



The Style Broker

With smarts and savvy, Kimberly Grigg approaches life and work with a fierce focus and a heap of savoir-faire

She's a vegetarian cross between Zsa Zsa Gabor and Goldie Hawn, and like those iconic blondes, this lady is smart, savvy and the epitome of style.

At the tender age of 6, Kimberly Grigg came to the bittersweet realization that she had outgrown her charming, but sleepy hometown. While her primary-school peers hungered for skateboards and corn dogs, Kimberly pieced out her allowance to neighborhood boys to help paint a mural across her bedroom walls.

"Even then I was all visual," she says. "I wanted my room to be the best ... I loved clothes ... I spent hours making Barbie dream houses out of boxes. I never really 'fit' in the small town."

Kimberly knew in her heart that she would have to venture from Graniteville, S.C., to fulfill her dreams of pink pumps with matching bracelets and of becoming a star quarterback.

Now, the owner and lead designer of Knotting Hill Interiors and mother of six, Kimberly approaches life's challenges and interior design with fierce focus, snapping into play without hesitation and leaving ambivalence on the sidelines – albeit in a pair of hot pink high heels and a forearm full of bangles.

After a childhood of conquering boredom by flexing creative muscles and becoming a superb seamstress to satisfy her inner fashionista on a dime, Kimberly attended Winthrop College and earned a business degree with an emphasis in interior design.

"I knew early on that to be in a creative business, you have to be good creatively and be a good business woman," she says. "It's not easy, but you have to train yourself to do both well."

Her first real job took her to Belk department store in Columbia, an entry-level position in the special events division. But it wasn't long before Kimberly created a successful fashion program that showed women how to employ a "layering system for dressing" – a special project that caught the eye of upper management and promoted her to regional status.

By 1986, Kimberly landed in Myrtle Beach working with the convention bureau.

There, she learned from her convention clients that there was a need for after-seminars events – they wanted to fill in the nights with fun and mingling. And who knew better than Kimberly how to creatively turn boredom into an amusement park?

She established Signature Events to fulfill that need, creating theme parties and high-spirited entertainment for 11 years, a business that she claims taught her a lot.

"Running Signature Events taught me everything about scale," Kimberly explains. "When you have to turn an empty banquet room with 15-foot ceilings into a tropical island or Vegas casino with a truckload of props and a strict budget, you learn what 'balance' really means, what works and what doesn't. I can walk into any room and envision it blank and know what size chair or piece of furniture it needs."

Besides running a business that demanded working nights, loading and unloading trucks at 5 a.m. and "trying to have a life in between," Kimberly adopted a child with special needs. It was the needs of that special child that prompted Kimberly to sell Signature Events.

But as fate would have it, she may have given up a business, but gained a family.

Kimberly had been divorced from her second husband long enough to "become a whole person" when she ran into long-time client Roger Grigg at a restaurant, accepted a date with him and "knew within ten minutes" that she would marry him.

"Three time's a charm," Kimberly smiles. "We both brought whole people to the table. Roger's an incredible businessman and has supported and influenced everything I've done. We feed off of each other. We're our own mastermind group."

The Griggs adopted another child since Kimberly was told by doctors that she would never be able to conceive children of her own – only to find her herself pregnant twice in 18 months. With the addition of two stepchildren, Kimberly found herself in charge of a brood of six.

"And when you have six children, three dogs, two cats, a home to run and a husband who also has a thriving business, our family is running a special event every day! You

have to have a system and be able to delegate. Our kids all have household jobs. Right now my 17-year-old is waiting for me to come home so he can detail my car, and my 23-year-old is doing the family's laundry."

As she worked her decorating mojo on her own home, friends and friends of friends sought her out for interior design advice. During both pregnancies, Kimberly leisurely took on "one project at a time" that came to life from her dining room table. She and Roger agreed that when the youngest child started school, Kimberly would apply her gift and launch her own interior design business.

Knotting Hill was intended to be "a two-person shop."

"Before I knew it, I had 11 employees and had to wear roller skates just to keep up," Kimberly says with a wave of her bejeweled hand.

She attributes much of her success in the decorating world to the fact that she refuses to become a designer with "a look."

"Whether it's modern or traditional, good design is good design," she says. "I've always been able to run the gamut and give my clients a room that fits the way they live with an element of surprise."

What Kimberly also brings to the decorating table is her overall belief that the process has to be based on honesty and trust to become a joyous and fulfilling experience.

"When you're designing someone's home, it becomes an intimate relationship. You have to have an open dialogue and put aside any tendency to control. My job is to help people find creative solutions to problems. You can't do that if one party or the other is trying to control the outcome," she explains. "And when everyone shares and relaxes, it becomes magical and fun."

Besides writing a book on the "Kim-plitic approach to interior design," Kimberly is intensely interested in volunteerism because she's making a list of 50 things she'll do this year that can "make a difference."

It would seem that this petite dynamo has achieved enough for 10 people, but if Kimberly Grigg has her sights set on accomplishing 50 more things in a year's time, it will be a touchdown – albeit in a pair of hot pink high heels and a forearm full of bangles! ♡