



DESIGNER: KELLY MOSSBURG

Story and photos by M. Chris Leese

“Design impacts your life, but a great design can change it,” says Kelly Mossburg, lead designer of The Cottage Company in Harbor Springs.

Kelly Mossburg is living proof. Starting out in the business world on a trek toward brand management with an MBA from Chapman University in Orange County, Calif., Mossburg found herself on a beeline back to the life of a designer in Harbor Springs. She is a third generation design specialist with a heart for family, the environment and making each day a celebration. This career is an avenue for her to inspire others to enjoy their unique living space here in beautiful, Northern Michigan.

As director of operations and lead designer, Mossburg is happy to follow in the footsteps of her mother, Vee Mossburg, and also loves the tradition of working with her father and grandfather.

Looking back at their heritage in design makes her excited about the future. The Cottage Company just remodeled its own office on Bay Street in Harbor Springs and it is filled with many of her favorite things. What are they, you ask? In her own words, here are 10 things Mossburg can't live without:

1 ABUNDANT LIGHT

I love large windows and glass doors that take in the view and pour natural light into a space — blurring the line between indoors and out. Tip: Strategically place mirrors opposite a window, or layer shades of white, to spread and amplify light rather than soak it up.

2 COASTAL COLORS

Light, clean, crisp neutrals. With a palette drawn from sand and sun, as much as surf and sky, I am attracted to colors that represent the local setting and evoke a strong sense of place.

3 COTTAGE

It's really a state of mind, rather than a style — comfortable and accommodating, cottage evokes feelings and connection to nature, to family and a desire not to just live life, but to find joy in a life well lived. Where nothing is too precious for the everyday, cottage is peaceful and welcoming, simple and clean, filled with energy, joy and flip-flops.

4 NATURAL MATERIALS

From jute to seagrass to rattan, I enjoy using organic materials for rugs, furnishings and accessories to help bring warmth and texture into a space. I cherish their low-maintenance and forgiving qualities — they also mask sand, dirt and hair remnants from our four-legged friends.

5 EXTENSIVE MOLDINGS AND MILLWORK

White painted paneling, such as bead-board or board and batten, are perpetually fresh and never go out of style. They're a no-brainer for adding character to a bare wall or blah cabinetry.

6 QUARTZ COUNTERTOPS

I love this composite. We used it in our office makeover and it's a showcase. It looks and feels like real stone, but is practically maintenance free. You can literally use it as a cutting board and it won't scratch. It also won't show wine or makeup stains. It's perfect for a carefree style of living.

7 TEXTURE AND LINENS

A variety of pillows, raised texture curtains, comfy linens and a complementary accessory piece at the foot of the bed are all essentials, when space permits.

8 A CLIENT'S PERSONAL STYLE

OK, I am coming right out and saying it — I adore my clients! I couldn't do what I love without them. To be entrusted with their memories is a great honor. One goal I keep is never to over design — I want to leave room for their history, memories and personal treasures. It's important to have individual style reflect an individual's personality and the look they love most.



9 MY AMAZING TEAM

Over time The Cottage Company has assembled a team of highly creative, technically talented and personally pleasant professionals, who are not only extremely skilled at what they do, but have fun doing it. Without my in-house construction team and their collaboration with design, I couldn't provide the same level of customer service, meticulous attention to detail and overall quality of work. I'm grateful for them on a daily basis.

10 GIVING BACK

I'm truly passionate about personal stewardship and making a difference in my Northern Michigan community by giving back through philanthropy and providing environments to people who could use a little more joy.

As Mossburg puts it: “The goal is to blend design and art with functionality and purpose.”

