

# *InFocus*

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*Nedgé Louis-Jacques*





## Nedgé Louis-Jacques

- Title**  
Partner and Senior Vice President
- Company**  
Tomas Tillberg Design, Florida, USA
- Graduation**  
Bachelor's degree in architecture from the City College of New York

### A fascinating world of water meets design

Tomas Tillberg Design is headquartered far down on the Florida peninsula in the United States of America. Embedded between the Atlantic and the fascinating swamp area of the Everglades National Park, the fascination of water in all its forms is omnipresent. And so it is not surprising that Tomas Tillberg Design is one of the world's leading companies for the architecture, design and interior design of luxury yachts and cruise ships. The company has over 50 years of experience and a wide range of expertise, ranging from design and new build to ship refurbishment and conversion.

Since inception, Tomas Tillberg Design has been involved in several new builds including the Crystal Serenity, the Queen Mary 2, two US built ships for Lindblad Expedition and the Tunisian cruise ferry Tanit built by DSME in South Korea. The latest ships are a series of expedition ships being built for SunStone Ships at the China Merchant Heavy Industry shipyard in Nantong, China.

In Weston, a Fort Lauderdale neighborhood, we meet Nedgé Louis-Jacques, Partner and Senior Vice President of Design. She is part of the company's senior management team alongside Managing Partners, Tomas Tillberg and Carlos Reyes - the latter specializing in the development, design and planning of new ship projects - and is responsible for space planning, material and contractor specifications and regulatory compliance.

### 30 years of experience in cruise design

The senior designer, who is bursting with energy, looks back over a career spanning more than 32 years, of which she spent 30 whole years working for high-class floating hotel business, namely the cruise industry. She obtained her bachelor's

degree in architecture from the City College of New York. When asked why she chose this line of study, she replied, without hesitation: "I simply loved the idea of finding creative solutions for spatial planning and design - and have always loved taking on these challenges; and I still do. Every day, there is something new!"

After a short, two-year excursus into the property sector, she was hired as ship interior design manager for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines (RCCL), one of the world's largest cruise companies, whose operational headquarters are located in Miami. Over the following eight years at RCCL and the 22 years as managing partner, and senior project manager and senior vice president at Tomas Tillberg Design, she gained an impressively broad range of expertise in every conceivable aspect of interior decoration and design. Her guiding principle, be it in her private or professional life, can be summed up as: "never stand still, always improve, and be the best version of myself I can possibly be".



Photo: Tomas Tillberg Design

### The "Who's Who" of the global cruise industry

The list of clients of Tomas Tillberg Design reads like a "Who's Who" of the cruise industry. Apart from her former employee, RCCL, big players in the sector have been added to Nedgé Louis-Jacques' professional ship's log, such as the Carnival Cruise Lines and Norwegian Cruise Line. In addition, famous cruise ship lines such as Celebrity Cruises, The World, Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Paul Gauguin Cruises and Holland America Line have been fitted out by Tomas Tillberg Design.

Perhaps the most wonderful coincidence of this global commitment is that Louis-Jacques loves travelling and working with extremely different people at all professional and skill levels - and she has enjoyed the plenty of opportunities to do so. Nedgé Louis-Jacques has been responsible for countless projects over the past three decades for the entire design, interior design and the spatial planning of cruise ships. This work entails dealing with product specifications, the basis of which is always Louis-Jacques' in-depth knowledge of the requirements and specifications of cruise ships. To date, she has gained considerable experience in drawing up detailed specifications for contractors, which really include every aspect of a space such as the selection of materials, whether it be the lighting, floor coverings, furniture and fittings, arts works or accessories.



Photo: Tomas Tillberg Design

## Expedition to the Arctic Ocean

Nedgé Louis-Jacques doesn't have to think about it for long when asked what her favourite project of the moment is. The expedition cruise ships of SunStone are in a class of their own: quite small ships for guests who put the emphasis on a particular travel destination rather than on luxury or merriment, though the interior spaces have to be as open and comfortable as possible. Since these ships pass through some of the most spectacular scenery in the world – the icy landscapes of the Arctic Ocean – they are designed so that the guests can fully immerse themselves in this special environment and observe the fauna. This is also reflected in the interior design of the cruise ships with their art and graphic panels in the cabins, corridors and lounge areas, that are always related to the destination, the name or the history of the ships.

All day long, the guests look out from the ship into spectacular outdoor scenes – and in the evening, they like to relax and continue to be inspired in a safe and yet exciting ambience. That is another determining factor for the interior décor, the furnishings and the design of the entire ambience: bringing the fabulous view of nature inside to make the unique experience complete.



*Photo: Tomas Tillberg Design*

## Sustainability of the cruise industry

For Louis-Jacques, each design project starts with in-depth research into the cruise markets and the destinations that the ship will travel to. The material library of Tillberg Design is totally geared towards cruise ships. If anyone thinks that this is a small, very specialist segment, they are very much mistaken. Because, at the moment almost everything is changing in the cruise industry – from the ship size, via the interior design, right through to the cruise routes and the types of cruise, as well as changes to meet sustainability needs.

New materials are constantly coming onto the market: highly function, sustainable and maintenance-free. Keeping up to date also means constantly obtaining information in close cooperation with the manufacturers. It is, therefore, not surprising that excellent service and communication - in addition to punctual delivery - are among the main requirements that Louis-Jacques demands of her suppliers.

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