

New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

In Tune

WARM NOTES OF SPRING



Mix & Mingle

Along the coast of Maine, Mélange Home Shop showcases interior designer Paula Daher's global, eclectic style.

Text by ERIKA AYN FINCH | Photography by JESSICA DELANEY

Paula Daher had a conundrum. During shopping excursions to places like France and Morocco, she'd inevitably wind up finding the perfect pieces for clients, both existing and future. That was great news for current clients, but she lacked the space to store items for those down-the-road projects.



The Boston-based interior designer was also eager to expand into the Kennebunk, Maine, market, where she has had a second home for the past four years. Ever the entrepreneurs, Paula and her son and business partner, architectural designer Clayton Daher, landed on the idea of a Vacationland retail space that would entice tastemakers with

ABOVE: Paula and Clayton Daher opened Mélange Home Shop in Kennebunk, Maine, last September. **LEFT:** The shop offers table lamps from Visual Comfort & Co. and rugs from the early 1900s that have been shaved and bleached by artisans in Turkey.



“IT’S ABOUT LAID-BACK LUXURY. IT SHOWCASES THE WAY I DESIGN: A GLOBAL, ECLECTIC MIX.”

—Shop owner and interior designer Paula Daher

orange 1984 Citroen Deux Chevaux that welcomes shoppers outside the front entrance. “So many people stop by to see the car,” says Paula. “It’s been a huge hit.”

Inside, those shoppers are greeted with tea, coffee, a latte, or a glass of wine, which encourages them to slow down and take in each vignette. Paula describes the space as modern yet comfortable. “It’s about laid-back luxury,” she says. “It showcases the way I design: a global,

ABOVE: Clayton, an architectural designer, worked with Reidson Corp and Adams + Beasley Associates to completely renovate the building, adding a dramatic dormer and painting the exterior Benjamin Moore Midnight Oil. Gregory Lombardi Design devised the shop’s front and back gardens. **RIGHT:** Swivel chairs, racks displaying blankets from Morocco, and an antique table from France cozy up a corner.

treasures from their travels and provide space for a second design studio. In September 2024, Mélange Home Shop opened its glass French doors in Kennebunk’s Lower Village.

The 3,000-square-foot space—2,000 for retail, the rest for offices—was originally built in the 1920s and had housed a variety of businesses, from an auto repair shop to a food market, before sitting empty for six years. Clayton renovated the structure while retaining its footprint, exposing trusses, adding a dormer and steel windows and doors, and installing pine-plank ceilings and polished concrete floors. Paula’s husband gifted her with the Hermès-





Built-in shelves corral trays and candy dishes from Nicolette Mayer as well as ceramics and artwork.

eclectic mix.”

Appropriate given the shop takes its name from the French word for “mixture.” On any given visit, *Mélange* offers antiques and art from France, blankets from Morocco, lighting from Visual Comfort & Co., bespoke upholstered

furniture, case goods, linens, candles, and books galore. In warmer months (the store is open year-round), a garden displays outdoor furniture.

Mélange also highlights Maine artisans; look for rugs, lighting, ceramics, and candlesticks made locally. “We

have met some of the most amazing artists and have had the chance to visit their studios,” says Paula. “We are so excited to be part of this community and share our design aesthetic.”

Mélange Home Shop, Kennebunk, Maine, melangebydid.com