

BLOCK Party

Local designer, style maven and now HGTV star Lauren Liess reveals what's currently on her design radar.

By Jennifer Barger // Portrait by Greg Powers

With five young children at home, an HGTV show in the works and a new book coming out next year, you'd think Virginia designer Lauren Liess would be a little stressed out. But the celebrated local interiors pro, known for blending earthy elements, modern lines and a smidge of vintage, comes across as cool and collected. "Having kids has relaxed me, and the way I design," says Lauren. "It helps me create rooms that are infused with natural elements—livable yet elegant."

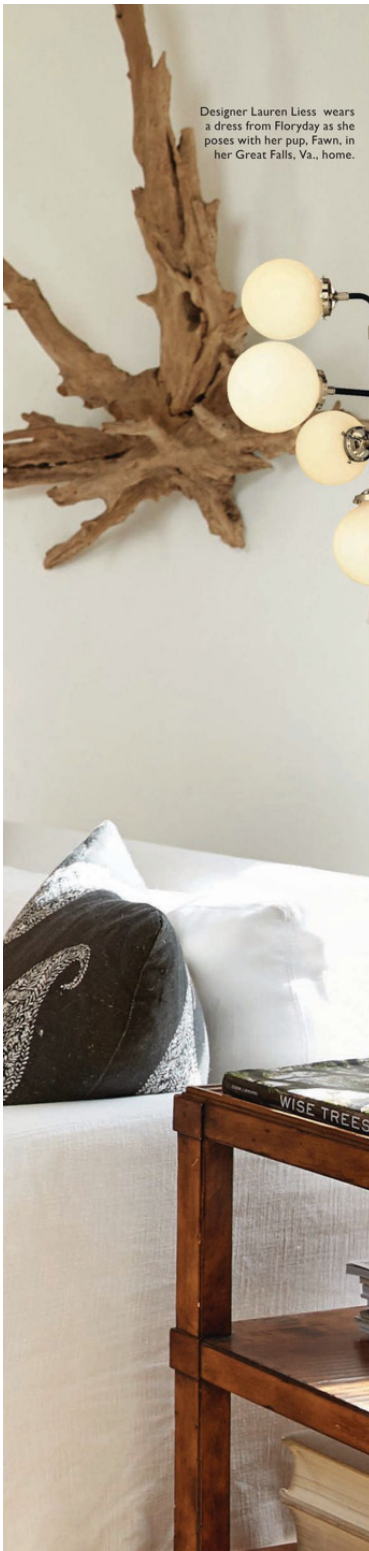
That breezy, easy style comes into focus on her upcoming HGTV show, *Best House on the Block*, where she and husband David Liess reimagine and redesign cookie-cutter homes around the DC area. "It's about taking generic houses or builder-grade things and making them really special," she says.

For example, in the premiere, they transform a redbrick ranch home near Rock Creek Park into a Cali-chic hideaway for a young family, courtesy of botanical prints, a reclaimed wood kitchen island and contemporary furnishings. "My clients in this area have a variety of styles: farmhouse, modern, more traditional," says Lauren. "But one constant is [the use of] natural elements—plants, greenery, wood."

That organic mix her clients desire also shows up in Liess' line of fabrics, sold to the trade and on her website (laurenliess.com). The Belgian linen prints—think dreamy pistachio-hued ferns, bold coral ikat and pinky-purple thistles—appear in her many residential projects. "Like many things I love, they're totally livable and look even better with a patina," says Liess. Here, the designer shares her tried-and-true picks for nailing a fresh, effortlessly cool and, most importantly, livable interior.



Designer Lauren Liess wears a dress from Floryday as she poses with her pup, Fawn, in her Great Falls, Va., home.



1. "Such a fun chandelier—and it looks beautiful in both traditional and modern settings." *Bistro globe milk glass 16-light chandelier, \$1,899, Restoration Hardware, 1222 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Tysons Corner Center, restorationhardware.com*

2. "This chair has a great midcentury vibe." *Callan chair, \$1,600, Room & Board, 1840 14th St. NW, roomandboard.com*

3. "Llama planters would add such a touch of whimsy to any space." *Llama planters, \$49-\$159, West Elm, 1728 14th St. NW, westelm.com*

4. "I often use my fabric to make pillows since they add that organic element I love to a room." *Various patterns, \$146 per yard, laurenliess.com*

5. "Anthropologie's Rhys sofa looks like a Swedish midcentury one. I have a similar model and it wears beautifully." *Rhys sofa, \$5,598, Anthropologie, 950 F St. NW, 5406 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Tysons Galleria, anthropologie.com*

