



# Barclay Butera



The dizzying array of textures in Barclay Butera's Newport Beach, California, home speaks to the designer's fearless use of pattern. One of his favorite prints—leopard—takes a prominent spot on the living room rug.

Melding Hollywood glamour with everyday ease, Barclay Butera

has parlayed his signature look into a thriving lifestyle brand.



**B**arclay Butera leads an incredibly charmed life. Since launching his design career in 1993, the California native has created a global home-furnishings empire, translating his eclectic personal style into a broad line of products. He has also owned and renovated the former homes of no less than Frank Sinatra, Bette Davis, and Desi Arnaz Jr., while also attracting many current luminaries into his stable of clients.

Barclay and his businesses—which include three retail showrooms, a Barclay Butera Home brand to-the-trade showroom in High Point, North Carolina, and a manufacturing plant in Los Angeles—are known for what he calls “livable luxury,” a look inspired by the glitz and glamour of Hollywood Regency style. But Butera is also very keen on comfort. “Growing up, my mother was an interior designer, and our living room was always reserved for special occasions,” he says. “Now I’m a firm believer that a living room is called that because it’s meant to be lived in. So when I design a space or a product, I want livable elegance to permeate throughout.”

Often beginning with the floor, Butera likes to build layers within a room, honing in on balance and symmetry as the design progresses. He frequently uses wallpaper “as a dramatic backdrop,” then works to define a focal point within the space. “Every room

has to have a grounding piece,” he says, “whether it’s a significant antique, artwork, a silver collection, or a sculpture. That’s what creates depth and interest.”

When it comes to color, Butera gravitates toward rich natural tones that are slightly muted, including chocolate brown, mossy green, and deep red. He’s also a consummate fan of intriguing textiles with a British Colonial or Far Eastern flair, often interpreting them in a fresh way for his furniture lines. “I essentially dream up a lifestyle story, and that story is played out in my products,” he says. “Across all of my work, I always make sure there’s a story to tell.”

In fact, story and character are so vital to Butera that he puts extra effort into newly built spaces to create depth. “I hate sterile new residences with no heritage,” he says. “At the same time, I love the challenge of transforming them.”

Though he no longer does residential design (except in showhouses), Butera still promotes a collaborative approach to decorating, encouraging his staff of 20 interior designers at Barclay Butera Inc. to serve as guides and teachers for their clients. “There’s a balance of what the client brings and what I bring as a designer, but I still have to lead the way,” he says. “At the end of the day, I’m the one who steers the vision.”

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**This photo:** Comfy tailored chairs from Barclay Butera Home grace the designer's dining room. "I create things that people can grab a hold of and that make sense for their lives," he says.

**Opposite:** Drawn to natural textures, Butera uses seagrass on both a chair and ottoman in this intimate seating area to relax the room's formality.



“Simple fabric lets you showcase distinctive shapes.”

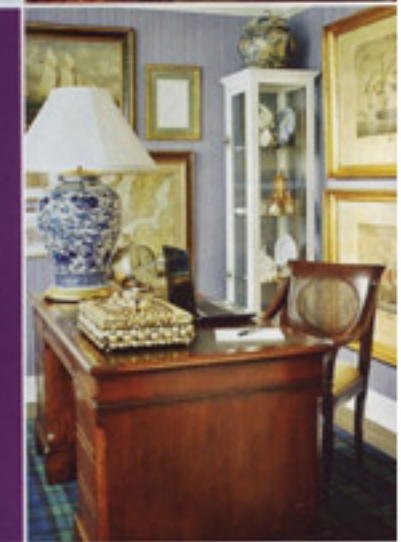
—DESIGNER BARCLAY BUTERA



English paisley wallpaper adorns Butera's bedroom, where the designer has also introduced a few handsome antiques in dark mahogany for contrast. "Dark wood tones always set a room off and make it feel elegant," he says.



Clockwise from top left: Soft shades of blue and cream give the bedroom a tranquil air. Forgoing a traditional beach-house style for his home, Butera instead honors the sea with subtle beachy accents such as this lovely starfish. A pair of clear-glass lamps designed by Butera encourage an ever-changing display of treasures in this living room nook, where a British Colonial-style side table takes center stage. A longtime fan of Asian antiques, Butera crowned his office desk with a grand chinoiserie lamp. In a backyard oasis designed for entertaining and relaxing, casual accent fabrics in lively shades of blue give clean-lined furnishings and cream cushions a colorful boost. To emphasize the height of the ceiling, Butera created an eye-catching vignette atop this exquisite secretary. Bold punches of cobalt blue enliven a sea-themed display.



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