



SPENCER

HERITAGE





ALTHORP HOUSE

A UNIQUE Family

Althorp was built in 1508, by the Spencers, for the Spencers, and that is how it has remained for over 500 years - the family line has contained politicians, courtiers, admirals, society beauties and pioneers in charity work, as well as gamblers, book lovers, and even a breeder of prize bulls. They were all related, but each Spencer was unique in time and taste.

Having one family in one home for five centuries has presented many opportunities for members of the line to leave behind their mark in the shape of their favourite acquisitions. A passion for collecting has always been present, and the cream of their collections now adorns Althorp. It is fair to say that the story of Althorp is also the story of the Spencers, and vice versa.



Althorp by John Vosterman 1677. This shows the original red brick, before it was tiled.

A family home to 19 generations of the Spencer family, Althorp showcases the various interests and passions of those who have lived here over the A UNIQUE HOME centuries. Charles, Ninth Earl Spencer has been in charge for just 20 of the House's 500-year history but he has striven in that time to make a positive difference, by taking an uncompromising approach to the continuing wellbeing of Althorp. This involves a fine balance between historical accuracy and practical modernity. Earl Spencer knows his job will never be complete overseeing the duty of running such a special place is an ever-evolving process.

From the captivating interiors to the beguiling grounds, Althorp offers a wealth of diversions for visitors of all ages. This is a house that continues to evolve: Althorp is a living organism, a part of our shared history, and, today, a simply gorgeous spot to spend a day being inspired.

A UNIQUE Home



John Spencer, created Earl Spencer



George John, 2nd Earl Spencer



John Charles, 3rd Earl Spencer



Frederick, 4th Earl Spencer



John Poyntz, 5th Earl Spencer



Charles Robert, 6th Earl Spencer



Albert Edward John, 7th Earl Spencer



Edward John, 8th Earl Spencer



Charles Edward Maurice, 9th Earl Spencer

Owners of Althorp [1500s to 1783]

Sir John Spencer, Kt, bought Althorp 1508 (d. 1522) married Isabell Graunt

Sir William Spencer, Kt, (d. 1532) married Susan Knightly

Sir John Spencer, Kt, (d. 1586) married Katherine Kitson

Sir John Spencer, Kt, (d. 1599) married Mary Catlyn, 1566

Sir Robert Spencer 1570 - 1627 Created Baron Spencer of Wormleighton married Margaret Willoughby, 1587 (d. 1597)

William, 2nd Baron Spencer, KB 1591 - 1636 married Lady Penelope Wriothesley, 1614 1598 - 1667

Henry, 3rd Baron Spencer 1620 - 1643 created Earl of Sunderland, KG 1643 married Lady Dorothy Sidney, 1639 1617 - 1684

Robert, 2nd Earl of Sunderland, KG 1641 - 1702 married Lady Anne Digby, 1665 1646 - 1715

Charles, 3rd Earl of Sunderland, KG 1675 - 1722
1) married Lady Arabella Cavendish, 1695 1673 - 1698,
2) married Lady Anne Churchill, 1699 (d. 1716)
3) married Judith Tichbourne, 1717 (d. 1749)

Robert, 4th Earl of Sutherland 1701 - 1729*

Charles, 5th Earl of Sunderland, 3rd Duke of Malborough, KG 1706 - 1758* (quitted Althorp 1734)

Hon. John Spencer, 1708 - 1746* married Lady Georgina Carteret, 1734 1716 - 1780

John Spencer, created Earl Spencer 1765 1734 - 1783 married Georgiana Poyntz, 1775 1737 - 1814

*Son of Charles, 3rd Earl of Sunderland and Lady Anne Churchill



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Althorp was built with classically aristocratic aims in mind - to demonstrate the wealth and power of the early Spencers, to show off their exquisite collections (of art, furniture, books, silver and porcelain), and to entertain.

But there was always an understanding that the owners of this great house had an obligation to share their good fortune with others. Distinguished visitors - kings, queens, foreign dignitaries - had only to ask, and the doors of this private palace were of course thrown open. But guests with less rarefied backgrounds could also ask to enjoy the contents - and a discreet tip placed in the hand of the head housekeeper would secure a tour, if the family's privacy was not unduly compromised.

These historic houses were dynamic places, full of bustle and industry ensuring the occupying family could lead pampered, smoothly-run, lives: even a little over a century ago, Althorp employed 65 permanent house staff, while another 45 worked in the gardens and Park, and a further 40 grooms attended the horses in the Stables. There was therefore less of a problem in absorbing a few extra people, curious to see the splendours within.

After the First World War there was a drastic belt-tightening in England's stately homes. It was hard to find staff, and estate incomes dipped while taxes rose. Between the wars, my grandfather (Jack - the 7th Earl Spencer) often welcomed visitors that shared his keen appreciation of the house and its chattels. His diaries show he was less thrilled by those who couldn't match his knowledge - he was almost comically scathing of what he perceived to be willful ignorance, when, in truth, he was asking way too much of his audience's intellect.

My father, by contrast, just adored people. He chatted happily with all comers to Althorp, as at ease with a prince as with a primary school teacher. He was modern in his outlook - sharing Althorp with enormous generosity, and without snobbery.

I've had the privilege of being in charge of Althorp, for quarter of a century now. I've certainly received some interesting guests - including former presidents Mandela and Gorbachev - and, through the annual Althorp Literary Festival, a never-ending stream of internationally acclaimed figures: novelists, sportsmen, comedians, politicians, and experts in dozens of fields.

But the high points of our year are those weekends when we fill Althorp with family and friends, as the 18 preceding generations of my family have done for 500 years. The original builder and occupant of Althorp - Sir John Spencer - left it as a condition of his Will that Althorp should always be a place of entertainment. It's not a tough duty to fulfill - whether with loved ones, or interested outsiders. It was never designed to be a place to hide away in - it was painted on the broadest possible canvas, as something spectacular that demanded widespread admiration and appreciation.



Spencer





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CHARLES SPENCER

"Althorp is the essence of Englishness"



THE 9TH EARL SPENCER



Watch **Charles, 9th Earl Spencer** introduce a new Althorp Living History furniture collection. Each piece has been curated to reflect the history and taste of Althorp, one of England's finest country houses.

For five centuries, Althorp - a sprawling English estate in bucolic Northamptonshire - has served as the primary residence of the Spencers, one of the most distinguished, aristocratic families in England with ties to Winston Spencer Churchill and the ancestors of George Washington. In April 1992, Charles, Viscount Althorp, became the 9th Earl Spencer and it was he who worked with TA to bring the Althorp Living History Collection to fruition. The resulting collection of furniture and upholstery pieces in Althorp Living History draws inspiration from treasures gathered during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries by Althorp's famous inhabitants.

"Althorp is to me the essence of Englishness... Understated but impressive, traditional but relevant, a historic house but also a warm and much loved home. Its contents have been assembled with discernment, over 500 years. If I had to sum up Althorp - itself the embodiment of the Spencer family's heritage - in one word, it would be English."

As you walk round this house, you will see the accumulation of paintings, furniture, china, and sculpture, which have appealed to the tastes of my family over the generations. I hope that, beyond the art, you will also notice that Althorp is very much a home. I believe this is down to the fact that one family has used this house as a home, in an unbroken line," states Lord Spencer.



THEODORE ALEXANDER

ALTHORP - VICTORY OAK

There isn't a more reassuring tree to the English than the oak: its handsome presence studs our landscape, and its mellow tones give warmth to our rooms. At the back of the Deer Park at Althorp we have an oak wood planted by my ancestor, Sir John Spencer, in 1589: the carved monument he erected there records his intention then – to replenish timber stock for the British navy, at a time when invasion from Spain was expected.

Inside Althorp there is a range of beautiful oak furniture, accumulated over five centuries by longgone members of my family. They would surely be proud that their good taste lives on in classically handsome form, from the intricately carved to the rugged and practical.

I am delighted to see the selection included here – pieces of Althorp, and of England - that are destined to give pleasure to new owners, who appreciate fine designs that have been valued and enjoyed by the Spencer family for many generations.

Charles Edward Maurice, 9th Earl Spencer

Spencer





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The histories of the Spencer Family's Heritage and Althorp are so tightly entwined that they would be impossible to unravel and separate. These Spencer ancestors were able to indulge their tastes – to commission art, furniture, and all the finer things in life. You can see the Spencer touch in every corner of Althorp – this historic house that my family has called “home” for over 500 years, and which for the past decade, has been given unprecedented care and attention.





TALBOT BARREL ACCENT TABLE
AL50127

An antiqued wooden barrel, the circular top above planked sides bound by hand-forged iron riveted straps and hand painted with the Spencer coat of arms.

18 x 18 x 28 in | 45.7 x 45.7 x 71.1 cm



BUTLER'S SIDE TABLE
AL50159

A reclaimed oak veneered and mahogany accent table, the planked top with a raise edge, above a frieze drawer and baluster turned legs joined by an undertier, on bun feet.

30 x 20 x 26 in | 76.2 x 50.8 x 66.04 cm



VICTORY OAK COCKTAIL TABLE
AL51041

A reclaimed oak and figured ash veneered refectory cocktail table, the rectangular planked and breadboard top above a figured ash apron, on turned legs and block feet joined by plain stretchers. Inspired by a 17th century refectory table.

63 x 38 x 20 in | 160 x 96.5 x 50.8 cm



OAK CLOVER ACCENT TABLE
AL50161

A mahogany and reclaimed oak 'Clover' table, the trefoil top above a triangular frieze and Cricket base, on three turned and block legs joined by board stretchers.

24½ x 23 x 27 in | 62.23 x 58.42 x 68.58 cm



LAWN CRICKET SIDE TABLE
AL50157

A reclaimed oak veneered and mahogany cricket table, the circular planked top with a raised edge, on three splayed tapering legs joined by a triangular undertier.

26 x 26 x 26¼ in | 66.04 x 66.04 x 66.65 cm



CARTER CONSOLE TABLE
AL53053

A mahogany and reclaimed oak veneered console table restored with pollard oak, the rectangular three quarter gallery top with six turned finials atop each turned leg, with two frieze drawers and a similar undertier below, on turned legs.

64 x 16 x 35¼ in | 162.56 x 40.64 x 89.53 cm





SILAS' SIDE TABLE
AL50162

A mahogany and reclaimed oak side table, the rectangular planked and breadboard top above a moulded frieze, on bobbin turned and block legs joined by a boarded tier and bobbin stretchers below.

31½ x 20 x 27 in | 80.17 x 50.8 x 68.58 cm



SILAS' SERVING TABLE
AL50163

A mahogany and reclaimed oak veneered serving table, the galleried top and undertaker with glass overlay, on spiral turned legs joined by an undertier fitted with two drawers, on turned legs with brass castors.

42 x 20 x 35¾ in | 106.68 x 50.8 x 90.8 cm



LODGE SIDE TABLE
AL50160

A mahogany and reclaimed oak occasional 'Joynt' table, the planked rectangular top with a moulded edge, above a panelled frieze with gently splayed turned legs terminating in block feet joined by a planked tray undertier. Inspired by a 17th century 'Joynt' stool.

28 x 20 x 24 in | 71.12 x 50.8 x 60.96 cm



LODGE COCKTAIL TABLE
AL51044

A mahogany and reclaimed oak occasional 'Joynt' cocktail table, the planked rectangular top with a moulded edge, above a panelled frieze with gently splayed turned legs terminating in block feet joined by a planked tray undertier. Inspired by a 17th century 'Joynt' stool.

54 x 30 x 19 in | 137.16 x 76.2 x 48.26 cm



WEST GATE CONSOLE TABLE
AL53051

A mahogany and reclaimed oak console table, the bowfront top above a plain frieze with drawer and corner brackets, on tapering legs terminating in brass castors.

72½ x 20 x 34 in | 184.15 x 50.8 x 86.36 cm

VICTORY OAK JUPE DINING TABLE
AL54037

A reclaimed oak and chestnut burl restored circular extending dining table, the segmented top opening to reveal six self storing fold out leaves above a plain frieze, on a vase column support and crossover refectory feet.

Open: 56 x 56 x 30 in | 142.2 x 142.2 x 76.2 cm
Closed: 47³/₄ x 46³/₄ x 30 in | 121.3 x 118.7 x 76.2 cm



VICTORY OAK JUPE II DINING TABLE
AL54038

A reclaimed oak and chestnut burl restored circular extending dining table, the segmented top opening to reveal six self storing fold out leaves above a plain frieze, on a vase column support and crossover refectory feet.

Open: 72 x 72 x 30 in | 183 x 183 x 76.2 cm
Closed: 54 x 54 x 30 in | 137 x 137 x 76.2 cm



THE OAK *Bedroom*

The Oak Bedroom was witness to one of the most romantic episodes in the Spencer family history. On 20th December 1755, during a ball to celebrate the coming of age of John Spencer, later the First Earl Spencer, and his fiancée Georgiana Poyntz, slipped away from the celebrations together with his tutor who was conveniently also a priest, and the few members of the wedding party. In this bedroom they were secretly married. Afterwards, the group left the bedroom and rejoined the ball, joining in the dancing so that no one knew of their marriage secret.

The bride said later of the ceremony "we both behaved very well, spoke distinctly and loudly, but I trembled so much I could hardly stand". Thus began a marriage that was manifestly happy.





NASEBY US KING BED
AL83022

A reclaimed oak veneered and mahogany tester King bed, with an arched headboard and four turned columns on a paneled foot rail, on turned legs.

85¼ x 88½ x 80½ in | 216.53 x 224.8 x 204.47 cm



NASEBY NIGHTSTAND
AL60046

A reclaimed oak and mahogany veneered nightstand with Bellied Drawer Faces, shaped top, and with four finely turned legs. Designed with Oil rubbed Escutcheons, and pull drawers.

34 x 20 x 32 in | 86.36 x 50.8 x 81.3 cm



NASEBY DRESSER
AL60047

A reclaimed oak and mahogany Veneered with bellied drawer faces, a shaped top, bold pilaster supported by six finely turned legs. Designed with oil rubbed escutcheons and pull drawers.

72 x 20 x 44 in | 182.9 x 50.8 x 111.8 cm

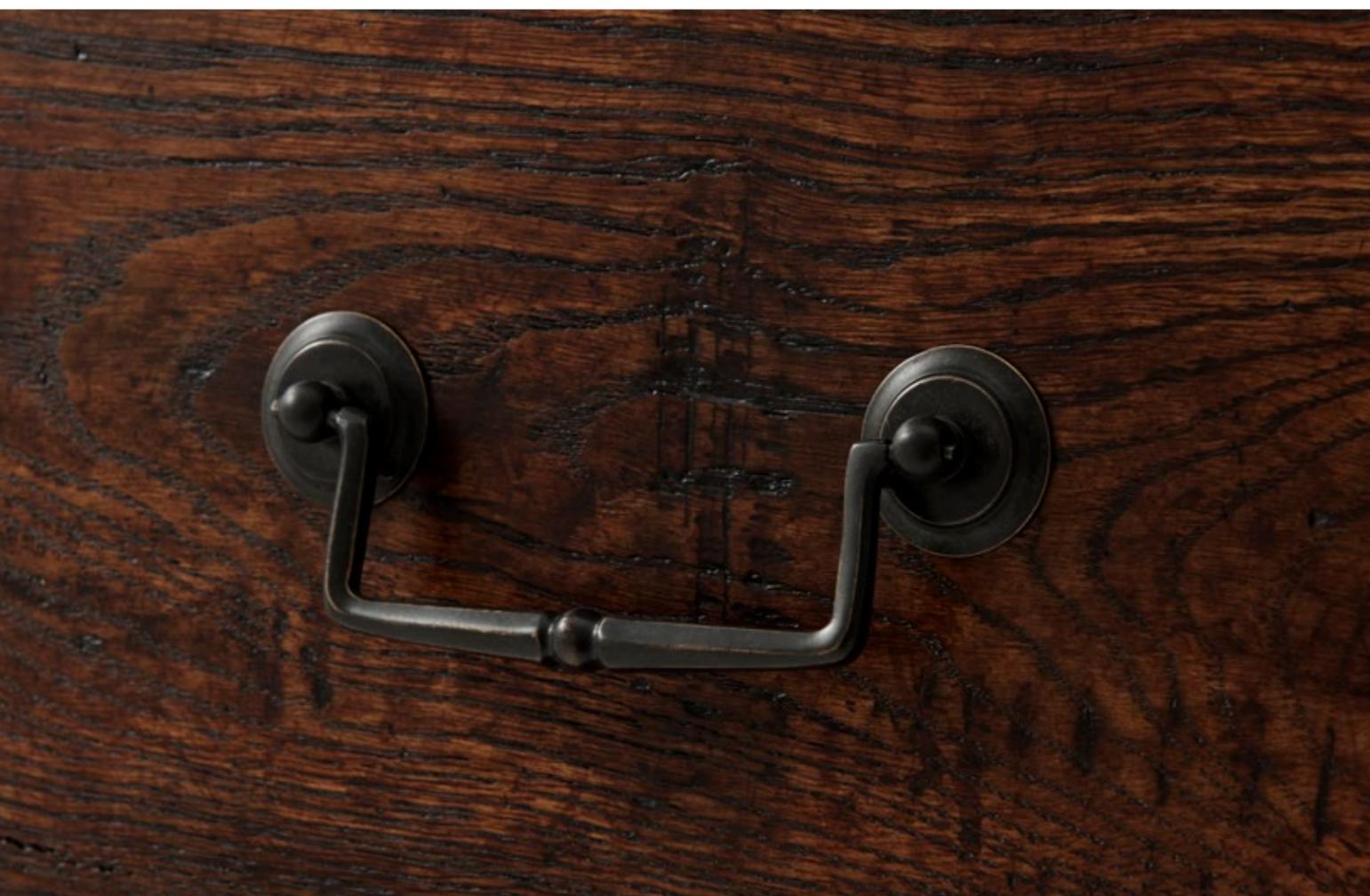


OLIVER BEDSIDE TABLE

AL60050

A rustic oak veneered bedside table featuring a moulded oak top above a frieze drawer and cabinet door with bronze finished pendant handles and finely turned feet.

26 x 18 x 28 in | 66 x 45.7 x 71.1 cm



AXEL CHEST OF DRAWERS

AL60049

A rustic oak veneered chest of drawers featuring a moulded oak top above two short and three long beveled edge drawers with bronze finished pendant handles on a planked base with tapered block feet.

50 x 19 x 42 in | 127 x 48.3 x 106.7 cm





THEODORE ALEXANDER

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