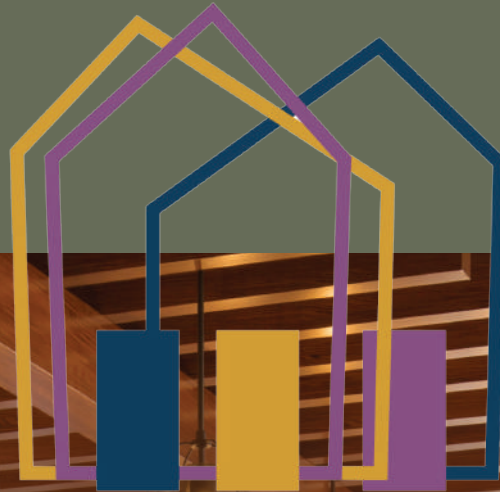


July/August 2021

Redefining
the Great Outdoors

Transcendent
Textiles

Designing the
Guest Experience



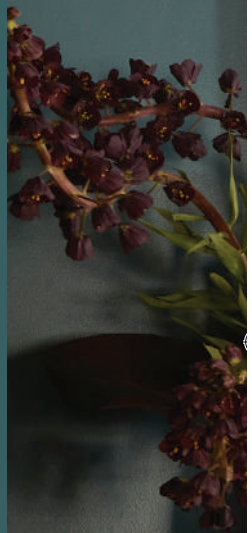
THE KALEIDOSCOPE PROJECT

Design is
an Escape



By Diana Mosher

Be Our Guest



Rich hues and details lend an enveloping sense of luxury to a guest space designed by Rydhima Brar for the Kaleidoscope Project at The Cornell Inn.
(Image: Frank Francis_Elle)



**Hospitality experts deliver
a great escape by layering
elements not found at home**

The hospitality sector took a beating due to COVID-19. Still, it was hard not to notice how many people, even during the height of the pandemic, were eager to pack up the car for a weekend away at the nicest hotel within driving distance. Even with very limited amenities, the desire to escape to a change of scenery was powerful. Restaurants with outdoor dining also provided a welcome respite from work at home. We're in a different place now. The pandemic is not yet behind us, but hospitality is back and consumers are shopping around for their next escape. Designing the guest experience is more important than ever—whether it's for a romantic dinner, a fun weekend trip with friends, or the family's summer vacation.

A Relaxing Respite

The Cornell Inn also features an opulent guest room designed by Rydhima Brar, founder and principal of R/terior Studio. Brar's direction was influenced by the room's location right off the main entrance with two large windows facing the street. Privacy was the first concern that came to mind—she also thought about ways she could make it more of a calm, relaxing space.

"That's how the narrative for the room started to come together, and it resulted in elements of jewel tones, deep colors, heavy drapery, and very bold, abstract tile in the bathroom," explains Brar. She instantly gravitated toward greens and blues and later added in pops of pinks and reds.

Growing up in Kuwait—and in her father's native India, too—there was always amazing drapery with rich details and luxurious velvets and brocades. "You may wonder why would hot countries with 100-plus-degree heat use velvet indoors, but they actually keep the heat out, work really well as blackout shades, and look very opulent," says Brar.

While keeping in mind the experience of actual Cornell Inn guests, who would be enjoying the space after the showhouse, Brar also came up with a fictitious persona and narrative during the design process. "I call the project the Empress' Quarters. I was imagining a princess from the ancient Mughal empire visiting the Berkshires on vacation... How would this room be transformative for her and how would she want to experience the space?"



Rydhima Brar

Likewise, Brar would like Cornell Inn guests to feel as if they have been transported to a different place—a unique, magical place that is very luxurious. "I want them to feel like they're fully cocooned." They might not feel like they're in the Berkshires anymore when they come back to their room for a relaxing evening. But they will emerge the next morning extremely refreshed and ready to do more of everything the Berkshires have to offer.

Every hospitality design project has its unique challenges and opportunities and requires a narrative that must welcome visitors from near and far. The end results will not always look the same, but the measure of success is always found in the ability to provide guests with a true escape. ●

DIANA MOSHER, Allied ASID, is a New York-based interior designer and media consultant. She was the 2017-2019 communications director for the ASID New York Metro chapter and continues to be active on the communications committee.



Rydhima Brar worked to combine opulence with comfort and privacy in a bedroom at The Cornell Inn. (Image: Frank Francis_Elle)