

Hendricks Churchill

HOMES
& GARDENS

Hendricks Churchill's 'Quieter, More Laid-Back Sibling' to a Connecticut Farmhouse Comes in the Form of a Carriage House With a Playful Twist

Behind its traditional exterior, Hendricks Churchill has created a colorful, pattern-filled retreat designed for everything from family gatherings and billiards nights to quiet workdays

By Charlotte Olby
Photographs by Chris Mottalini & Jeff Holt
September 2026



Hendricks Churchill

There is something wonderfully deceptive about this Connecticut carriage house. From the outside, the crisp white clapboard, symmetrical windows, and petite cupola give it all the hallmarks of a traditional rural outbuilding – the sort of place you might assume had stood on the property for generations. Step inside, though, and the mood shifts: [Hendricks Churchill](#) has swapped farmhouse style for bold wallpaper, dusty pinks, mossy greens, and an eclectic mix of contemporary and midcentury pieces. And while there is certainly room to park the car, that is hardly the most interesting thing happening in this multi-faceted space.

The carriage [house](#) marks the second phase of the design team's work on the property, and the team deliberately wanted this addition to feel like it held its own character. The brief was wonderfully ambitious: alongside a three-car garage, there is a guest suite, home office, gym, sauna and games room, all tucked into a convincingly 'new old' addition to the farmstead. The result is a more relaxed yet practical 'sibling' to the main house, rather than a miniature version, and playful enough to surprise once you head inside.



The carriage house was always part of the plan – just not quite *yet*. Hendricks Churchill had first worked with the clients on the main farmhouse, and although a broader vision for the property was discussed at the time, everyone decided to live with the first phase before taking on the next. Five or six years later, the brief evolved. The second phase would bring not just the carriage house, but a swimming pool and greenhouse, all conceived as part of a larger masterplan for the 50-acre property. As Heide Hendricks, one half of the design studio working alongside her husband and architect Rafe Churchill, puts it, 'a little time living on the property seemed like a good idea before doubling the scope and budget.'

Hendricks Churchill

The question was then how to make these new additions feel as though they belonged. There was initially talk of connecting the carriage house to the main home via a tunnel or corridor, but the team ultimately chose a freestanding structure – and that decision turned out to be key to the character of the whole site. 'Rather than scattering buildings across the 50-acre expanse, we leaned into the spirit of a traditional homestead or Shaker compound,' Heide explains. 'By clustering the structures, we created a sense of community.' The farmhouse, carriage house, painting studio, pool and greenhouse now all sit in conversation with one another, so that a walk across the property or a glance from a window each reveals a 'moment of discovery'. As Heide notes, 'it's this relationship – old and new, near and far – that really anchors the history and character of the site.'

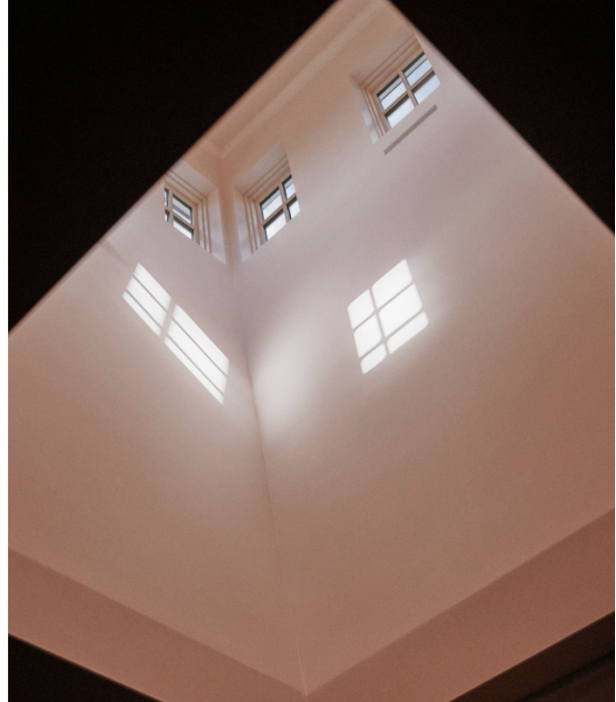


The brief was a fairly substantial one: a three-car garage, yes, but also room for a guest suite, [home office](#), [gym](#), sauna and a place to play a few rounds of billiards. With so much fun to fit in, the proportions of the building became an important part of the design.

Architecturally, the team took cues from the main residence without simply shrinking it down into a carbon copy. The carriage house follows some of the farmhouse's detailing, sure, but its exterior trim is deliberately pared back, with the finer touches concentrated around the mudroom entrance and cupola. 'Think of the carriage house as the main house's quieter, more laid-back sibling,' she adds.

'While it shares the same design DNA, it's intentionally more understated,' Heide continues. Outside, they stripped back the ornate exterior trim found on the main farmhouse, reserving the finer details for inside. 'We weren't afraid to mix eras and energy,' she continues. 'The

design relies on a bold interplay of patterns and an eclectic mix of furnishings that bridge the gap between contemporary design and mid-century modern finds.' In other words, there was no attempt to make everything conform to a certain [interior design style](#) – and that slightly eclectic approach is what gives the carriage house its easy, lived-in character.



A pink-and-green palette runs through the rooms, shifting from whisper-soft shades to deeper, more saturated tones, while pattern is used with a confident hand. 'Our color story is in pink and green,' she says, explaining how it all begins with a lively "breakfast room" green in the [mudroom](#) with a hint of shell-pink in the dramatic cupola, then moving into dusty rose in the billiards room and hazier mossy greens upstairs. The aim was to make each transition feel 'fresh and intentional,' rather than simply carrying one scheme from room to room. There is plenty of personality here, but it never feels as though the house is trying too hard.

That playful spirit extends to the materials, too. In the garage ('a particular joy'), the walls and ceiling are clad in untreated Douglas fir beadboard, but a painted band around the room gives the timber a graphic edge. 'It seems as if a flood of indigo ink rose up and then left a residual watermark,' Heide says of the effect, which was intended to make the space feel more like it has been part of the landscape since the 1800s. Elsewhere, reclaimed heart pine flooring brings its own patina, with 'the grain, the subtle imperfections, and the depth of color' offering something that new timber simply can't replicate. 'Its aged patina gives the space an immediate, earned sense of history,' she adds.

Hendricks Churchill



The home office feels more like a [living room](#) than a place for serious spreadsheets – and that was entirely intentional. Mossy green walls and generous windows overlooking the grounds create a calm, light-filled setting, while a patterned George Smith sofa, midcentury rocking chair and tactile mix of wood, brass and leather give the room a distinctly residential feel. A bright yellow floor lamp adds a little jolt of joy, while the collection of vintage and contemporary pieces keeps the scheme from feeling too polished. It is a workspace, certainly, but one that makes a very good case for taking the occasional meeting from a comfortable sofa.

Hendricks Churchill



The [games room](#) is perhaps where the carriage house's more mischievous side comes out to play. [Farrow & Ball's Sulking Room Pink](#) drenches the beadboard walls, 'providing the perfect foil for the bold, plum-colored pool table', while a [Porter Teleo](#) wallpaper stretches across the ceiling overhead, adding an unexpected hit of pattern to the otherwise cocooning space. The plum-red billiards table brings another saturated note, set against a richly patterned rug that came from the clients' former home.



Hendricks Churchill

The [guest bedroom](#) goes all-in on the idea of a country retreat, with a pastoral landscape mural from [Calico Wallpaper](#) wrapping around the walls and drawing the surrounding scenery right into the room. Against it, Hendricks Churchill has layered a simple yet chic wooden bed with a vintage gingham throw, a 1940s Swedish club chair reupholstered in sheepskin, and a midcentury pendant, while a patterned rug and small collection of side tables keep things feeling relaxed rather than overly polished. 'The guest suite is an immersive experience, with trim that frames a lush, pastoral landscape mural,' Heide adds.



The [powder room](#) is certainly not playing it safe either. Here, the carriage house's green palette goes from soothing to jewel-like, with further beadboard paneling framing a vibrant [Pierre Frey](#) pattern that climbs from the walls onto the ceiling. A wall-hung porcelain sink in a softer shade, brass fittings, and a pair of wall sconces add just enough polish, while the black-and-white checkerboard floor keeps the whole thing feeling grounded. Upstairs, the [bathroom](#) takes a much quieter turn, with pale walls, warm wood underfoot, and a beautifully aged brass-framed sauna enclosure.



The [greenhouse](#) is a rather lovely extension of the home's entertaining spaces – calling it simply a place for growing plants feels like selling it short. Framed in black-painted metal and glass, it is filled with potted plants, flowers and plenty of sunlight, with a dining table and vintage-style chairs creating a spot for dining among the greenery. A generous timber sink and rows of terracotta pots bring a practical, slightly antique character to the space, while the view out across the gardens makes it tempting to forget about the gardening altogether and simply sit down for lunch. Together with the carriage house, pool and main farmhouse, it completes the intimate cluster of buildings that gives the property its distinctly established, rather than newly constructed, feel.

Perhaps the most special thing about this carriage house is that, despite being the newest addition to the property, it never feels like it is trying to appear that way. Its traditional proportions, timeworn materials and close relationship to the farmhouse and surroundings give it a sense of belonging, while the playful interiors make it feel thoroughly joyful and current. It is practical, too, but never at the expense of personality – a place for muddy boots, pool games, visiting guests and quiet afternoons alike.

Hendricks Churchill

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

January 2021



JANUARY 2021

JANUARY 2021



NEWS & SHOPPING

- 11** OBJECTS OF DESIRE New design must-haves, from lighting to furniture
- 15** NEWS Create your own modern table design and discover a new collaboration offering cheery dinnerware
- 17** PASSION FOR PATTERN Beautiful botanical fabrics
- 19** BIG CATS Bring out your wild side with animal print homeware
- 47** A FEAST FOR THE EYES Decorative platters pretty enough to display or serve
- 48** TABLE MANNERS Fancy napkin rings
- 51** OPEN BAR A glamorous drinks trolley is your perfect party partner
- 52** RAISE A GLASS Colourful and striking wine and champagne glasses

INSPIRATION

- 34** A PIECE OF HISTORY Michael Bruno, founder of 1stDibs, has set up home in a beautiful old mansion in New York's famed Tuxedo Park, built in 1901
- 82** SEASONAL STYLE SECRETS Ten fabulous Christmas decorating tricks
- 86** CURVE APPEAL Elegantly rounded forms bring softness and sophistication to this London property
- 94** ALL THINGS BRIGHT Interior designer Kate Guinness' family home layers vibrant patterns and historical colours
- 102** DOWN TO EARTH A shared lifetime of belongings have been beautifully curated in this Connecticut farmhouse
- 112** ENLIGHTENED THINKING An outdated Victorian townhouse has been injected with a touch of bright LA style
- 118** GRACEFUL & REFLECTIVE Take in the beauty of Chippenham Park's elegant frosted landscape
- 124** WINTER'S ROSES We hone in on winter-flowering hellebores

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



MUDROOM
The shiplog cladding strikes a traditional and rustic mood. Nero River slate floor tiles, Mandarin Stone, are similar. Source a bobbin leg bench at 1stDibs. Similar William Morris-style cushions, Etsy

HOMESANDGARDENS.COM 108



Hendricks Churchill



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 Parnono

INSPIRATION

I always used to pride myself on living all over the world. You cannot tie me down, I'd say,' Katherine McConnaughey 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



INSPIRATION



ENTRANCE

The Persian rug brings a colourful vibrancy. Sideboard, source similar on 1stDibs. 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, Hammertown. Find similar solid wood side table on Etsy. Source a similar rug at Rugs of London. Walls in Ammonite, Farrow & Ball

