

Designer Kim Coombs talks on working with Jackie Siegel on 'Queen of Versailles Reigns Again'



[Kim Coombs](#), founder and president of KBCO Design, has never seen a home quite like what David and [Jackie Siegel](#) have been working on in Orlando.

The 90,000-square-foot Versailles mansion has been under construction for nearly two decades, but has become the focus of a new television series. The Siegels starred in a new Discovery+ documentary, *Queen of Versailles Reigns Again*, that debuted March 30, following [Jackie Siegel](#) as she works to complete the mansion in the Lake Butler Sound area of Orlando.

Here, Coombs, who has been working with the Siegels on Versailles, speaks with *Orlando Business Journal* on the iconic mansion, what she experienced, what's next for her firm and more:



Kim Coombs, founder and president of KBCO Design

How did you and the Siegels get connected for the Versailles project?

One of the original architects [David Siegel](#) worked with referred me to him. Apparently, they interviewed quite a few designers, and I'm assuming asked us all the same question, "How would you tone down the current design of the house?" I'm always in solution-mode, so I just rattled off some actual solutions right then and there, and David looked over at his CEO and said, "She's hired." I'm quick to get to the point, and I think they liked a solutions-based quality and approach.



David Siegel, CEO of Westgate Resorts

JIM CARCHIDI

What were your first impressions when they brought you to look through the house?

It was massive, so big it truly reminded me of our hotel projects, the scale was just huge. It was sad, because you could tell how much the family had been through with all the bad vendors prior, and I just wanted to help them. The situation was simply not OK, and I must help them finish this project.

How does Versailles compare to other homes you have provided services for?

It doesn't. It compares to hotel and restaurant work we have done in the hospitality industry. There is nothing like Versailles.

What was unique about Versailles?

Gold, all the gold. It's not a material I was accustomed to using at this scale and in so many different applications - there is gold gilding everywhere, gold chandeliers, frames and mirrors, handrails, all the ornate furniture and custom accessory designs. Because there is so much modern and simplistic design on the market right now, we simply don't see a lot of those styles offered. It created challenges and requirements for more customization than I planned.

How long did you work with the Siegels and what did you learn helping design Versailles?

I started three years ago, with some holds throughout Covid for several reasons. As the interior designer for the project that was an unfinished, existing structure, I've learned to be very flexible with unforeseen issues. It's also been a challenge to work with not just one client, but a whole family of them with ages ranging from 18 to 88. I strive to make sure all their input is considered as much as possible in every room.

What was your favorite piece in the house and why?

The dining room's gilding because it is so different than work I've done in the past, and incredibly expensive. I was very worried about the installation and wanted it to be perfect. I'm super-pleased with the result, the room is gorgeous.

What were some complex design solutions?

Versailles is full of complex design challenges, I'll just name a few from Season 1 of Queen of Versailles Reigns Again:

- **Dining room:** The prior build and design did not call for a gold ceiling, which David wanted. Jackie wanted royal purple worked in. I was conflicted by the contrast that was going to show, so I decided to do an ombre finish of silver leaf to the gold to soften the transition. It's unique and truly helped pull the transition together beautifully.
- **Morning kitchen:** As detailed on the show, the biggest challenge was how to make it exquisite, yet comfortable as the family hangs out in this room together all the time. I solved with the custom-built circular table and large lazy Susan, as well as adding additional lounging furniture. The room feels luxurious, yet casual.
- **Time frames:** Custom furniture always takes a long time, and we go to do the ordering during a global pandemic that put huge pressures on supply chains. We were, and are, constantly dealing with these time constraints on custom orders and challenges to meet deadlines and coordinate installations. I had to call in a lot of favors with vendors we have used in the past to make miracles happen. I cannot thank them enough, but staying on top of them was key, as well as having great relationships to fall back on and rely on for this kind of specialized work.

What was it like overseeing such a large project?

This project takes a village, but for my part, the interior design was very much like managing a large hotel project. The scale of the work, the time demands, the number of vendors all combined to truly equal that of working on a custom hotel. Even more of a challenge because it is a home, and every room is fully customized and pure luxury.

How do you see this project leading to more work for your business?

I'm hopeful KBCO Design gets noticed by the luxury residential market more than ever before, and specifically because of the extreme amount of customization we can offer in service, solutions and product. It's a niche, and we have an incredible depth of experience after working on Versailles and other luxury residences in the past.

What is a common mistake most homeowners do that you think a designer never overlooks?

Pay attention to the details. By that, I mean, as an interior designer, it is my job to plan out everything from the space to the construction, the finishes - every detail of the interior and every consideration. By doing this well, we minimize decisions on the fly during the construction and installation processes, because we've already planned every detail.

I also bring a uniquely distinct perspective because of our experience in luxury residential, hospitality and theme park work. I can look at a project from a distance and zoom in and out of it to see more of what should be considered better than individuals who are not designers. That ability brings a lot of value to my clients.