



I've just ordered this retro window treatment for my sunroom-here's how interior designers convinced me chik blinds are back

Super versatile and a well-loved tool in an interior designer's arsenal, chik blinds are having a real moment. Here's why I'm sold on these sun-filtering blinds

By Charlotte Olby
Photographs by Chris Mottalini
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Hendricks Churchill

You only have to take a quick scroll through the feeds of some of the most renowned interior designers to find an array of woven or 'chik' blinds hung at some of the most beautiful windows.

Seemingly retro, these sheer window treatments are back on trend in a big way, and I'm seriously on board. On a quest to find something whimsical and unimposing for the windows and patio doors in my home, I stumbled upon chik blinds and it was pretty much love at first sight.

Beloved by experts, and certainly piquing my interest, I reached out to the experts to further understand their love for these organic blinds. Here's what they had to say.

'Chik' window blinds were originally invented in Northern India and are crafted from natural materials like bamboo, jute, rattan, or grasses, to bring an organic and timeless touch to window dressing. Made up of horizontal strips, they are a perfect summer window treatment idea as they still allow plenty of light to filter through.

Designed to shield you from direct sunlight and keep the room cool, they create a dappled light effect that dances across the room and often feature intricate latticework and a rope with which to lower or tie them up.

Chik blinds add texture and warmth to a space, creating a cozy yet sophisticated ambiance that's hard to achieve with traditional and heavier window treatments.

Beyond aesthetics, chik blinds offer practical benefits that make them a popular choice among designers. They provide excellent light control without being overbearing, making them ideal for creating a cozy environment.

Heide Hendricks and Rafe Churchill of Hendricks Churchill, an architecture and interior design studio, are huge fans of chik blinds both personally and for their clients.



"This photograph [seen above] was taken at our family home, Ellsworth," they explain. "Chik blinds are an easy way to elevate a space by bringing in texture and warmth. The handstitched lattice designs in cotton string paired with the natural bamboo act as a versatile piece that can either play up or down the formality of a room."

'They are easy to use and can be purchased at a fairly accessible cost,' Heide continues. 'Plus, they can also help scale down larger windows to create a sense of intimacy that feels organic to the space. In the case of Ellsworth, the chik blinds work to break up the linearity of the Shaker kitchen cabinets while acting as a warm counterpoint to the veiny, white marble.'

'There is an irregularity to these blinds that gives them a sense of craft which compliments the woodwork in the kitchen and surrounding pantry and mudroom. Practically, the blinds allow the kitchen to receive wonderful muted light all day long.'

I'll admit, I've never put too much thought into window treatments until I moved into my new home. Previously, I've either lived in rentals or in our first house which had window shutters everywhere so I haven't really had to give them much consideration until now.

And while I'm of course very excited to choose curtain ideas for the bedrooms and am leaning into the café curtain trend for my living room, at the back of my house we have a sun-drenched sunroom with large windows and patio doors to dress. Which is how I came across chik blinds.

Adding texture and warmth to a window and still 'dressing it', woven blinds feel like the perfect blend of functionality mixed with a little whimsy. Blocking light isn't essential in my space (in fact, it would be detrimental) so I'm not phased by the amount of soft light that will be able to shine through these sheer window treatments.

One of the main reasons designers love these blinds is their versatility. Complementing a variety of interior design styles, the neutral tones and rustic texture make them feel casual yet super design-led - whether you're designing a bedroom, kitchen, or living room.

With their combination of style, versatility, and eco-friendliness, it's no wonder that chik blinds have become a staple in interior designers' toolkits. Personally, I've just placed a big order on Etsy to deck out my sunroom and am considering adding more to my kitchen too. I love that they feel special and give a sense of pattern without heavy fabrics and motifs, and of course, the dappled light effect. Would you consider chik blinds for your home?

Down to Earth

This riverside farmhouse in Connecticut is the epitome of rural elegance and was too beautiful for one high-flying couple to resist

By Juliet Benning
Photographs by Tim Lenz
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DOWN TO EARTH

This riverside farmhouse in Connecticut is the epitome of rural elegance and was too beautiful for one high-flying couple to resist

WORDS JULIET BENNING PHOTOGRAPHS TIM LENZ

INSPIRATION



Hendricks Churchill

INSPIRATION



STYLING
A farmhouse door reveals a bar. All the windows in the house have minimal decoration to ensure the views of the river beyond can be seen. Antique chairs, a cowhide rug, a red cabinet and mid-century brass bench, sourced at Hendricks Churchill. House no. 102 similar at 101010.

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DINING ROOM
This pared-back scheme places emphasis on the organic shape of the chandelier and the natural beauty of wood and woven materials. Table, custom made by Get Back Inc.; CH23 dining chairs by Hans J. Wegner, source from Permono

I always used to pride myself on living all over the world. You cannot tie me down, I'd say,' Katherine McConaughey explains from her Connecticut home. A few years since retiring from a 33-year career as a flight attendant, both she and her husband David, the CEO of a media firm, have finally put down more permanent roots. 'I've planted my great-grandma's irises and a lilac that was given to me when my dad passed away. These are plants that have always moved with me and now we're here, we're never leaving.'

The couple, who have 'lived in Manhattan since forever' and raised their daughter Caroline there, discovered the appeal of the region on visits to friends. 'We wanted to simplify. It's incredible how people live out here. They're so into the outdoors and growing organically,' Katherine enthuses. 'This is an area really devoted to conservation and preservation.'

Their original property was a mid-century era home that, no matter how they tried, they just couldn't get to suit their lifestyle. 'After three years we put it on the market and it sold in three days,' Katherine says. While David was eager to build from scratch, Katherine was less convinced and had she not been in a certain place at a certain time things may have turned out very differently. 'I was driving down this road and I literally saw the agent put the 'for sale' sign out for a 1920s-era riverside farmhouse. A few days later we viewed it.' While Katherine was enchanted, David was more impressed with the home's natural surroundings, the wildlife and the opportunity to fish. 'When he found out a pair of American bald eagles raised their eaglets here yearly, the home became impossible to resist,' Katherine laughs.

Soon after, the couple moved in and began configuring the house for their lifestyle. Hiring

Heide Hendricks of interior design firm Hendricks Churchill was a decision that sparked an extraordinary synchronicity. 'It was astonishing how many of Katherine's images were on my own personal inspiration boards. We were aligned in our vision of what we were attracted to,' Heide explains. 'I'd never hired a decorator before, but this was our forever home, so we wanted to get it right. I knew that Heide would give the interior a unique story,' Katherine adds.

The house had been renovated a few years prior, but the couple decided to create a new entryway and, with the river curving around the house, make more of a feature of the old screened-off porch as well as creating plenty of book storage. One of Heide's triumphs was the overhaul of the basement. 'The lower level was non-existent. David's office down there had a dirt floor. We thought we would never use it but now, with a bar and snug where we watch TV, it's a new portion of the house that's perfect for entertaining.' Heide's instinct for pale and nuanced paint colours contributed to the period tone, with the high-gloss ceiling of the basement reflecting the light and bringing movement from the water.

Heide was given strict instructions not to obstruct the windows. 'I was very aware that the interior must not upstage the view,' she explains. 'Katherine and David are big nature lovers, so bringing in jute, cowhide and raw linen was right up their alley. But I also loved placing all their belongings, collected over the years,' she adds. 'Heide has joined both of our identities so beautifully,' Katherine concludes. 'There's so much of our shared family history here. I've never felt happier or more at home.' ■

■ Interior design by Heide Hendricks, hendrickschurchill.com



BREAKFAST AREA
A French-style bistro table and button-back sofa make a relaxed nook to enjoy morning coffee. Lupin Simbar table in marble, Sklum, 1940s; leather bridge chairs, source from 1stDibs; Indian split-bamboo Chik blinds, Joss Graham

INSPIRATION



ENTRANCE

The Persian rug brings a colourful vibrancy. Sideboard, source similar on Istolix. Octagonal mirror, RT Facts. Source a Persian rug at Rugs of London. Wall lights, Circa Lighting



MUDROOM

Built-in cabinetry conceals coats and outdoor equipment. Ceiling light, Circa Lighting. Walls in Purbeck Stone, Farrow & Ball

OFFICE

This space was once a basement with a dirt floor, now it has areas for work and contemplation. Armchair, Hammerstown. Find similar solid wood side table on Etsy. Source a similar rug at Rugs of London. Walls in Ammonite, Farrow & Ball

