

[DESIGNER SPOTLIGHT]

With a Star-Studded Client List, Charles & Co. Redefines Hamptons Style



The project brief for a family beach house had a strict “nothing nautical” directive. Designer Vicky Charles was only too happy to oblige.

BY CLAUDIA BAILLIE





Before launching Charles & Co., Vicky Charles was head of design for members club Soho House, where she worked for almost two decades. Today, Charles and her team “mainly focus on residential, which I adore” (portrait by Glynis Carpenter). Top: One such project is a Hamptons house designed as a getaway for a family and their friends. In the airy living room, a rug by [WOVEN](#) grounds three sofas by [DMITRIY & CO.](#) The poufs and custom ottoman are by [GEORGE SMITH](#), and the velvet-upholstered armchairs are by London-based [PINCH](#) design studio. The table lamps (foreground right and left) are by [VAUGHAN](#), and the ceiling pendant is from [RW GUILD](#). A painting by an artist friend of the client adds a personal touch. All photos by Stephen Kent-Johnson unless otherwise noted

[SEPTEMBER 10, 2023] “It’s all about relationships,” says Vicky Charles, the fast-talking, approachable and boundlessly creative cofounder of interior design studio Charles & Co. when asked about her company’s success. “Whether it’s with your client or the people you work with, you’ve all got to get along.” Everyone’s excited in the

honeymoon period, but deeper into the project, Charles notes, “something’s bound to get stuck at customs or need to change, so being able to communicate is vital.”

Luckily, most of Charles’s team worked with her before she launched the firm in 2016 with business partner Julia Corden, “And we have a lot of repeat clients,” she points out. “Plus, most projects come via word of mouth, which is really very lovely.”


Regarding those clients, the roster is impressive: Ashton Kutcher and Mila Kunis, Amal and George Clooney, David and Victoria Beckham, Emma Stone and Harry Styles. Celebrities, along with well-traveled non-famous global design cognoscenti, may have initially encountered her chicly comfortable interiors without knowing her name. Before setting up the studio, Charles spent 18 years as head of design at Soho House, where she helped define the members club’s instantly recognizable “home from home” aesthetic that has been emulated innumerable times by interior designers and homeowners around the world.

“I was sad to leave,” she says of her former place of employment, where she oversaw a wealth of high-profile projects, including Soho Farmhouse, in the Cotswolds; The Ned, in London; Soho House Istanbul; Little Beach House Malibu; Soho House Chicago; and Ludlow House, in New York. “But I did hospitality for so many years, and now we mainly focus on residential, which I adore.”

In addition to a main office in New York City (Charles lives upstate in the Catskills, a few hours away) and an outpost in Milan, Charles & Co. has recently opened a showroom and office on London’s Lots Road. “We have a fantastic list of European clients, so it’s important for us to have a base there,” the UK-born Charles explains. “Plus, the architecture in Europe is really exciting.”

Closer to home, one of the firm’s latest projects is a seven-bedroom, 10-bath, 10,000-square-foot beach house in the Hamptons, which it started at the beginning of COVID and worked on throughout lockdown. “It was interesting because we only met the client on Zoom, and it could have been hard to get a gauge,” says Charles. “But she is awesome and great to work with, so it wasn’t ever a problem.”





A vintage mirror from [HOWE LONDON](#) reflects light in the welcoming entryway, which is furnished with a Brampton sofa from Dmitriy & Co. upholstered in a warm-hued fabric from [ROSE TARLOW](#).

Built in the late 1990s, the house was typical of the area. “It’s shingled on the outside, the interiors were very white and looked just like everything else in the Hamptons,” Charles says. “But the owner has three teenagers and was very clear that she wanted a home for the kids to enjoy, and that it should also be set up for entertaining.” Although they don’t live there full time, the family visits on weekends and vacations throughout the year. “So it needed to be cozy, too,” Charles notes.

Along with a strict “nothing nautical” directive, the designers’ brief was to add color and texture, and to invest in some great . “The client, who works in the film industry, wasn’t shy about having some fun,” says Charles. “She was keen to choose things with longevity and was incredibly decisive, which is so refreshing.”



Another view of the living area provides a glimpse of the dining room beyond. The built-in shelves (left) were already in place, says Charles, who added visual interest by papering the niches. Rustic tables from were 1stDibs finds.

Entering through a sun-filled hallway, one is struck by the floors, which have been stained a rich dark brown, the perfect foil for a [DMITRIY & CO.](#) sofa in warm, rust-colored fabric. Reflecting the light flowing through the glass door pane and vertical windows is a carved vintage mirror from [HOWE LONDON](#), which is accompanied by a slender floor lamp and a neat woven bench, both from [ORANGE](#), and sourced via 1stDibs.

Next is the living room, which is even brighter, thanks to a series of nearly floor-to-ceiling windows hung with gauzy linen drapes. Sofas and armchairs by Dmitriy & Co. and are arranged to create relaxed seating areas that also maximize views of the pool and the beach beyond. Providing a personal touch, an artwork above the fireplace is by a friend of the client's.



Left: In the dining room, a set of dining chairs by Rupert Bevan surround a table by Matthew Cox. At the windows, a pair of upholstered occasional chairs by George Smith complement the Woven rug. The ceiling pendants are by Los Angeles-based glass artist [ALISON BERGER](#), while a [PRB](#) table lamp rests on a console by Galerie Half, both via 1stDibs. Right: An adjacent bar area centers on another table by Matthew Cox, with armchairs and tufted poufs by George Smith providing seating. The ceiling fixture is from [MORENTZ](#).

The adjacent dining room accommodates a sizable rug by , selected to pick up the teal, amber and burnt-orange hues that thread their way through the house. “One of my favorite things is working with clients and letting them gravitate toward different colors

and textures,” says Charles. “You’ll always find an identity that runs throughout their choices. These things are very personal, and it’s interesting to observe how people see color differently.”

Continuing the dining room’s theme of warm colors, a pair of shapely cocktail chairs by [GEORGE SMITH](#) sits in the window. Blue leather chairs from Rupert Bevan surround a generous dining table by Matthew Cox. Lighting comes courtesy of a row of hanging pendants by Los Angeles-based glass artist Alison Berger and a chic table lamp from [PRB](#) on 1stDibs. Also adjacent to the living space, a paneled bar room is painted in Studio Green by Farrow & Ball, creating a snug but sophisticated feel. Above the table hangs a [MODERN DANISH CHANDELIER](#), sourced from Morentz on 1stDibs.



An expansive island and burnished-brass and leather stools by Chelsea Upholstery make the kitchen a family hub. The trio of lanterns is by via 1stDibs. The cabinets were repainted in Pigeon by Farrow & Ball, and existing countertops and back splashes were replaced with Calacatta Borghini marble.

A kitchen plays a vital role in any home belonging to keen hosts, and here, the substantial island is a hub for family gatherings and parties. The space was relatively new, Charles explains, “so it felt wasteful to rip things out just for the sake of it. Instead, a few updates were the best way forward.” Her team didn’t change much other than the color of the cabinets and the hardware and countertop. They also added a trio of lanterns by ,

sourced from 1stDibs, that are at once practical and elegant, as is a set of burnished-brass bar stools by Chelsea Upholstery.



A ground-floor guest bedroom has its own seating area, thanks to a pair of armchairs and a Decca sofa by Dmitriy & Co.

The ground floor's welcoming guest bedroom is packed with characterful pieces, including a bed from , a bamboo coffee table and standard lamp from Orange, a chandelier from Morentz, bedside lamps from PRB and a pair of armchairs from FINCH Hudson, all acquired on 1stDibs.



The primary bedroom is a study [IN ELEGANT NEUTRALS](#), like linen wallpaper from Studio Zen and a subtly textured bed frame by Dmitriy & Co., which also made the plush ottoman and armchair, as well as the bedside lamp that rests on a Stahl + Band table. The ceiling fixture is by [RH](#), and the rug is from Woven.

Upstairs, the primary bedroom offers a master class in . “We deliberately kept things soft here and added texture with sumptuous fabrics and tactile linen wallpaper,” says Charles. “The room opens up to an incredible view of the water.” Next to the bedroom is a relaxed office space complete with custom pull-out bed and chairs, as well as a coffee table and a side table/magazine rack, both from Orange at 1stDibs. Bedrooms belonging to the children and for guests demonstrate a similar low-key approach, some decorated with pretty floral wallpapers and others with elegant stripes.



Charles, who loves color, chose sumptuous Mahogany and Brinjal paint by Farrow & Ball for the family's hangout and entertaining space on the basement level. Pumpkin-colored velvet poufs by Soho Home and golden wingback chairs by [CISCO BROTHERS](#) supply extra vibrancy, while ample sofas by RH, piled with throw pillows from Zak + Fox, invite lounging. Vintage touches come via a [NOGUCHI](#) lamp and a [MID-CENTURY](#) standing ashtray from Retro Design.

Although the house required no architectural interventions, the basement was unfinished, offering an opportunity to invent a space from scratch. “The client had the brilliant idea to create not just a screening room, which links back to her own work, but a bar and a nightclub too,” says Charles. The result is a series of playful spaces, including a game room, realized in decadent chocolate and cherry shades punctuated with the house's signature rusts and yellows. “It was amazing leaning into the seventies palette,” says the designer, who used silk wallpaper and a bold purple ceiling to impart even more glamour. The client wanted a place where, post-pandemic, she and her family could invite friends over to have fun, explains Charles, who felt free to go all out. “When the chance to include a dance floor and a DJ booth came up, we said, ‘Hell, yeah,’ and just went for it!”

VICKY CHARLES'S QUICK PICKS



ALDO TURA FOR MACABO BRASS AND BLUE-GOATSKIN
COCKTAIL SET, 1960S, OFFERED BY MICHAELA BAUER -
VINTAGE INTERIORS

"Vintage barware, all day, everyday. This Italian set would make a great gift. Everyone needs an ice bucket!"



**TOMMASO BARBI LUCITE AND BRASS TABLE LIGHTER,
1970, OFFERED BY ITALIAN DESIGN 900 SRLS**

"Another gift idea — perfect for lighting dinner candles"



SET OF 6 HOLLYWOOD REGENCY MINI CERAMIC SEA SHELL BOWLS, 20TH CENTURY, OFFERED BY SCOUT STUDIOS

"These are my dream dessert bowls. Shouldn't you always have something with a sense of humor on the table?"



**PINK AND WHITE ITALIAN MARBLE TILES, 1950, OFFERED
BY PITTET ARCHITECTURALS**

“Floors are the one finish in your home that you’re in contact with all the time, and they can’t *not* be perfect. The style needs to work with the architecture, of course, but always buy old if you can.”



SET OF 4 WOODEN STOOLS, 1960S, OFFERED BY
FUNDAMENTE

"Pot stands, side tables, seating — I'd use these versatile stools as anything."



**HUSTADT LEUCHTEN SET OF 3 FAT LAVA SCONCES, 1970S,
OFFERED BY VAN DEN ANDERN**

“This set of modernist fixtures provides both beautiful lighting and wall decor.”



SWEDISH HANDMADE RUSTIC WOOD BOWL, 19TH
CENTURY, OFFERED BY FRANO ANTIQUES

"The perfect fruit bowl, no matter what your kitchen decor is"



ROBERTO GABETTI & AIMARO ISOLDA TAPILEO RUG, 1970,
OFFERED BY SIDE-GALLERY

"Statement rugs like this are not to be hidden under furniture."



LEVI'S DISTRESSED LEATHER ZIP-UP BOMBER JACKET,
CONTEMPORARY, OFFERED BY SUI GENERIS
CONSIGNMENT

"Always such an unexpected win to find a great jacket when on an
antiques hunt."