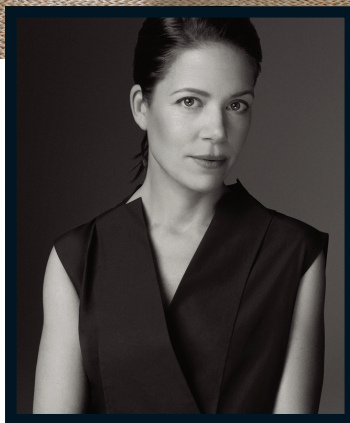


Amy Mellen's country home is rustic and cosy. "I feel like the house dictated what it was going to be," she says. "It's a log cabin, so it's never going to be modern."



# Amy Mellen



Calvin Klein Home's creative director on finding inspiration in unexpected places and her own not-so-minimal moments. *Text by STACY LEE KONG*

**It's safe to say that**, after 15 years at the company, Calvin Klein Home creative director Amy Mellen has the brand's signature aesthetic — sophisticated, modern, elegant — down. But alongside her love of minimalist design and icons like Donald Judd, Jean-Michel Frank and Charlotte Perriand, Mellen finds inspiration in surprising places, even in the most maximalist of interiors. Here, she chats with *H&H* about hot home trends, her dream house and how a tattooed lady can spark a new floral pattern.

## Q+A

**H&H:** *What does your house look like?*

**AM:** My apartment in New York is all white and grey. It's calming, and there's hardly anything in it. When I come home from work, it's a nice, serene environment. My country house, though, is full of stuff. I have a lot of small things that I've picked up while travelling — bowls from Japan, textiles from Asia and India. There's a screened-in porch in the back, and the living room has beams in the ceiling and a fieldstone fireplace with a really nice, big mantel. That being said, there's not a lot of furniture or clutter.

**H&H:** *Has your style been impacted by working at Calvin Klein?*

**AM:** Completely. A few weeks ago, we were in Marfa, Texas, and we went to the Judd Foundation. You know, if I'd seen a cement box 20 years ago, *CONTINUED*

Produced by Jennifer Koper (images)/Photography by William Waldron (living room)

Mellen loves the modern lines of Philip Johnson's Glass House in New Canaan, Conn.



I would have thought, "That's ridiculous; I don't get it!" But I loved how the box frames the landscape, and how the light hits it, and the shadows that it casts. I think I probably did always have a little bit of minimalism in me, but I definitely appreciate that a lot more now. That's why I have a grey, soothing apartment in the city. But there's still a part of me that wants to put up wallpaper and a giant chandelier!

#### H&H: Where do you find inspiration?

AM: Inspiration is everywhere. I'll see a shadow of a leaf on the sidewalk and take a picture of it so we can make a print of it. Right now, I have a picture from a magazine of a woman who's got tattoos all over her body; it made me think, "Let's do a black and white floral that looks like her tattoos."

#### H&H: Describe your dream house.

AM: It wouldn't be big, and it would probably have a lot of glass in it, because I love being outside. I'd want a great view, and hopefully water nearby, and it might even be just be one level. Actually, Philip Johnson's Glass House would be ideal!

#### H&H: Have you done any design-inspired travel recently?

AM: That trip to Marfa was incredible. You fly to El Paso, drive for three hours, and then it's just dry, dry desert. The town's got maybe 2,000 people. You just rent bikes and ride around and drink beer and look at art. It's awesome! The next place I want to see is Georgia O'Keeffe's house, the Ghost Ranch, in New Mexico. Working here, there are little pilgrimages that we all need to make to see places that have inspired Calvin.

#### H&H: The most important part of a room is...

AM: The wall colour and the floor. You want to start with that. I decide what colour wall I want, and then I work from there.

#### H&H: What are your top investment pieces?

AM: A really nice bed — something simple, because a bed is easy to change up with a new duvet cover. Sofas are the same: you can get a new pillow or put a throw on it and totally change the look. You should also invest in hardware, like door handles. People don't really think about those things, but you use them every day; they should be special.

#### H&H: Are there any home trends you're really loving now?

AM: There's so much pattern and colour, and I love it. Every magazine has patterned rugs and fabric and pillows and curtains. People are having fun again.

## WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE

Amy Mellen finds inspiration in all sorts of spaces, thanks in part to her stylish social set.



#### REFINED LAYERS

"My friend Robert Couturier's house in Connecticut is phenomenal. It's over the top; every surface is covered by some expensive little trinket. It's the opposite of minimalism, but it's so inspiring."



#### WEATHERED AMERICANA

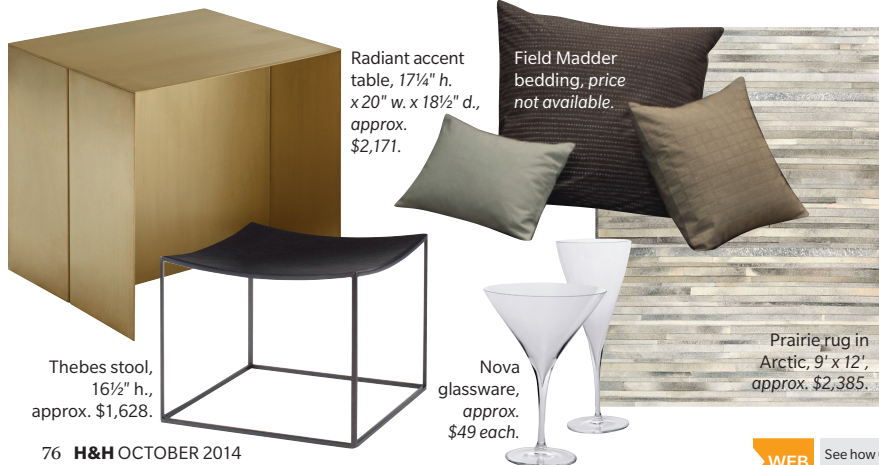
"The design team at Roman and Williams is really amazing. Their own home always inspires me, and their other projects, like New York's High Line Hotel (above), do, too."



#### RUSTIC MINIMALISM

"My friend John-Paul Philippe bought this 300-sq.-ft. cabin in Connecticut. He's travelled to Japan a lot, so it has that influence. He finally left the city and is making sculptures and really living that life."

### AMY MELLEN'S PICKS FROM CALVIN KLEIN HOME'S LATEST COLLECTIONS.



Radiant accent table, 17¼" h. x 20" w. x 18½" d., approx. \$2,171.

Field Madder bedding, price not available.

Thebes stool, 16½" h., approx. \$1,628.

Nova glassware, approx. \$49 each.

Prairie rug in Arctic, 9' x 12', approx. \$2,385.