



Susan Easterly Coleman



ABOUT SUSAN

INTERIOR DESIGNER

Serving as a member of the American Society of Interior Design (ASID) and the International Interior Design Association (IIDA), Susan Coleman is the lead designer for Easterly Coleman Furniture Company.

Susan, who has designed homes all over the United States, as well as the Cayman Islands, now heads up the third generation family-owned business. With locations in Lebanon and Bristol, Va., venerable Easterly Coleman offers the finest in furniture, as well as a custom cabinetry and design services with Bristol serving as full scale design center.

Susan's grandfather, James Easterly, founded what was originally known as Lebanon Furniture in 1935. Her father, Jim Jr., grew up working in the business and her mother, Lorene, joined him at Lebanon Furniture in 1970. Under Jim and Lorene's direction, Lebanon Furniture became so successful that Heilig-Meyers, a

notable and successful chain of that time, offered to buy Lebanon Furniture but Jim had no interest in selling the business.

Susan, who credits her mother as her inspiration for introducing sophisticated and elegant lines to the business, as well as being the catalyst for the company's move into design work, attended the E. Claiborne Robins School of Business at the University of Richmond. She received degrees in marketing and finance. Her graduate work in design was completed at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, then ranked within the top five design schools in the country.

Under the expert guidance of Susan and Tim, Easterly Coleman has developed into an extremely successful and reputable business and expanded its umbrella to include her grandfather's original business, Lebanon Furniture Company.





Many of today's most successful interior designers are known for a particular style that serves as their calling card. It might be a color palette, a specific type of artwork or furniture, a certain aesthetic, or something else that can directly identify them with the project at hand.

That isn't the process for Susan Coleman, whose design style simply can't be pigeon-holed. In her more than 30 years as a successful designer, Coleman has created a variety of dynamic residential interiors, complete with custom cabinetry and furnishings, throughout the United States and the Cayman Islands – all unique to the vision of her clients.

“Honestly, I don't really have a
preferred style,”

“I would never force my thoughts on a client so I just try to tune into what they're telling me. I conform to what they want and what they like. It's not my house, it's theirs so it's important to understand how the family functions and what their personalities are like,” Coleman said of her exquisitely detailed designs.





Richmond, Virginia Historic Distric Home

While Susan Coleman doesn't like to play favorites when it comes to her interior design projects, she won't deny that this historic home on Grove Avenue in Richmond, Va. holds a special place in her heart.

The home, built in the 1800s, had been repurposed into several apartments. Her client wanted the home restored to its original glory, which was music to Coleman's ears.

Coleman's inspiration for the restoration of the home came from a piece of artwork bought by her client in Cuba. Placed over the living room fireplace, the original oil painting gave birth to Coleman's vision.

"That was it – that one piece of art is where we started," she said. "She wanted us to design around the colors in that artwork. At first, I was like 'how am I going to make this work' but we did it and when we finished it was beautiful, classy and full of color."

Coleman's client gave her poetic license to do as she wished, a designer's dream come true.

"Some might have been intimidated by this project, but I wasn't at all," she said. "It is so awesome to be trusted to do something like this from the ground up. And she really listened to me and didn't dissect everything."



Coleman's inspiration

for the restoration of the home came from a piece of artwork bought by her client in Cuba. Placed over the living room fireplace, the original oil painting gave birth to Coleman's vision.





“When you have a vision and people start picking it apart, you lose it and your creativity can be stifled. But this house, it *was just really a joy to do.*”

“The ceilings were not high enough, but I positioned the ottoman so we could use it, and she absolutely loved it.”

Coleman also had a lot of fun creating her client's family story along the staircase.

“My client is very family oriented so she wanted something special with photos,” she said. “We created these plexiglass frames that go the length of the stairs and basically tell the story of her family.”

“I was really happy with the way everything turned out and my client was so easy to work with. This was a fun, fun project and was pretty much a dream for a designer. The more difficult the challenge, the more fun and rewarding the end result is – and that was definitely the case here.”



