love—china, crystal—even if it gets chipped. I often wrap up in a fur instead of a blanket.



The couple kicks back with their pugs, Truffle, Mae, and Suki. On the wall is artist Kiki Smith's collection of "Banshee Pearls" lithographs.

**Custom Made** The couple collaborated with designer Carlos Falchi on custom guitar straps, such as this one paired with Cory's favorite John Suhr Drip Caster. "Cory thinks about the house when he has guitars made," Stephanie says. "He sticks to woods and metallics—you won't see a cherry red American flag here."



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The Lakes' bedroom is full of sentimental objects, including the antique Chinese altar table that Stephanie gave to Cory as a wedding gift.





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The vanity and vintage dressers in Stephanie's Versailles-inspired dressing room belonged to her grandmother. Stephanie's grandfather was president of Donaldson's department stores.

Working or lounging, Stephanie always wears platforms or stacked heels. “But I'm not a stiletto girl,” she says. “I don't like to topple.”

Stephanie holds a Ph.D. in decorative arts, material culture, and design history. She is also the biographer for Bonnie Cashin, Coach's founding designer, and inherited Cashin's clothes when she passed away in 2000. On the mannequin are clothes by Cashin and necklaces by Stephanie.

