

L.A. CONFIDENTIAL: TOMASKY AND WOLFF ON THE DEMOCRATS

# NEW YORK

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REALTY BITES

## Life on the Road

Hamptons, hwy. vu.

**T**HE MOST-FOUGHT-AFTER LAND IN the Hamptons is south of Montauk Highway, but "we're running out," says Dayton-Halstead Real Estate president Diane Saatchi. What's left is pretty much on the highway's shoulder. So lately, "substantial and significant houses are being built in places you never thought they would be," says Stuart Epstein of Devlin McNiff Real Estate. Land that used to be considered too close to the highway for Shingle Style vacation pleasure domes "now has \$2 million spec homes," says Saatchi. In the past year, houses built on one-acre lots near the corner of the highway and Georgica Road are selling for as much as \$2.4 million. So what's so relaxing about trading the city for the turnpike? "It's the only place that's still affordable," says broker Tina Fredericks. It also forces buyers to spend \$20,000 or more on trying to make that home-on-the-highway seem bucolic. Demand for East Hampton-based noise-abatement expert Bonnie Schnitta has "almost grown exponentially over the last three years," she says. "We do it for one person, and someone else calls and says, 'You saved their property—do it for me!'" Her company, South Fork Technological Consultants, installs fountains or waterfalls that have the same frequency as road noise, and fences backed with an acoustic material that muffles the roar of passing Range Rovers. The fountains often spout blithely away in the pool, probably doing the hulking vacation bungalows some good on the feng shui front too. The cost of getting peace and quiet for your peace and quiet? Only \$10,000 to \$20,000 for an "average house," says Schnitta, though decorator versions run as much as \$50,000.

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## FALL FASHION 2000

BY MARK HOLGATE

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