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VISIONS OF ELEGANCE

Camilla Bellord was blessed with a passion for interior design which, combined with an eye for detail, has turned her into a miracle worker for homes



PHOTOGRAPHY: NICK SMITH, ANNA STATHAKI AND ANDREW BEASLEY



Timeless, elegant interiors are at the heart of interior designer Camilla Bellord's philosophy. Nikki Owen met the woman behind showstopping designs in Chelsea, Knightsbridge, Dubai, New York, France and Switzerland.

Sometimes we are blessed. Blessed with a passion, with a vision of what we want to do with our lives.

And this passion, this direction that we often discover at a young age is a gift. And so to interior designer, Camilla Bellord.

With over 17 years experience in the design industry, Camilla launched her studio back in 2016 with a philosophy of timeless interiors, infused with an eclectic elegance.

Projects have included show apartments at Kings Chelsea, a townhouse in Cadogan Square, Knightsbridge, the Grand Park Hotel and ski chalets in Gstaad, with reviews, features and awards bestowed from across the globe.

My goodness, it's incredible. So, on interviewing Camilla – who's based in the glorious Cotswold village of Great Rissington – my first question had to be why is she so passionate about interiors and was there, perhaps, a moment in her life that sparked a desire to design?

"Ever since I can remember," Camilla says, a crisp white shirt topping simple denim jeans, her glossy, long dark hair gliding down her back, with a smile both warm and reassuring.

"I have loved to create and spent most of my youth with a pen and sketch pad in



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I love that thought of Camilla as a child with her sketch pad – it says, to me, that for Camilla, design is part of who she is – and always has been. Brought up on the idyllic Sussex coast, childhood for Camilla



was something magical, growing up by the sea, fostering the perfect environment for creativity.

So I'm intrigued, how did she train to become such a highly successful interior designer?

"After I trained in interior design at the KLC School of Design in Chelsea, I worked with some of London's leading design studios. Tom was then recruited by the European football governing body, UEFA, to Switzerland," Camilla says.

The "Tom" Camilla is referring to is her beloved husband and now business partner. Following a successful 20-year career in ➔

commercial marketing and property (plus the couple now have three children), Tom has joined Camilla in her interiors business, and the couple are going from strength to strength.

"Following our Swiss wedding, the patter of tiny feet came thick and fast," Camilla tells me. "In 2013, with three boys aged two and under, a return to the UK beckoned and this became the catalyst to creating our own studio. We had always dreamt of setting up our own family run business.

"With my background in design and Tom's in business, we had the perfect mix to take the plunge and Camilla Bellord Interiors was created."

From the shores of Lake Geneva to projects across Dubai, New York, France and Switzerland, it's this experience of both life and the world that Camilla brings beautifully to her work.

Each project is totally unique, a collaboration between Camilla and the client, the entire company striving to blend their design ethos with a client's personality, as well as their needs.

To Camilla, it's all intuitive.

"We like to meet our clients face to face, and if possible, in their environment," says Camilla, who cites her design idols as Federica Palacios (who she used to work with in Geneva), Christian Liaigre and Anouska Hempel.

"This allows us to get a glimpse into their lifestyle, the books on their shelves, family photos, muddy shoes at the door, their interests, their dreams, what makes them tick, what they love. All of these factors help us to piece together a proposal which will enhance their life."

Again, this talk of life, of what makes people tick – it sums up Camilla's approach entire, because, of course, with the increasing demands of modern day living, what we all would really love is a beautiful space to live. A hideaway. A sanctuary.

Camilla totally understands this. "The interior design process can be stressful for many people and we pride ourselves in making the interior design process a pleasurable journey."

But, I ask her, what drives her to keep doing what she does?

"It is such a privilege to work in the dynamic and exciting world of interiors, where no two days are ever the same."

For Camilla, she finds she is constantly inspired by the design world, particularly The Design Centre in Chelsea and Maison & Objet in Paris. "However," Camilla tells me, "often the most intriguing inspiration is found in unexpected moments in life, a trip to the Science Museum or the Cotswold Sweet Company in Stow with our boys, an autumnal walk in the Windrush Valley and the light show at Blenheim Palace, to name but a few."

What a beautiful thought – that inspiration



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can be taken from the smallest things, from places and family and memories, for what are we creating with the decoration of our homes if it is not memories?

This insight makes Camilla stand out. She is an interior designer who finds client satisfaction the most rewarding aspect of what she does – or, as Camilla endearingly puts it: “It’s about a smile on a client’s face when you present a proposal that blows them away, a twinkle in their eye when you show them the finished space, a wonderful client review.”

With such a rich tapestry of life within her reach, I wondered, considering their travels and their previous life in Switzerland, how does living in the Cotswolds influence Camilla’s approach to design?

“Our design principals and business ethos haven’t changed since moving to the Cotswolds,” Camilla tells me.

“But it is so exciting to live and work in an area of such outstanding beauty and architecture.

“We particularly love to mix old and new, and local architecture certainly provides us with this opportunity.”

Old and new still require Camilla to keep an eye on trends, yet, wisely, she is not a slave to them.

“Although we keep abreast of design trends and new products,” she says, “we don’t seek out on-trend solutions. Our focus is to create timeless interiors.”

That said, naturally, like any good designer, Camilla keeps her finger on the creative pulse and, at the moment is absolutely loving Crittall windows, for their versatile and beautifully executed design details.

On top of Camilla’s very personal and bespoke interior design service, there is also now the Camilla Bellord Boutique, a shop option available online for exquisite products – something Camilla is very enthusiastic about.



“We have pulled together a small collection of some of our favourite art, accessories and furniture from suppliers from all over the world,” she tells me.

“We particularly love products that have a story, like the Bamileke stools and the Indonesian tribal shell necklaces are a particular favourite. The collection is constantly evolving and we’re currently developing some exciting new products which we will be launching later in the year.”

Camilla cites her family as inspiring her and of course, her own gorgeous 17th century home is a true style hub.

‘We particularly love products that have a story, like the Bamileke stools and the Indonesian tribal shell necklaces are a particular favourite’

“Our home brings all the natural charm of wood burning stoves, original beams and the all-essential Aga together,” Camilla tells me.

“We have chosen to accentuate these features with a neutral backdrop, but punctuated the space with an eclectic mix of family antiques, statement sculpture, as well as our much-loved book collection from Yves Klein to Banksy.”

Attention to detail, says Camilla, is the key to creating that “homey feel”.

“A scented candle with elegant match striker in easy distance,” she enthuses. “A well-positioned music system, a basket filled to the brim with logs ready for the fire, a cocktail table next to an armchair to pop your drink on.”



When not working, the Cotswolds provides Camilla (who loves Ashtanga yoga), Tom and their boys with a wonderful backdrop to their lives, and Tom and Camilla love a Sunday roast at the King’s Head in Bledington and walks along the River Windrush.

So, with all this rapid yet calm success, what’s next?

“It’s been an incredible start to our exciting journey together, with projects in London, the home counties, the Cotswolds and even the mountains of Switzerland. We really look forward to sharing more of our wonderful projects in the coming months.”

And so it is there we end our interview. I stand and find myself instinctively lighting a candle, adjusting the throw on my armchair, and then smile at how, already, Camilla has influenced me.

Yes, it’s true, some people do have a gift. Thank you for yours, Camilla Bellord. 

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