



The mansion on the grounds of the Naval Observatory, which serves as the home of U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris and Second Gentleman Mark Emhoff. **Bettmann / Getty**

In the News

Kamala Harris and Doug Emhoff Revamp the Vice Presidential Abode—With Help From Sheila Bridges

The AD100 designer gave the Victorian-style home a facelift with American furnishings and craft accessories

By Adrian Madlener

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Vice President Kamala Harris and second gentleman Doug Emhoff are enjoying refreshed digs in DC, *The Washington Post* [has reported](#). The redecoration of the 33-room home, Number One Observatory Circle, came courtesy of AD100 designer [Sheila Bridges](#).

Harlem-based Bridges made a name for herself by cleverly blending old- and new-world elements in striking domestic and workplace interiors—a talent that earned her the attention of clients like Andre Harrell and Sean “P. Diddy” Combs. But outside of homes for musical heavyweights, Bridges has built a portfolio of work inside political circles, tackling projects like President Bill Clinton’s Harlem offices and the Washington, DC, mansion of a state Supreme Court justice. As the latest to tap Bridges, Vice President Harris and Emhoff made improvements to their official home on the grounds of the US Naval Observatory.

According to the vice president’s office, renovations took just over a year to achieve and commenced soon after she and her husband took up residence in April 2021. Bridges was tasked with creating interiors that felt comfortable and conducive to the couple’s daily life but that could also accommodate official receptions, *The Washington Post* reports.

Built in 1893 and perched within 13 acres of leafy hillside, the 9,000-square-foot estate features round turret rooms, inglenook [fireplaces](#), sweeping verandas, and even a heated pool. Unlike other Victorian properties of its ilk, the Queen Anne-style house does not follow a symmetrical layout. Its main rooms do not revolve around a central hall, but instead connect to each other in a free-flowing fashion.

The house has been home to seven previous vice presidents and their families, each of whom has introduced their own tweaks to the space: [Nelson Rockefeller](#), President Gerald Ford’s VP, famously brought in a Greek-inspired “[cage](#)” bed by the Surrealist artist Max Ernst; the Bushes worked with designer [Mark Hampton](#), who transformed the home’s interior using an ample amount of celadons, lime greens, and light blues.

For their own take on the home, Harris and Emhoff opted to imbue the interiors with a style reflective of their native [California](#). Bridges responded with a neutral color palette and bold accents sprinkled throughout. (A pink library ranks as one of these “breakout” moments.) Working with items from the home’s official furnishings collection, belongings owned by the second family, as well as new pieces, Bridges prioritized designs by American talents and produced by domestic manufacturers. *The Washington Post* also reported that the decoration was paid for privately.

“It’s an incredible honor,” Bridges told the *Post*. “The house is an architectural landmark. I love old homes and figuring out how to use them for a family with a modern lifestyle. That is what we did.”

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