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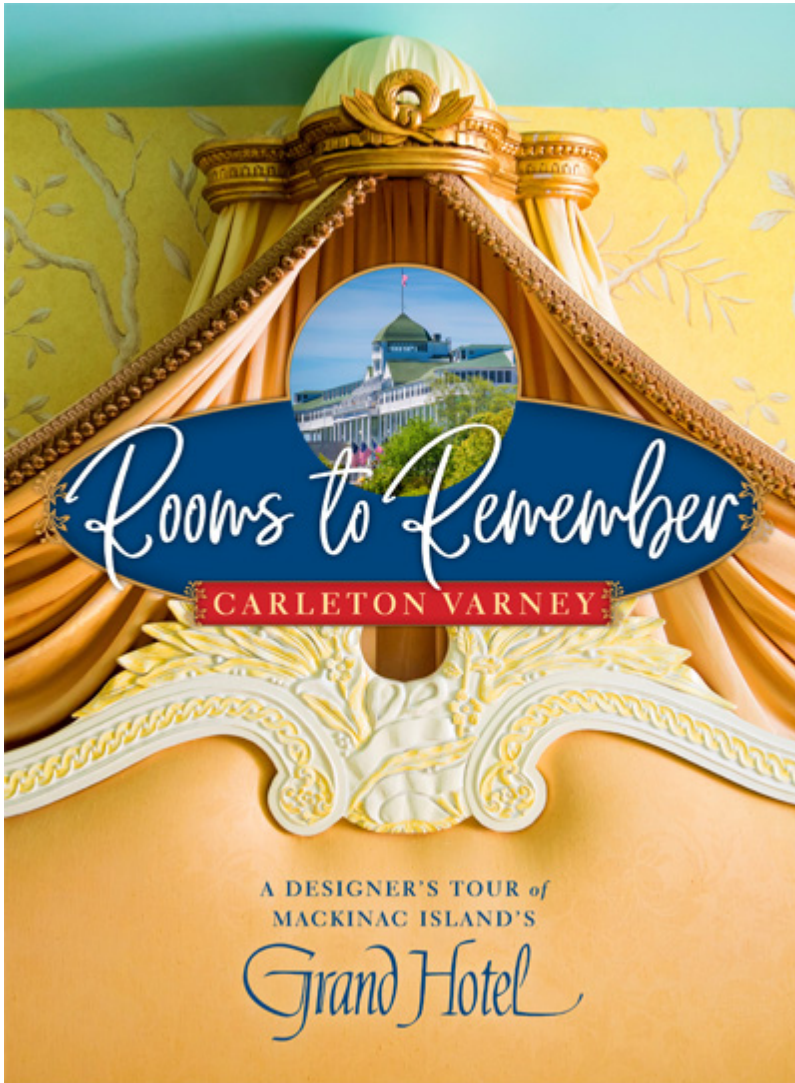


— 10/10/19 —

Pattern Play: Conversation with Carleton Varney

Topic: Interior Design

Summer may already have come and gone, but that doesn't mean we can't dream of sunnier carefree days. A new book by one of America's best known interior designers, Carleton Varney, memorializes those precious summertime moments in the most stylish way possible. "Rooms to Remember" celebrates Varney's 40-year love affair and work with the iconic summer hotel, Mackinac Island's Grand Hotel, which sits on the top of the car-free island that is located in the middle of Lake Michigan and Lake Huron.



Profiling the Grand's 43 unique rooms, this book offers an endless supply of color and pattern-upon-pattern play that will engulf you into a world where the imagination runs wild. It also provides decorating details, history and insights as well as useful tips for adding personality to rooms and easy ways to freshen up a space for example.

We recently caught up with the New York-based Varney

to ask him about the book, the hotel and his secrets for decorating in his signature maximalist style.

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury Why did you decide to write the book?

Carleton Varney I wanted to leave a log of what the hotel looks like while we have worked on it so that in the future whoever works on the hotel will see the importance of these rooms, the colors and fabrics, details and appointments. It's a legacy really.

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury What makes the Grand Hotel so special in your view?

Carleton Varney Because it is one of the last few privately-owned resorts of this caliber left. There is a personal connection that this establishes for guests while they are staying at the hotel.



Carleton Varney Suite | Photo Courtesy of Grand Hotel

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury What is your favorite room and why?

Carleton Varney My favorite room would have to be the Carleton Varney Suite. The different fabrics that are used are all special to me and give reminders of different residences and places in my life. There is a nod to my New England roots in this space. There are special memories throughout, like a photo of two of my sons with President Carter in one bedroom and a collection of my over thirty-six books.

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury What was your favorite memory at the hotel?

Carleton Varney My favorite memory of the hotel would be my first walkthrough. Seeing the hotel and dreaming what it could be.



Carleton Varney Suite | Photo Courtesy of
Grand Hotel

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury Do you have any advice or tips for someone who wants to visit the hotel?

Carleton Varney Take plenty of time while you are there, do not rush. Stay until the hotel becomes a part of you with the feeling of warmth, color, tranquility, and magic.

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury Maximalism is “in” apparently — what’s your philosophy on it?

Carleton Varney I consider myself to be a maximalist. Anyone who is interested in keeping their heritage and history alive is a maximalist too. Adding photos and other memories from your life and experiences are important to surround yourself with these pleasant thoughts.



Cupola Suites Grand Hotel | Photo by Kim Sargent Architectural Photography

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury What's your secret to mixing patterns?

Carleton Varney Never be afraid. A flower garden is never made with one flower, and your home shouldn't be either. Consider mixing the scales of the patterns. Think large scale floral for larger elements like the drapery panels and a smaller scale for smaller items like throw pillows. Ensure that you select colors that balance each other, like pink and blue or pink, orange, and white for example.

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury What would you say to someone who was afraid to add Carleton Varney-level color into their spaces at home?

Carleton Varney Take a walk in your garden. You will see how all of the colors in flowers and nature blend together. You will feel the joy and happiness that these bright blooms bring to you. Be energized and know that you can bring this feeling into your home.



Woodfill Suite Grand Hotel | Photo by
Michel Arnaud

Coldwell Banker Global Luxury **What are some ways readers can incorporate the hotel's iconic style into their interiors at home?**

Carleton Varney Take a look at the different styles we have used throughout the hotel – French, Victorian, Biedermeier, etc. and take the opportunity to experiment with these in your own home. Notice how the different details relate and how they affect you. Remember, some styles will work better than others depending on the location of your home.