

AT HOME WITH CAMILLE STYLES

YOU'RE CORDIALLY INVITED TO MASTER THE ART
OF ENTERTAINING WITH AUSTIN'S LIFESTYLE GURU.

BY MOLLY MCMANUS
PHOTOS BY KIMBERLY DAVIS

As you enter the Mediterranean-inspired home of Camille Styles, which she shares with her husband, Adam Moore, and their 1-year-old daughter, Phoebe, you are swept away to a peaceful beach with sandy hues found throughout, accented by the pool's tranquil midnight-blue waters and the stunning panoramic view of Lake Austin. Styles and Moore spent their honeymoon in Capri, Italy, which influences the architecture, interior design and entire atmosphere of the house. Stylistically simple yet sophisticated and impressive, the clean neutrals and creams infused with subdued patterns take you to another place and time as you drift in to the oasis. The surrounding hills of the Highland Park West neighborhood serve as the perfect backdrop to terrace lounging. The floor-to-ceiling windows filter in bright light, which pours over the home's interiors. The home is open, warm and welcoming.

Styling by Ashley Hargrove, dtkauinstyling.com

Makeup by Lauren Lumsden, Rae Cosmetics, raecosmetics.com

Hair by Mollie Morgan, Mirror Mirror, mirrormirroraustrin.com

Joie Daryn top, \$248; JBrand jeans, \$222; Frye Melissa boots, \$428, available at Neiman Marcus at The Domain, 3400 Palm Way, 512.719.1200, neimanmarcus.com; Kendra Scott necklace, model's own.





“We designed our home to entertain and always have family and friends coming and going,” says Styles, a lifestyle blogger who places entertaining front and center—professionally and personally.

It’s apparent that Styles’ family and friends are extremely important as she describes her happy place.

“Sitting around a huge table with everyone that I love, having homemade pasta and great wine, talking for hours,” she says. “To me, the perfect evening is spent creating great memories with the people I love.”

Styles’ husband, Moore, lost his brother more than a decade ago to melanoma. The loss affected the couple’s life philosophy, and they now place importance on cherishing the little moments, as well as the people in their lives.

“Adam has a very deep understanding of holding

on to the people you love,” Styles explains. “When you lose someone like that, it makes life that much more real. You can’t count on anyone being here forever; none of us will be.”

Just before Phoebe was born, both sets of grandparents moved to Austin and now live less than two miles from the young couple.

They are extremely involved in Phoebe’s life, spending time with her throughout the week.

“It’s been a wonderful experience having Phoebe; it’s breathed a whole new life in to the family with having this new perfect little person who brings so much joy,” Styles gushes. “My in-laws laugh so much every day because of her. I think that was something that was missing from their lives for a while. It’s been amazing to see over this past year. They see how precious that life is, and they cling to it.”

Life is indeed precious, which is why it is so important to Styles and Moore to entertain with friends and family, offering their home as the gathering place. And while life is short, Styles explains another lesson she’s come to terms with: to live without regret.

“I’ve never been someone who looks back and wishes things were different because I believe

things happen for a reason. Everything is a learning experience,” Styles explains. “Maybe it’s naive because I’ve been really blessed up to this point, but if something isn’t going right in the present, I can look back and see why it was important or necessary.”

Styles was in a horrible car accident five years ago in which she broke her neck, spending weeks in the hospital.

“I would never say, ‘Oh, I’m happy that

happened.’ But I couldn’t imagine if it didn’t happen because I grew so much as a person from that experience. Prior to the accident, I had never been in that position where I had to rely on other people and be vulnerable. It made me so much more empathetic to people who were in the hospital or going through some type of illness,” she says.

If Styles had opted for the surgical route, it would have left her without mobility in her neck. Instead, she chose to wear a neck brace for 16 weeks and, amazingly, her vertebrae fused back together naturally.

It is with this drive and positive attitude that Styles found the courage to start her own company at age 25. Now, at 29, Styles has created an internationally followed lifestyle blog, camillestyles.com, that has led to a successful career as a master of entertaining in style.

“To me, the perfect evening is spent creating great memories with the people I love.”





STYLE

Style is an underlying theme throughout the blog, Styles' career and personal life. From makeup, hair and beauty tips, to fashion inspiration, home décor and how to deck out your next party, style is found in every corner of the blog.

Featured style columns include "Monochromatic Mondays," in which a color, trend or pattern is highlighted through fashion, beauty and home design in one giant collage, and "Pretty Simple," in which hair and makeup tricks are taught through step-by-step instruction. Each column is written either by Styles, a member of her staff or a contributor.

"I wanted the site to be an inspiring resource for people, where they weren't just hearing my voice: 'Oh, I like this lip color!' or 'I like doing this to my hair.' I wanted it to truly be expert tutorials, advice and knowledge. I knew our readers would get so much from that," she says, adding, "I do think we have a niche, but I think it's more so the attitude behind it, the laid-back, fun,

modern, creative attitude and approach to entertaining, fashion and style."

Styles' own passion for fashion started at Missouri University, where she studied fashion PR. After submitting a purse design, Styles won a *Vogue* contest sponsored by Dooney & Bourke, which subsequently flew her to Milan and Florence, Italy, with Dooney & Bourke designers to help design

one of their collections by visiting a variety of Italian suppliers.

"It was the best trip," Styles says.

"It was one of those once-in-a-

lifetime experiences. I was very wide-eyed."

After graduating from college, Styles spent a few months working for a fashion PR company in New York, finding the city and the industry weren't exactly what she was looking for.

"I'm glad I went for the sole reason of finding out that I didn't want to live in New York. But it was a great experience for me. Being 21, living in

The blog is very much designed like a national lifestyle magazine. From home décor and party ideas, to beauty and fashion tips, to recipes and new restaurants, Styles has brought together some of the most creative and talented people to serve on her team and help manage and design the blog, as well as a wealth of contributors comprised of writers, photographers, artists, chefs and designers who offer their expertise daily.

Styles determines the creative vision behind each photo or video shoot, which accompany one

of the blog's regular series, styling every look she possibly can with her classic and tasteful approach. Styles encourages readers to stop stressing about the small stuff and start having fun. Her enviable designs, laid-back approach and positive outlook on life provide a national and international audience for her lifestyle blog.

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Favorite Items

Found in Styles' Home:

"I love our dining room table; we searched and searched. We wanted it to be big so we could fit 10 people comfortably. We found a great wood worker and Adam sketched out what we wanted. We've fit 14 people there before, with much smaller chairs. I'm a big believer in making people a little too crowded at parties."

"I have a lot of shells and coral.

I love those pieces because they remind me of the beach, my favorite place in the world. I have this wave of calm whenever I step on to the beach. Anything I can do to bring a piece of the beach-y feel in to the house."

"Beach photos by French photographer Christian Fez."

"I love Phoebe's nursery. I wanted it to be this total serene escape from the craziness of the world. I love the peaceful feeling of her nursery."



New York made me grow up and figure out how to do things on my own...but I missed the warmth and openness of Texas," Styles says.

In addition to fashion, Styles also has a knack for interior design. Her personal style is minimalist, and she hopes to emulate Italian beaches. Moore and Styles provided their architect, Ryan Street, photos of them lying on the beach or dining at a beachside bar, telling him, "This is the vibe we're going for."

"We still laugh. [Street] probably thinks we're crazy, 'What are these people talking about?'" Styles says, smiling.

But in fact, he was able to achieve the look. The patio lounge chairs, framed by bougainvillea vines, provide almost an exact replication of the beachside Italian bar.

"That trip made a lasting impression on us from the Mediterranean style of architecture and way of life," Styles explains. "They spend so much time enjoying life, savoring it, eating great food, drinking great wine, not counting calories. They embrace the moment and take time to hang out with family and friends. All of those things fed in to our home design."

ENTERTAINING

What is the strong suit of the multi-talented lifestyle guru? Throwing a fabulous party, of course! Her entertaining expertise and eye for style has led her to contribute to a variety of websites, including those of Martha Stewart, the *Los Angeles Times*, Food Network, the DIY Network and the Cooking Channel, where she comes up with the vision for the segment or column and styles it. She also provides her own production company, with guests enjoying the party and skilled videographers documenting the scene. With her seamlessly produced videos, Styles landed a permanent spot as a contributing entertaining specialist to hgtv.com, where she recently finished wrapping up their series *Holiday House*.

As the entertaining host of *Holiday House*, Styles takes viewers around HGTV's beautiful home in Atlanta. Coming this winter, *Holiday House* will offer how-tos on holiday entertaining, including how to properly stock the bar and set up a kids' area. Styles serves as tour guide and works behind the scenes as the stylist for the special.

"It was really interesting to see their production company, which is four times the size of our team. I was really impressed because they had to execute our concepts at the house before I even arrived. The whole house looked awesome. They executed our ideas to perfection," Styles says.

What is her No. 1 piece of advice in hosting a great holiday party?

"The host has a huge impact on it," Styles warns. "We've all been to parties where the host is frazzled, running around, in the kitchen the whole time. No matter what's going on, if you're behind schedule, open the door with a huge smile. Take time to greet all your guests, chat with them. If the host is relaxed, it helps everyone else relax and have a great time. When dinner is an hour late, no one cares if they're having fun."

Styles got her start in the event world when she moved to Austin from New York to work for a catering company, which is how she met her husband. From there, she began exclusively planning corporate events for Springbox, an advertising agency Moore owned. One night, Moore asked her out for a drink and the rest, as they say, is history.

"It was very controversial, as work relationships are. It was kind of a secret for a while, you know, dating the boss, kind of scandalous," she laughs.

Fed up with her boyfriend also being her employer, Styles left Springbox right before the couple got engaged and started her own company, Camille Styles Events.

"When I was planning events for clients, the message I was always trying to



Styles' Tips for Setting an Inspiring Table

- 1. Pick a palette.** I always begin any table design by choosing a palette of two or three colors that reflect the mood I want to create, then make sure that every element on the table falls in to that family of shades. It's a great way to make a big impact, even with only a few simple details. My current favorite palette for fall is charcoal, amethyst and cream—it's a bit unexpected and feels rich and luxurious.
- 2. Incorporate natural elements.** Nothing feels more seasonal than bringing a bit of the outdoors in to a table design. For fall gatherings, I might place a cluster of acorns at each place setting or gather a bunch of autumnal branches on to the center of the table for an eye-catching display. During the holidays, I use pinecones or pomegranates as natural place-card holders.
- 3. Places, please.** Even for the most casual gatherings, a printed element on the table shows that a little extra effort went in to making it feel like an occasion. Place cards are great because they allow the host to plan the perfect seating arrangement in advance, and it instantly puts guests at ease when they know where to sit without having to ask.
- 4. Study in contrast.** One of my signatures when setting the table is to incorporate a unique mix of old and new, high and low. I love breaking out my great-grandmother's collection of vintage glassware and pairing it with my modern striped napkins from West Elm. And remember that tables don't have to be topped by actual tablecloths; I've used bed sheets imported from Mexico, vintage curtains and upholstery fabric as unexpected and beautiful table coverings.
- 5. Serve it family-style.** When I plan a menu, I consider the colors and textures of the food in addition to the flavors. So I love to serve the food on big platters meant for sharing right in the middle of the table. Not only does this serving style create a laid-back, communal experience, the food does double duty as a beautiful centerpiece as well.



relay was not to worry so much, let some little details go. It's not about impressing people. It's about staying true to yourself, having fun and expressing yourself and your own creativity," Styles says. "That's what we're always trying to express on the blog: a good balance between entertaining being a way to spend time with your friends and family, but also about feeding your soul and expressing yourself creatively.

"My favorite feature we do on the blog is our 'Entertaining With' series, where we spotlight one creative person—from a chef to a designer to a blogger—and do a home tour photo shoot where it unveils their personal style. We are always looking for people who are doing interesting, creative, unique things with their entertaining."

At times, the content looks unattainable, but it's meant to inspire everyday entertaining. It can be as simple as having a glass of wine with your girlfriend and putting fresh flowers on the table arranged in a unique way, or taking the time to set a beautiful table for dinner.

"The blog is a balance between being approachable, natural and inspiring people, and creating a setting that people want to aspire to as well. We ask, 'Is this achievable and not intimidating?'" Styles says.

FOOD

While style and entertaining serve as the foundation of Styles' work, food has really taken a seat at the head of the table in Styles' life.

"Food is what I'm most passionate about," Styles asserts. "I used to think it was fashion, beauty or style, but the more I've cooked and delved in to the world of food, it has become my biggest passion."

Series include "Tuesday Tastings," in which Styles tries out an original recipe, as well as "Tastemakers," in which contributor and Sustainable Food Center Communications Manager Elizabeth Winslow profiles farms and farmers, restaurants and others making an impact on the culinary scene in Austin.

"I'm always fascinated by people who make a living by producing really incredible food," says Winslow, who recently visited Sonja Cote's new restaurant, Eden East. "Camille is really great about giving me input. She has such a close

relationship with her readers. I can bring that to the food entrepreneur to get the best story for the blog.”

It is apparent browsing through the blog that Styles is a complete foodie. From baby food recipes inspired by her new motherhood, to gourmet snacks to serve at a cocktail party, each recipe has an innovative component, created by the restaurant-obsessed blogger.

Each featured recipe is styled flawlessly, thanks to Styles’ creativity, but can also be credited to her taking a semester in culinary school to expand her knowledge on the basics of cooking, which has enhanced the ways in which each culinary item translates on the blog.

“It’s great to fuse my love for food with my love of design because that’s really what food styling is. It’s a combination of the stylist and the photographer collaborating to create a great image,” Styles explains.

Even more important than how the food looks is how it actually tastes. Styles stresses the importance of buying locally and seasonally, not only for nutritional value, but also for the amazing taste fresh food can provide.

“I’ve gotten a lot more mindful of what we put into our bodies as a family,” says Styles, who also emphasizes how food can add to those great memories of being with your loved ones. “When Adam and I took a trip to Greece, our boat captain made a

Greek salad out of his vegetable garden. For me, that symbolizes

what Greece tastes like now, how really fresh, seasonal food, when it’s prepared simply, is the best and creates these memories that recall a certain place or time in our life.”

Bringing her lessons from Greece back home, Styles and Moore, with Phoebe in tow, visit the Republic Square Farmers Market to shop for food that is organic, free of antibiotics and pesticides, local and seasonal.

Styles and her husband joke that for every year they’ve been together, there has been a major life transition. From Styles starting her own company, to marriage, to building their dream home, to having a beautiful baby girl, you’d think they’d be overwhelmed. But Styles is happy, cool and calm.

“Becoming a mom, in a weird way, has made me more laid back. When I was pregnant, I had a lot of apprehension about how it would all work out. I remember having some freak-out moments where I would say to Adam, ‘I’m pulled in so many different directions right now, I barely have time to fulfill my commitments. How in the world am I also going to be the kind of mom I want to be?’” she recalls. “Everything I had nailed down before was up in the air again. What was I doing before when I thought I was so busy all the time? Throw a baby in the mix—that’s busy!”

“In the early days [of having a baby], the hardest and worst days were the ones where I felt I wasn’t giving Phoebe enough time and attention. I had to learn from those days and figure out how to change that and make sure that I was being the kind of mom I want to be.”

Styles says she’s learned to balance being a mom and entrepreneur through adjusting priorities and shutting off work on the weekends.

Styles’ next great adventure is producing a book that embodies all the aspects of the blog, featuring all new content. HarperCollins gave her the publishing deal, and local photographer Buff Strickland is collaborating on the project. The book, set to release in fall 2014, will feature personal stories from Styles’ life that have never before been shared, more than 80 original recipes (created and tested by Styles) and endless entertaining tips.

“I’m really excited about the images because they’re some of the most beautiful work that I’ve been able to style so far in my career. With that being said,

Styles’ Farmers Market Picks

Happy Hemp. I sprinkle their raw hemp seeds on yogurt and salads.

Cake and Spoon for cinnamon rolls.

Dewberry Hills for great organic chicken.

Johnson’s Backyard Garden is my go-to for vegetables since I get my weekly CSA box there.

Confituras Jam. My favorite is the strawberry-vanilla bean.

Texas French Bread. I always get the raisin walnut loaf.



it’s also a lot of writing, instruction and definitely something that will be an entertaining resource, not just eye candy. It’s all about approachable, laid-back entertaining: Making entertaining a part of your everyday life instead of waiting for the special occasions,” Styles says. “I wanted the chance to take everything

I’ve learned through all my different experiences and produce the best work of my career.”

She’s just shy of 30, and we can expect to see Styles continuing to be on the cutting edge of blogging and entertaining, with her genuine enthusiasm for what she does.

“When I have a new idea I want to accomplish, a new series I want to create, or a new project I want to try out, those things energize me and make me excited to go to work every day. When you truly love what you do, it allows you to give more to other aspects of your life because you are full of energy and have a sense of joy,” Styles affirms.

Styles urges her readers to take these life lessons to heart: Have fun and don’t stress; express your creative side; live each day to the fullest and without regret; follow your passions. After all, life is about living in the moment and perhaps savoring a slice of delicious apple Bundt cake with the people you love most.



Styles has landed a permanent spot as a lifestyle expert on HGTV. To see her *Holiday House* design, including this tablescape as well as Styles’ tips for holiday entertaining, go to hgtv.com/video/holiday-dinner-tablescape-video/index.html