

*Home profile

THE OWNERS Fashion boutique owner Laura Vinroot Poole, her architect husband, Perry, and their daughter, Fidelia (known as Fifi).

THE PROPERTY A single-storey Sixties house in Charlotte, North Carolina, with five bedrooms, four bathrooms, a dressing room, kitchen and dining area, living room, playroom and den.



LIVING ROOM

By keeping the bones of this large, bright room simple, Laura was able to mix kitsch and classic items, yet still achieve a cohesive look. 'The glittery Space Curtain and flea-market lions sit happily with my Forties furniture,' she says.

Get the look The Space Curtain is by Paco Rabanne. For animal figurines, go to Caravan. The Sixties framed sofa is by James Mont; Supatra does a similar style. Buy hide cushions from Ligne Roset. Dunelm Mill sells striped cushions.

HALLWAY

Laura loves the original Sixties front doors with coloured glass inserts. 'My husband bought two huge steel Jean Prouvé doors in Paris to replace them, but they're in the basement while we "decide" which to use. It's been our only argument about how the house should look,' she laughs.

Get the look The Forties console table is by Tommi Parzinger. Perry designed the mirror, the Amelie mirror from Graham & Green is similar. The vintage glass lamps are by Jacques Adnet. For a chandelier like this, go to Besselink & Jones. Source terrazzo flooring from Pilkington's.

Southern belle

Laura has invented a new design direction in her North Carolina family home – mid-century modern meets Elvis at Graceland – and it's pure Southern-fried chic

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DINING ROOM

'I love the clean lines of modernist furniture, but it can look masculine if the setting's too minimal,' says Laura. 'The dining room completely sums up my style approach – unique furniture that we source at antique shops, with more traditional, feminine touches like the wallpaper and silverware.'

Get the look The hand-painted wallpaper is by de Gournay. The table and sideboard are vintage Jean Prouvé. For a similar style try Higher Market Studio. The chairs are vintage TH Robsjohn-Gibbings. For a selection of silver tableware, go to Brissi. The vintage lamps are by Jacques Adnet. The glass vessels on the sideboard are by Tapio Wirkkala for Venini. Vessel sells contemporary glassware by Venini and Tapio Wirkkala.

This is an old-fashioned town, but I've always been the girl who wanted to do something different,' says boutique owner Laura Vinroot Poole. 'So it's no surprise I've ended up here, in a modernist home surrounded by conservative mansions. It was built in the Sixties by the architect who also designed the local hospital – we have the same terrazzo flooring as the wards,' she says. 'The previous owner was so cheap he hadn't done anything to change the house's structure, but I love its integrity. The only thing we had to rip out was some bad Eighties wallpaper.'

Laura is a traditional Southern belle with a very modern attitude, not unlike Jerry Hall, one of her style icons. She's the daughter of the city's former mayor who monograms her bed linen ('It's just what Southern girls do – put their initials on everything.'). but who gave away her wedding silver to her sister. 'The pattern was chosen for me when I was a child and added to every year,' she says. 'I had an identity crisis when I got married and realised I'm just not a Chantilly girl!'

So what kind of girl is she? *Laura shares a passion for Corbusier and Neutra with her architect husband, but says her style is also inspired by Elvis's Graceland home.* She's a career woman who travels the globe sourcing designer labels for her fashion boutiques, saying her job is to import culture for customers who may never have left their home state.

That maverick sensibility, as well as husband Perry's eye for design, can be seen throughout this light-filled home. *The couple's collection of modernist furniture is juxtaposed with pretty or quirky touches,* so you might find a Jean Prouvé sideboard next to a pink satin chair and a lamp with a porcelain oriental base. 'The mid-century look can be quite cold and masculine, so I like to soften it,' says Laura. 'I wanted to reinterpret the preppy style I grew up with in a modern way, so I'll mix my mother's 19th century antiques with flea-market finds and gorgeous textiles.'

While Laura and Perry share a vision for how their home should look, there's one room they've agreed to disagree over: 'It's my dressing room,' laughs Laura. 'Perry designed it for me, which is lovely, but being an architect – and male – he wanted everything to be enclosed, whereas I like to see my clothes, all the wonderful colours and fabrics. When friends visit from New York, this dressing room makes them sick with envy – I know we're fortunate to have so much space.'

The home's single-floor construction gives it an incredibly open feel. *'This is a party house,' says Laura. 'We've placed the furniture so you can see everything that's going on, but there are also intimate spaces to chat.'* And the kitchen is a natural gathering place. 'Cooking and talking is what we do in the South,' says Laura. The family have created a vegetable garden, and weekends are spent with the doors pulled back, digging over the beds while Fifi rides her trike in and out of the house. 'This is our home for life,' says Laura. 'I just can't imagine living anywhere else.' Elvis would certainly approve. *Find out more about Laura's two boutiques at capitolcharlotte.com.* >



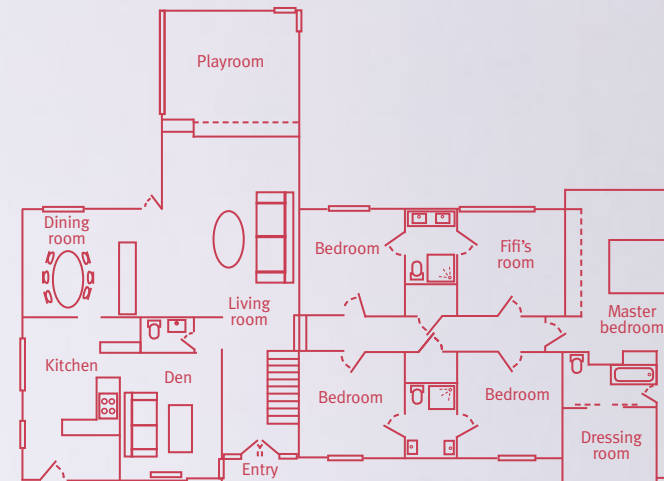
KITCHEN

The kitchen, which was designed by Perry, cleverly echoes the home's Sixties origins, with an added shot of 21st century cool – especially the gleaming marble work surface and ceiling-high splashback. Open shelves keep the look light and display the couple's collection of Fifties glassware. 'We love to cook and entertain, so this is a well-used room – especially when I whip up my can't-fail vanilla, cinnamon and cardamom ice cream,' says Laura.

Get the look For a similar kitchen, check out Howdens. Marble City sells marble work surfaces. The Fifties glass egg timers on top of the units are by Paolo Venini. The ceramic light shades are by Massimo Vignelli for Venini.



THE BLUEPRINT



LIVING ROOM

With its white walls and original terrazzo floor tiles, this room could have looked clinical. 'We made it intimate by grouping comfy chairs and sofas round a low table, added cosy rugs and plenty of lamps for mood lighting,' says Laura.

Get the look The pale-blue chairs are from a Paris flea market; for similar styles, go to Oka. The pale Forties sofa is by Edward Wormley; for something like it, try Kingcome Sofas. The Forties floor lamps and coffee table are by Jacques Adnet. The Cube Collection sells Perspex side tables. The rug is by Larusi. >

Home truths

On a Sunday... we work in our kitchen garden, then buy at the organic market all the veg we've failed to grow at home.

Who is your style icon? Charlotte Gainsbourg meets Jerry Hall meets Yasmin Le Bon meets Lucie de la Falaise – do I have rock-star husband envy?

Who are your favourite fashion designers? Phoebe Philo, Dries Van Noten and Azzedine Alaïa.

Your culture fix is... Essays by genius writer Julia Reed and films by Sofia Coppola. I like video games, too, but I like to kick it old school – definitely Frogger or Pong.

Reveal your secret talent. I make a mean grits soufflé with North Carolina goat's cheese.

What are your must-click websites? Auction houses wright20.com and tajan.com.



MASTER BEDROOM

For all her love of modernism, Laura hasn't forsaken the Southern custom of monogramming bed linen. But a playful mix of boldly patterned accessories lifts this traditional look to new levels.

Get the look The bed was bespoke, but try Sheerhome for styles like it. Laura's monogrammed bed linen is by Leontine Linens; Volga Linen offers this service. Ikea's Malena fabric is similar to the bolster. Buy a plaid throw from Jen Jones. For zigzag cushions, go to Missoni Home at Amara. >

MASTER BEDROOM (ABOVE)

Laura admits to being a 'textiles snob', but her fabric obsession was put on hold when buying curtains for the bedroom, as the huge windows would make her dream fabric – silk – too pricey. 'These linen drapes are chic, until I win the lottery...'

Get the look Buy linen curtains from The Natural Curtain Company. The Forties chairs are by TH Robsjohn-Gibbings; for similar, go to the The Odd Chair Company. The lamp is vintage George Hansen, but the Alex Swing Arm lamp at House of Fraser is like it.

DRESSING ROOM (ABOVE LEFT)

'This is my sanctuary,' says Laura. The fittings were designed by Perry, who wanted to put doors on all the cupboards to create a sleek look. 'I wouldn't let him! I love my clothes and I want to see them all at once.'

Get the look The wallpaper is by Osborne & Little. The Stem sideboard at Ligne Roset is similar. The set of drawers is Fifties George Nelson. To have a bespoke wardrobe system made, go to housetohome.co.uk/findatradesman.

NURSERY (LEFT)

Rather than go down the pink and frilly route, the couple have given Fifi a playful, happy space that mixes their love of good design and relaxed attitude.

Get the look The cot is by David Netto Design. The table is by Jonathan Adler. Next Home sells floral rugs like this. Buy retro-style nursery prints from ladybirdprints.com.





THE DEN

'Putting plates on the wall is very traditional but I wanted to put a spin on the preppy decorating ideas I grew up with,' says Laura. The red-and-white geometric pattern of these designs, and the artful way they're hung, creates a focal point, while the kitsch oriental lamp adds a touch of fun.

Get the look The red-and-white plates are by Hermès. The Forties chairs are by Edward Wormley, the Dream Velvet Armchairs at Graham & Green are similar. The lamp is from Belvedere Antiques in Atlanta, buy figure table lamps from Oka. Wallace Sacks sells sheepskin cushions.

*** Livingetc loves...**

- How luxe textiles and ornate wallpaper add a touch of pretty to the couple's collection of mid-century modern furniture.
- That the practical new kitchen hints at the home's Sixties pedigree.
- The way Laura and Perry have combined colours – peach, duck-egg blue, chocolate and soft neutrals. Simply delicious.

ONLINE EXTRA

See more of Laura's kitsch-cool home by visiting livingetc.com/north_carolina.