

San Clemente's Patty Farmer writes the books on Playboy

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Yes, she's a former fashion model, but that's not how Patty Farmer became an expert on Hugh Hefner, let alone how he engineered jazz music's appeal in popular culture. The author of "Playboy Swings! How Hugh Hefner and Playboy Changed the Face of Music," Farmer started to pick up threads tying major milestones in this music's appeal to Playboy's founder as she was researching her previous book, "The Persian Room Presents," a history of New York City nightlife at the legendary Plaza Hotel, where she maintains an apartment. Farmer, who is also an investor and commercial real estate businesswoman, splits her time among New York, France, Texas and Southern California, where she calls San Clemente home. She is currently engaged as an on-camera historian and consultant for a forthcoming docu-drama series about the life of Hugh Hefner.

My Neighborhood: San Clemente

Why I Live Here: Well number one, we are known for having the best climate in the world. It's one of our claims to fame – other than fighting Huntington Beach as the original Surf City! It's a good balance for me. Having an apartment at the Plaza in New York, knowing that I can always go home to San Clemente, makes me appreciate all the places I visit that much more.

My Perfect Day: I'm an early bird. I get up by 4:30, so I'm never the life of the party. I'm at my Fitness 19 gym by 5:30 at the latest, so I get my workout in. I come home, get my two little poodles and we take our beach walk to the pier. I come up with some of my best lines and openings walking. I've taken to sticking a pen and paper in my waistband so I can jot things down, because by the time I get home it's gone – I was so brilliant before! I'm at my desk writing by 8:30. I have two more books in the works – the Playboy chronicles continue. There is still a lot to be said. The next is "Playboy Laughs" – the comedians and cartoons of Playboy. It sounds frivolous, but when you have cartoonists like LeRoy Neiman and Shel Silverstein – and you know, Vargas drew for them – it takes on a whole other dimension.

Support for a Knitting Habit: Strands! The knitting workshops there have the neatest group of women I have ever met in my life. You know, knitters are not the people you think they would be – even Rosey Grier, the football player, was a knitter. We are all very accomplished but nobody cares. We all just sit there and talk about what we're knitting. I love to knit baby things but had nobody to make them for! Finally my doctor's daughter just had twins, so I'm knitting like a crazy fool.



Favorite Restaurant: I have a couple. La Colombiana is a little hole in the wall, but the proprietor, Eddy, does all the cooking, and it's the best food in the world. I stop at Ellie's Table for coffee and ham-and-cheese croissants before I hit my beach trail. I would be very disappointed if either of them ever closed up.

The Book Everyone Should Read: This old book never leaves my nightstand; it's called "The Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of the Crowds." It is about how people are swayed by the markets – it's a business book, but it talks about everything, from tulip mania in the 1600s where tulips were used as a currency, more valuable than gold.

Kenny G or Dave Brubeck: Dave Brubeck. But I love all jazz. When I'm in New York I cannot even mention that I like what they dismiss as "West Coast jazz." And you know, I love Al Jarreau. I did have the pleasure of speaking with him for "Playboy Swings." This nine-time Grammy winner was so gracious with his time and memories.

Red or White: Red, Champagne. Champagne first.

Angels or Dodgers: I'm a football girl. Rams.

Lessons Learned as a Frequent Flier: Pack light, only carry on, and only two pairs of shoes.

Pet Peeve: Judgmental and intolerant people – and in this election year, I'm going a little crazy.