

Personality Studies

At home and for distinguished clientele, **Sheila Bridges** grounds her interior design with a unique sense of place

by **SAM COCHRAN**



DESIGNER

Sheila Bridges

HOME BASE

New York City

MANTRA

Furnishing forward—
furnish for a lifetime

GO-TO MEAL

Fresh ramen with all
types of vegetables
from my CSA

Start Your Engine

For a 1936 Cotswold-style estate in New York, Bridges's client found inspiration in the driveway of all places—resulting in cabinets painted the same green as their son's vintage Ford pickup truck. "Ideas can come from anywhere," she notes of the kitchen, designed in collaboration with architect David Abelow. "It's fun when people don't take things so seriously." The rich hue complements the green shades in the dining room's hand-painted wallpaper. "A kitchen shouldn't be stand-alone. It should have a relationship to adjoining spaces."

RECURRING MOTIFS

Signature design ingredients add a Sheila Bridges touch to one-of-a-kind rooms.



The designer praises marble's rich character and unique veining.

"It can be any kind: Vermont Danby, Carrara." From \$536 a square meter; lapidica.com



"I used to have a lot of parties," Bridges notes, explaining her vast collection of vintage glassware. \$325 for set of nine; 1stdibs.com



When it comes to appliances, you can't go wrong with Italian—which remind Bridges of her studies in Florence. From \$6,549; us.bertazzoni.com



The designer's iconic Harlem Toile de Jouy pattern, seen here as a wallpaper, features scenes that explore stereotypes of Blackness. \$300 a roll; sheilabridges.com

History Lessons

At her Harlem apartment, located in a landmark 1901 building, she looked to the past, modeling the traditional cabinetry after the home's original doors. Benjamin Moore Hemlock blue paint complements her Torino Damask wallpaper, which she designed after a historic painted ceiling in Turin, Italy. "The room looks the same today as it did 10 years ago," she says. "It is possible to do a timeless kitchen."



Odes to Joy

"If you look back at my own kitchens, all of them are different," Bridges says. For her 1,600-square-foot retreat in the Hudson Valley, she opted for a small and open kitchen from which to entertain her frequent guests. The space features neutral cabinets and pops of yellow in the form of a Smeg range, Le Creuset Dutch oven, and Nanette Hahn painting. Her ultimate advice? "Surround yourself with the things you love, the things that make you happy. Everybody is unique, and that is what design is all about."

Local Attractions

At Bridges's pied-à-terre in Reykjavik, the kitchen is an homage to Iceland's nature and culture. Black cabinets nod to the country's basalt columns and black sand beaches, and 3D wallpaper designed by Twenty2 with Pratt Institute features a nautical motif of Viking ships and crashing waves. "I make all my visitors put on 3D glasses," she says. Wine storage under the eaves and a magnetic knife block help to max out the snug space.

