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JEFFREY BILHUBER ON  
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DREAM  
KITCHENS

Plus:  
HOME  
TRENDS

SPECIAL  
ISSUE!



Pattern, when combined with color, gives traditional rooms a modern energy.

MASTER DESIGNER

# JEFFREY BILHUBER

THE CELEBRATED INTERIOR DECORATOR DRAWS ON BOTH HISTORY AND TRENDS TO CREATE UNIQUELY AMERICAN SPACES. HERE, HE SHARES INSIGHT INTO HIS LATEST BOOK, HIS NEWEST PROJECTS AND HIS FAVORITE KIND OF CLIENT.

BY DEBORAH SKOLNIK



**B**y any measure, Jeffrey Bilhuber ranks among the handful of American interior designers who have achieved worldwide renown. His artistic vision—one informed by history, yet defined by innovation—has led him to create instantly iconic spaces and accrue a long list of clients that includes such luminaries as Michael Douglas, Iman and the late David Bowie, Halston, and Hubert de Givenchy. In March, the famed New York School of Interior Design awarded him its prestigious Albert Hadley Lifetime Achievement Award.

Yet while he is elite, Bilhuber is not exclusive, as his legions of fans know. Instead he aims to spread his aesthetic far and wide through a variety of licensed collections, including carpets, porcelain dinnerware, furniture and floor tiles. Then there are his well-loved décor books, which help even beginners put together thoughtfully balanced rooms.

In March, Bilhuber published a new book—his fifth to date—entitled *Everyday Decorating*. A marked departure from his previous works, it features chapters titled with adjectives such as “Cozy” and “Happy,” and filled with lush images and pithy insights.

*What made you see a need for this particular book?*

It circles back to my first book, *Design Basics*, which continues to sell very, very well, 12 years after its publication. Wherever I turn, people come up to me and thank me for *Design Basics*. It’s still actively used, actively enjoyed, actively shared. We needed to follow that up with a book that is a similar travail, a similar price point and doing a similar concept but in large issue. So obviously, it reflects evolving tastes and evolving living standards, too. That’s really what the book does: It builds on that premise that we all benefit from good information. And if we know what we’re asking for, we’re going to like what we get when it arrives.

*You mention evolution. Has your approach to writing evolved?*

I found that in the last six years—especially since my [last] book, *American Master*, was published, which was three years ago—the way that we source information, and the way that we retrieve it and retain it, is completely different from before. Our minds are working much faster. The way that we started to build this book was as a printable Instagram. There are always things that I see on Instagram that I wish I could pull back up. We wanted to build a printed Instagram [with] great projects, wonderful, timeless works that have value built into them, and then help people understand why they are drawn to these rooms.

*Your designs have a distinctly American feel. How do you incorporate that with European and other influences?*

What we do as American designers is that we sample. If you ask someone to define what a French room looks like, they have a very clear image. They also get a clear image of what an English room looks like, or an Asian or Russian room. But if you ask them to tell you what an American room is like, it’s blurry; they can’t figure it out. That’s an asset, because we’re the only culture as a young society that’s asked to sample other cultures in other periods of time. We’re not that specific. I’m allowed to put an Italian com-

SIMON UPTON



Blue and white patterned cotton animate the bedhangings and curtains of this charming bedroom.