



Simplify, Simplify

Designer and cofounder of the Deep Ellum restaurant Local
ALICE COTTRELL is minimal all the way.

By PAMELA GWYN KRIPKE Photography by STEPHEN KARLISCH Holiday design by HAILE WOSSEN OF AVANT GARDEN



OPPOSITE PAGE: Simple glazed Krispy Kremes and tiny-bottled bubbly, two of Alice Cottrell's favorite forms of sugar, make unexpected holiday treats.

THIS PAGE: Mohair stools from Arvid and Ligne Roset tables, "made from a material NASA uses," nestle into a 20-foot wool shag rug from Unique Carpets in California, playing up the opposing textures that Cottrell loves to incorporate into her design.



Alice Cottrell

CATCHING ALICE COTTRELL AT THIS PARTICULAR TURN OF THE MOON, this certain Tuesday even, would seem an auspicious stroke. She seems to know that some convergence of diligence and opportunity has swept her here, to this exquisitely small spot.

"It definitely suits my life right now. I can travel without worrying about responsibilities at home. It has a freeing effect, mentally. Changing the scenery is invaluable for inspiration," says Cottrell of her current whereabouts, both geographically and ethereally. Her recent hop to this citified flat on Turtle Creek Boulevard rides like a happy jump seat alongside a career in full drive, streaming down a spanking new road.

In a refinement, of sorts, Cottrell, 43, has honed her personal space and creative pursuits at once, charging both with clarity and vigor. These transitions of the last year and a half are rooted in scale, specifically in a paring from large to small. For 20 years, Cottrell, a registered interior designer, built a recognized business in hotel design, infusing oversized environments from Montreal to Honolulu with a signature warm modernism. In Dallas, she is known for creating urbane and chic interiors for the celebrated restaurant Local, where she is a founding partner. As she moves her home from a three-story town house to these petite quarters, she casts her eye on residential work, discovering intimacy in the switch.

"It is like dating. You see how people live, work, and eat. You have a key to their house," Cottrell says. "It is hard to get 30 people at a corporation to agree on one bedspread fabric. Here, I can see that I've already made lifelong friends." >>

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— ALICE COTTRELL





OPPOSITE PAGE: "This space is really a warm comfortable contemporary, which is what I like to offer my clients," says Cottrell, whose large down sectionals and long sofas have become signature pieces. Original 1950s pen and ink drawings for the WJ Sloan furniture store stretch over the sofa and add charm.

THIS PAGE: (Left) An efficient kitchen boasts a polished wenge wood counter, used handsomely for dining or serving. A white patent "liquid leather" stool from Walter Knoll provides clean contrast. Cottrell is known for her use of exotic woods, such as striped rosewood and Macassar ebony, as well as her unexpected finishes. "We use lots of auto paint," she says. **(Below)** Eighteen-year-old border terrier Kelly commands all things from a spanking white duvet in the master bedroom. A metal wire sculpture from Karkula, in New York's Meatpacking District, provides subtle dimension to the wall overhead. Red and green wool throw courtesy of Yves Delorme.

While Cottrell crafts interiors for homes of all magnitudes, she simply loves living small. Her 750-square-foot apartment is a study in clean geometry, smart use of volume, and the mindset that must accompany the measurements. "I don't have anything that I don't use every day," she says, atop a 16-foot down-filled sofa of her own design. "This home has enabled me to completely simplify my life."

Cottrell grew up in a suburban house in Houston, proceeded to Texas Christian University for a degree in interior design, and then hit New York to work on the design staff of Donald Trump's Atlantic City casino hotels. "I lived in a 198-square-foot apartment in the Flatiron District," she says. "It was a rectangle with 6 inches of counter space," she says. Her current space appears huge by comparison. "I could live here for the rest of my life."

Here, then, provides enough room and enough sanctuary for Cottrell, her 18-year-old pup, Kelly, as well as occasional gatherings of friends. Fashioning grandness from a diminutive first-floor footprint relies on certain structural elements, in addition to a debunking of standard procedure.

"People think small spaces need small things. I believe in a play on scale," says Cottrell, pulling a fuzzy black stool up to one of two 54-inch square tables. "In a 20-foot room, a 16-foot sofa maximizes the length, not the other way around." The tables, in white and chrome, anchor a white-gray motif, accented most months only by the green of the park outside. A wall of windows showcasing this broad view and spacious individual rooms, including a doorless closet, lends airiness to the space. Plush fabrics, golden hardwoods, and one well-chosen reading chair inject warmth without crowding. Cottrell says, smiling: "If it's an inch more than 1,000 square feet, I probably won't live in it." **D**

PLEASE SEE "WHERE TO FIND IT," PAGE 168.

