Southern Charm

Head over heels for luxe antiques and soft, dreamy neutrals, New Orleans designer and shop owner Rivers Spencer creates rooms that are equal parts poised and ethereal.

Spencer in her eponymous retail store on iconic Magazine Street in New Orleans.
AN ELEGANT SPOT TO DINE

Deep in the throes of applying to law school, Rivers Spencer began faux-finishing antique furniture in her grandmother’s garage as a creative outlet. Before long, she was hooked. “I read everything about design I could get my hands on after that,” says the 29-year-old Mississippi native. In 2011, she opened her shop in New Orleans, and an influx of jobs followed. For a recent Garden District project (right), Spencer created a romantic dining room around a collection of rare Biedermeier klismos chairs. But the luminous smoke-colored walls are the showstopper. “I love how it feels like a little jewel box,” she says.

A PEEK INSIDE RIVERS’S WORLD

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“‘I want to do something bold and modern, yet still sophisticated and traditional.’” — Rivers Spencer

“‘I love everything about Art Deco pieces—the soft lines, the scale, the glamour.’” — Rivers Spencer

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CARVEN LE PARFUM

“I’m drawn to floral scents, and the top notes in this really speak to me.” — Rivers Spencer

MARBLEIZED VASE

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1930s TUB CHAIR

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TO CATCH A THIEF

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