

Meet Cortney Bishop

A woman with a distinct design repertoire and a bohemian spirit

BY BRIGITTE SURETTE

You've most likely seen Cortney Bishop's designs if you've visited restaurants, homes and hotels in Charleston. Her iconic style is as diverse as she is, and her bohemian spirit shines through most every project she tackles. Design and travel are in her blood. Her mother was a designer and entrepreneur, her grandmother an

Q&A artisan, sewing fashions by hand, and her father, a global business executive.

"Their creative and entrepreneurial influences pushed me toward interior design as a business," Bishop said. "And, my father inspired and encouraged my ambitious spirit."

Ambitious is an understatement, as Bishop's hand and artistic eye have been an integral part of several new Charleston commercial projects (and some out of Charleston and the country), including Daniel Island's new Kingtide restaurant, The Dime Market and Eatery and The Ryder, a boutique hotel in the heart of downtown on Meeting Street. In addition, she's putting the final touches on The Longboard, a new Sullivan's Island restaurant that she says will have a "nod to the islands," (in both design and cuisine), to its sister restaurant in St. John.

Both the hotel and restaurant are slated for a spring opening this year.

Growing up in Atlanta, she and her family vacationed on Kiawah Island in the early '70s. She was drawn to Charleston, moved here after college and worked for the Kiawah Island resort community. Though she made a few stops along the way, and always will have a wanderlust, Charleston is her base and as she said, "It keeps calling me home."

I reached out to her to get her expertise on what's in store for kitchen designs for 2021.

First, any details about your very first design project?

My first real home project was based in Knoxville, TN. My partner and I had just opened our firm and were eager to land our first gig. I got a call from the president of Regal Cinemas who was hoping to collaborate on a large renovation of his new home. During the initial



KATIE CHARLOTTE

Cortney Bishop's design style is about re-imagining interior spaces without bounds, with a balance of creativity, functionality and comfort.

meeting, we talked a lot about music and as a thank you for the opportunity, I left him a trio of live concert CDs. Turns out he was a huge fan of the band and the next thing I knew, I was hired! It was one of those projects that I learned so much from — a "throw yourself into the fire" kind of opportunity. I was determined to swim rather than sink.

Have there been any changes in kitchen design over the past year,

especially in light of how our lives changed in 2020?

The kitchen's identity has grown more than just a place to cook and eat, especially over the last year. It's a communal space so there has to be ample room for the household to work, study, hang out, cook and dine! Banquettes to maximize kitchen seating and game tables are both hot requests for sure.

Trends come and go. What are some



KATIE CHARLOTTE

Bishop prefers cabinets to be all one color. Here, bold black and whites make a dramatic statement. Open shelving, she believes, is here to stay.

On the web

For more information about Cortney Bishop Design, visit <https://cortney-bishop.com> or follow her on Instagram @cortneybishopdesign.

that have come and have stood the test of time?

Designers will always pick and choose which trends they want to see stick around and keep in their repertoire. I've seen a big shift towards maximizing how we treat walls and ceilings — moving away from the simply painted sheetrock. There's been a strong push towards the surfaces being treated with more durable materials like stained wood and shiplap, to vibrant wallpapers that further give life to a space. I'm determined to make the trend last!

What are some of the most requested client must-haves in kitchen design?

Right now, our clients are looking for anything to make their kitchens more family friendly starting with the largest island possible. More and more, we're



One of Bishop's go-to colors is Farrow and Ball's "Ball Green." She loves the color paired with lighter wood tones, darker stones and tiles. The color embraces the Lowcountry's landscape.

incorporating dual dishwashers, refrigerator drawers, ice makers, and a big single basin sink.

Are open shelves here to stay? Some love them, others don't — what's your take?

Absolutely — open shelves allow for a lighter, seamless integration into the rest of the kitchen versus heavy cabinetry. They give life to kitchen walls and serve as showcase pieces for dishware, pottery and treasured collectibles. Just be thoughtful to account for enough storage space in the rest of the kitchen. You don't want everything on display, after all.

Do you have any go to colors that you like as a palette and/or backdrop in kitchens?

I haven't been able to stay away from Farrow and Ball's "Ball Green" as of lately. It blends effortlessly with lighter, and sometimes even darker stones, tiles, and wood tones. The color definitely speaks to our Lowcountry landscape too.

Do you like the trend for varying colors in upper and lower cabinetry? Do you have any "go-tos" you like in terms of finishes or features?

I prefer to stick to applying accent colors or stains on a kitchen island rather than varying colors between upper and lower cabinetry. I treat the kitchen island like a piece of furniture and want it to be the showstopper versus a punch of color on a cabinetry run.

A go-to finish is white oak. Whether on the floor, on cabinetry, or even furniture, I'm using it in nearly every



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Bishop loves marble for countertops. For this client, it was used on both the large island and the backsplash. Stained wood warms up the cooler tone and yellow-toned rattan adorn the bar stools.



Design is as diverse as one's personality. Here, Bishop's creation takes an edgier approach. Mixing materials, colors and textures, and creating layers is what good design is all about.

project in some capacity. With a Bona Naturale finish, it keeps the yellow out.

Are you seeing more quartz and less marble? Do you have a favorite for countertops — why?

For our projects, not necessarily. I've never not loved marble. If anything, I have been drawn to it more lately, especially Evorio marble. It looks like soapstone but requires less maintenance, and will surely pass 'the timeless test.' Many have concerns about marble surfaces, but we've been encouraging cli-

ent dog bowls be hidden away so the pups wouldn't clash them throughout the day. We built the bowls into a lower cabinetry drawer so when it was feeding time, the drawer could simply be opened and then put away.

Your website has an array of styles from "southern charm" to "bohemian" to "primitive modern" — what was the motivation or inspiration behind some of them?

Inspiration is spawning from our clients themselves. We are getting to know them even better than before — their needs, their personalities, their lifestyles, their joys. Personalities start to shine, and I believe that's why our portfolio is so diverse. Now more than ever, we're reminded that our homes need to feel like us. Our goal is to design a home that speaks to our client's unique personalities, all while balancing comfort, function and beauty.

Finally, how would you define your own personal style? What do you like to surround yourself in within your own personal space?

Our spaces are meant to tell our stories and mine is constantly progressing. I'm always taking new risks when it comes to my own home, my fashion, and my personal style. Definitely a bohemian at heart, I'm all about mixing materials, colors, and textures — whatever it takes to create layers and a meaningful story that feels like home to me.

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ents to embrace the everyday wear and tear — bring on the character and life!

What are some unique elements one can put in a kitchen? Can you share a few of your most unusual or unique you've included for a client or clients?

More drawers! The ease of drawers as opposed to traditional doors in a kitchen is a no brainer — with self-closers, please!

A unique request came from a client whose dogs were very much a part of their family. They preferred the