

At Full Gallop

When passionate equestrians Fernanda Kellogg and Kirk Henckels fulfill their dream of fusing a house and stable in South Carolina, they turn to Brockschmidt & Coleman to create a gracious haven from their unlikely hybrid

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Twenty years ago, when Kirk Henckels proposed to Fernanda Kellogg, it was on horseback—a place where the couple, both lifelong riders who met through their local hunt club, feel supremely at home. Once married, the pair divided their time between Fitch's Corner, Kellogg's farm in Millbrook, New York, and the Park Avenue apartment that once belonged to Kellogg's father, the late Ambassador Francis Kellogg. When it came time to add a third residence to their portfolio—in Aiken, South Carolina—it was, not surprisingly, their horses that led them there.

About eight years ago, when the animals began an annual sojourn south for winter training, Kellogg says, "I thought, What's wrong with this picture?" She decided to follow, initially renting an apartment in Aiken, the world-renowned equestrian capital. After a few years, Henckels, who works in real estate and finance, decided they should build their own place. "I'm a frustrated architect and builder, and I had always renovated old houses," he says. "This was my shot at doing something new."

Working closely with architect Joseph Smith, Henckels envisioned a central domestic space with stables attached, a form that recalls a classic Palladian villa with agricultural outbuildings connected on each side. His wife was thrilled. "I'd seen apartments above barns before, but never this," Kellogg says. "Kirk understood that ever since childhood I'd wanted to live with the horses, and this was the closest he could get me to my dream."

When the compound was complete, the couple brought in Bill Brockschmidt and Courtney Coleman, the Manhattan-based design duo who had presided over the redo of their apartment



The living room of Fernanda Kellogg and Kirk Henckels's home in Aiken, South Carolina, which was designed by architect Joseph Smith of Hall-Smith Office, with interiors by Bill Brockschmidt and Courtney Coleman. The Louis XVI daybed and Louis XV armchairs, which are covered in a Hazelton House chintz and a ticking by Malabar, and the antique Chinese lacquered cocktail table are heirlooms from Kellogg's family; the antique pine mantel is Georgian, the rug is by Dash & Albert, the floors are stained concrete, and the walls are painted in Brattle Spruce by California Paints, with trim in Benjamin Moore's Devon Cream. For details, see Resources.



Kellogg with two of her horses.



The kitchen's hunt-themed chandelier was purchased by Henckels in Millbrook, New York, as a Christmas gift for his wife; the stove is by Thermador, and the painted "floorcloth" is a custom design.



In the dining room, the Directoire table belonged to Kellogg's father, the chairs are Regency, the painting is by Abelardo Favela, and the wall is paneled in pine planks. For details, see Resources.



The entry's table and Viennese mahogany carousel horse are antique; the walls have a custom wash, and the ceiling is painted in Farrow & Ball's Borrowed Light.



A veranda overlooking the courtyard.

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in New York, to help with the interiors. "They have a wonderful sense of pattern and color," Henckels says. Indeed, the pair's first decision was to give punches of color to the initially all-white space. "It was very dramatic," says Brockschmidt, referring to the soaring 27-foot living room, which is topped by a cupola. But, adds Coleman, the neutral palette made the spaces, including a library with a vaulted ceiling, appear "too nebulous." After a bit of cajoling, they convinced their clients to go with a spruce-green shade on the majority of the walls. "The dark color made things a lot more intimate."

The next challenge was to incorporate what Coleman calls a "mish-mosh" of the clients' inherited furniture—everything from a lacquered Chinese table to a pair of Art Deco pieces. The Georgian pine mantel in the living room has graced almost every apartment Henckels has ever lived in; a pair of Billy Baldwin bergères had belonged to Kellogg's mother. Among the more

felicitous newer additions are the framed illustrations from the 1917 English children's book *The Fox's Frolic*, which Kellogg found in an antiques store and which gives the house its name.

Brockschmidt says there's definitely a *Green Acres* conceit to the decor, given the fact that a couple of Park Avenue dwellers have filled what is essentially a horse barn with fine antiques. The charm comes from the high-low mix: The designers toned down the fanciness quotient by using fabrics such as ticking and brightly colored cotton chintz. Dutch doors in the living room mimic those of horse stalls, while the kitchen is entered through a sliding barn door. The floors, concrete stained a deep luggage brown, accommodate muddy boots and a pair of even muddier black Labs. But unlike in the classic 1960s television sitcom, Kellogg is hardly a hapless Eva Gabor floating about the farm in a marabou-trimmed negligee. An accomplished horsewoman who is also a talented cook, she started a weekly Thursday barn



lunch in the courtyard. The homey fare includes “big casseroles, hearty dishes,” and the crowd, which can number as many as 30, is made up of “the various circles in Aiken,” including, she says, the blacksmith, “who now won’t come unless it’s Thursday.”

Both Henckels and Kellogg say their favorite place to be is the enfilade of rooms—bedroom and sitting area, office, bathrooms—that make up the master suite. Reminiscent of a sleeping porch, the bedroom has a rich blue ceiling to conjure the sky and crisp eyelet café curtains that ensure privacy while allowing in light and a glimpse of the green-striped outdoor awnings. “It’s very tempting to spend all of our time there,” Henckels says.

When he began the project, Henckels was visited by a local polo player who told him he’d lost his mind—that he and his wife would be listening to the sound of horses all day and night. The couple was undeterred. “I wish they made more noise,” he says. “That was the point of having the master bedroom over the courtyard.” Kellogg agrees: “Some people wake up to the birds. I wake up to the clip-clop of horses.” Neither would have it any other way. ■

LEFT: The trestle table and benches are antiques, and the tin-top console was purchased in Sharon, Connecticut. **BELOW, FROM LEFT:** A guest bedroom’s circa-1890s French metal beds are dressed with bed skirts of a Claremont fabric; the shades are of a Quadrille toile, the American hooked rug was found at Sotheby’s, and the carpet is by Prestige Mills. In Henckels’s bath, the artworks include Salvador Dalí prints and an 1890s English hunting scene; the walls are painted in Benjamin Moore’s Natural Elements. **OPPOSITE:** In the master bedroom, the headboard is upholstered in a Malabar fabric, the bed skirt chintz and wallpaper are by Brunswick & Fils, the side table is 18th century, and the carpet is by Stark. For details, see Resources.

