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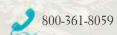


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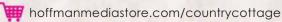






Country Cottage, a special edition of The Cottage Journal magazine, is a wealth of fresh ideas on all things country—from rustic dream cabins to modern farmhouse style. From antique and vintage to rustic chic, the quaint abodes in our pages will inspire you to incorporate the spirit of country living into your own home.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

ottage style isn't just a manner of decorating—
it's also a state of mind. One of the reasons it is so
beloved, and so prevalent throughout the South, is that
it embodies the comfortable, deeply personal sensibility
that we cherish. Cottage décor is all about finding beauty
and grace in the ordinary and the imperfect: gently weathered
furniture, sun-bleached linens, hardwood flooring worn smooth
by years of use. And in a region where our connection to the
past means everything, the heirloom treasures and vintage finds
that characterize the look fall right in step.

In our first-ever *Southern Cottages* special issue, we bring you a collection of interiors that encapsulates the best of this approach to decorating. From a blue-and-white lakeside beauty (page 69) to a cozy, colorful nest tucked amid the bustle of Atlanta (page 61), each of these homes represents a singular take on cottage style yet feels perfectly on point. Get inspired by a Florida home filled with curiosities and enlivened by artistic flair (page 39), or revel in the sweet serenity of an abode cloaked in layer upon layer of white (page 99). You're sure to find one that speaks to your heart.

Lion Frederick









This kitchen represents a streamlined take on cottage décor, with time-honored components such as an apron-front sink, simple cabinetry, and open shelving to display dishware and collectibles. Light floods in through expansive windows, enhancing the pale, neutral palette. (Opposite) No cottage-style scheme is complete without a bouquet or two of fresh blooms. Mass ruffled roses, tulips, Dahlias, and spiky Veronica in a pretty vessel, as shown here, or take a more casual approach and gather an array of wildflowers to tuck into a ceramic pitcher or a galvanized tin cachepot.



(Clockwise from top left) The appeal of this decorating style lies largely in its layered, collected feel and its mix of textures—such as this varied grouping of silver, plates, and glassware. Gentle, creamy white is the signature cottage color, lending a fresh, clean air to upholstery, surfaces, accents, and more. A wreath of greenery softens a chandelier that wears a hint of patina. Distressed woodwork creates the illusion of age on a hutch that houses a blended family of china and crockery. (Opposite) Flowing slipcovers, another cottage decorating mainstay, dress a pair of chairs for an extra feminine touch.













Brimming with colors inspired by its bayside locale, this Fairhope, Alabama, abode continues the story of its owners, as the sixth home they've built in their years together. "My inspiration is fabric," says homeowner Cindy Thompson. "I tend to stay with the same color scheme. I just do different textures and designs for each house." The focal point of Cindy's palettes always finds its way back to blue. In this venture, the hue makes its way through the main living areas in a mix of bold patterns and a spectrum of solids displayed on chairs, pillows, window treatments, rugs, and a well-curated collection of accents.











From the family and dining rooms to the kitchen, the home's spaces blend not only because of the open layout, but also because of their unabashedly blue refrain. Cindy expertly layered the hue throughout with traditional ginghams, contemporary motifs, and classic china patterns. Despite the eclectic variety, the tranquility of the blue-based palette brings a sense of comfort instead of clutter, rest rather than disorder. Cindy's affinity for the shade began when she received a few heirloom pieces of her grandmother's antique flow blue china. "I just flew from there," she explains. "I kept collecting. I've got to live with blue."



In the Thompsons's previous houses, the master bedrooms usually took on more masculine looks with neutrals and browns. On a whim, Cindy decided to try a daintier style with a bit of feminine flair. The result is a beautiful suite that celebrates a softer, more subdued version of the blue-and-white palette seen elsewhere in the residence.









Three blocks from downtown Fairhope, this French country cottage fits right in with its quaint setting. From the front porch—outfitted with plenty of comfy rockers—Cindy and her husband, Terry, can sit and take in the town, listening to church bells on any given day or watching vibrant floats drive by during the local Mardi Gras holiday parades. Cindy says the back porch, complete with wood ceilings and a fireplace, functions as an extension of the living room—a continuation of space where friends and family can enjoy fellowship. "It's a live-in home," she explains. "There's not a room in the house you can't go sit in or play in. I try to keep things that make me happy around me. I try to make all my houses home."









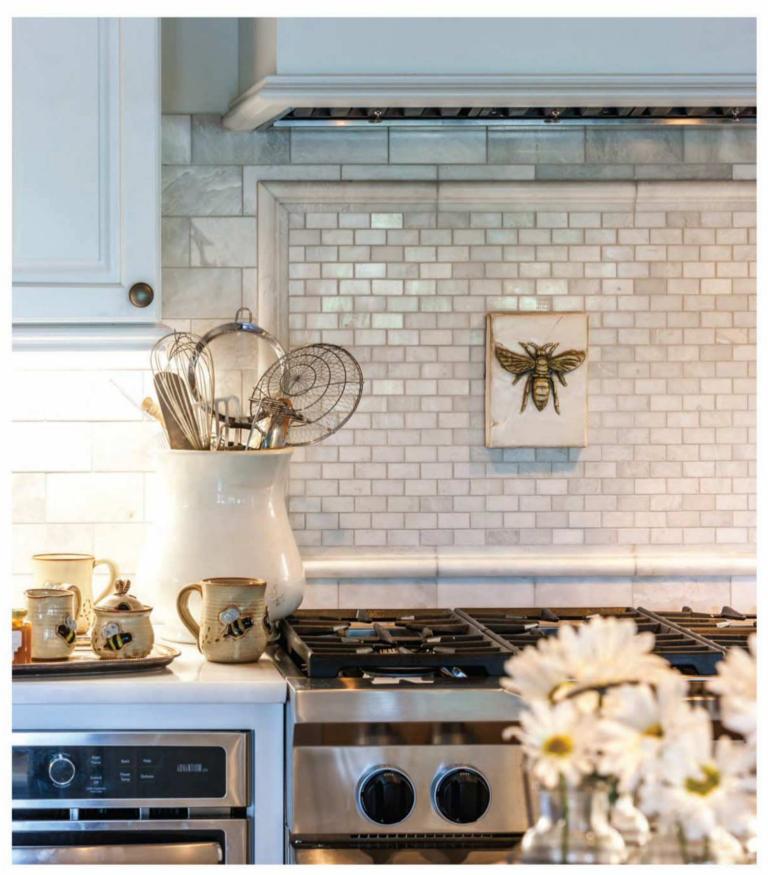


Southern Comfort

A QUAINT ALABAMA RESIDENCE BLENDS THE BEST OF SUBURBAN AND COUNTRY LIFE WITH A CLASSIC STYLE THAT HAS HOSPITALITY AT HEART.







Warmth radiates from richly stained woodwork incorporated throughout, inspired by a childhood camp house Leesa's father built from salvaged heart pine. "This wood is some of that same salvaged wood, and I love that my home is connected to that place in this way," she says. The lovely woodgrain creates a nice contrast with the simplicity of a whitewashed kitchen, enlivened with outdoorsy embellishments. "My kitchen has always been the heart of the home, a philosophy taught to me through a great legacy of cooks: my mother and my grandmothers," Leesa says. "I believe hospitality is good faith in action."







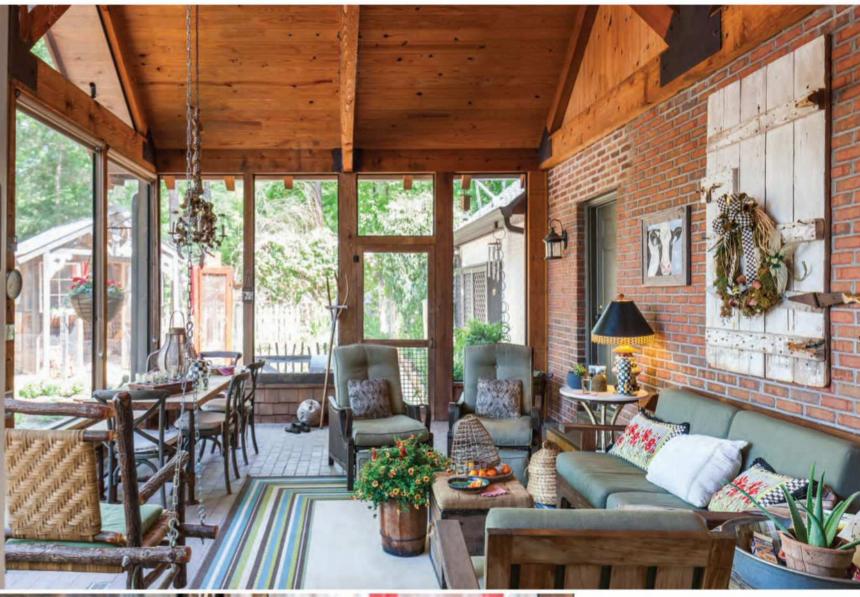


After traveling to Salvador Dalí's home in Spain, Leesa was so taken with the artist's use of white décor that she committed to that scheme in her master bedroom and elsewhere around the residence—using only fresh blooms to pull in color. "Touches of flowers from my garden are surprises of life I put in containers on surfaces throughout the house," she says. "In the summer, I grow many wildflowers to have plenty for cutting."





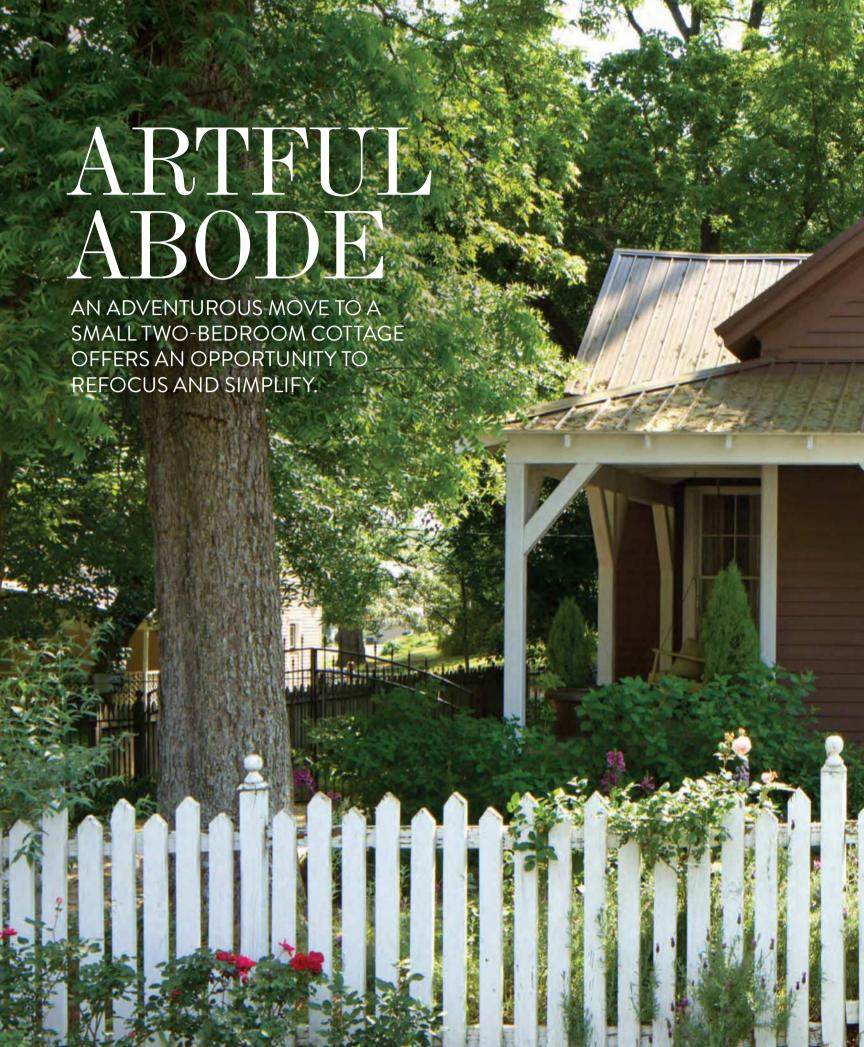






Furthering the home's bucolic feel, the Streets added a chicken coop to the surrounding gardens. "Most of the year, you can find Rich and me outside on the porch," Leesa says. "We live out there." Filling the space with reclaimed treasures and woodland-themed china extends the farmhouse ambience and also reflects the natural wildlife that can be seen while relaxing in the outdoor area. The couple sees the porch as an extension of precious entertaining space. Their affinity for hosting and, ultimately, the inspiration for their home, comes from a theology centered around love. "The vision for this home was to have a sanctuary for people to come and thrive and feel loved on," Leesa says.









Outfitted in classic shapes and soothing neutrals, homeowner Pandy Agnew's living room also boasts creative use of color. "What speaks to me in furniture and accessories is true comfort and classic style," she explains. "I love using neutrals for large pieces and introducing bold accents with unexpected art, color in changeable pillows, a great antique, or a unique piece of furniture." A cheery pastel pattern on accent chairs adds delicate dashes of color to a room awash in sunlight and beige. Exposed beams ground the room in natural tones, while sheer cream draperies elegantly blend the garden and the living space.





In the dining room, a simple, varnished hardwood table and matching mirror echo the beams that line the ceiling, lending a cozy feel that beckons guests to gather round. Minuscule fragments of turquoise are artfully strung together to create a showstopping chandelier. Its gently sloping lines and cool seaside tones gracefully contrast with the rustic mood of the surrounding wood.















"Your home will give you much more than shelter—peace, rest, pride, and great joy. [It] is the gathering place of life's memories," says Pandy, "so make them beautiful." Abiding by this belief, Pandy decided to keep her guest room (opposite) streamlined in order to make room for life's merry moments. Stripes, navy blue, and rope accents lend an understated nautical feel to the grandson-friendly space. White paneling provides a breezy, effortless backdrop to an animal print lampshade, creating an open space ready to be filled by her grandsons' joyful playtime and active imagination.











The simplicity and organic charm of the interior extend onto Pandy's porch and patio spaces. As the veranda (opposite) remains unadorned—with the exception of an olive swing bedecked with matching pillows—the surrounding flora takes center stage, inviting guests to view the garden and delight in the lush foliage. Wicker chairs frame a cut-stone table topped with gold candelabras (top right), providing a setting that underlines the serene forest landscape for restful plein-air dining.







RURAL SPLENDOR

A CREATIVE DESIGN APPROACH HELPS THIS COZY TENNESSEE FARMHOUSE STAND UP TO THE DEMANDS OF COUNTRY LIVING.





Designer Eric Ross struck a balance between beauty and utility when he started work on this farmhouse in Morrison, Tennessee. Owners Debbie and Joey Jacobs wanted a newly constructed home that would live up to minding a farm and raising cattle. The inspiration started with durable slate floors (right) to camouflage the dirt tracked in with a typical day's work of gardening and tending the herd, and the final look was a fresh blend of American and English country. Collected treasures and framed foliage prints impart a feminine touch that balances nicely with a handsome plaid stair runner. Beige wallpaper adorned with a subdued pattern softens the dark wood and angular lines of the entryway. Creating a lovely link between the two spaces, the designer selected the same wallcovering and wainscoting for the kitchen (page 51). Just outside, a mix of traditional white and black wicker furniture and cozy rocking chairs offer the Jacobses and their guests plenty of seating along an expansive wraparound porch. Plush pillows pair with contrasting-print cushions, accentuating the pristine white exterior, a welcoming red front door, and black shutters. Any perch provides a serene view of the rolling green pastures and grazing farm animals beyond. "Joey is an executive who has found working on a farm sort of theraputic," says Eric. With plenty of functional elements incorporated into the timeless design, this farmhouse offers a tranquil respite from the Jacobses' busy lives.













Accumulated over the years, beautiful antiques and decorations are given pride of place on a bedside table. A wicker armchair topped with an equestrian motif pillow reflects the homeowners' love of the bucolic vista outside their window. Gently echoing the bed skirt, a checked wallpaper was chosen for the adjoining master bath (opposite). Brushed brass fixtures and hardware along with a duo of dark framed mirrors strike a bold contrast with the tan-and-white scheme. A polished brick floor in a herringbone design infuses the space with texture and warmth.





For the homeowners' guesthouse, the designer carried forth the color scheme of chocolate browns, myriad greens, and soft creams that enliven the main house. "I wanted to keep the palette similar so it wasn't disruptive when looking at views of pastureland," Eric explains. A windowside set of distinctive armchairs provides a view of the picturesque countryside and a comfortable reading nook. At the end of the bed, Eric placed a settee he had upholstered in brown-and-white houndstooth, a classic print that befits the homeowners' traditional aesthetic. (Opposite) Tucked into the alcove of a dormer window, a refinished secretary displays more of the couple's sundry keepsakes and a few favorite books.











For homeowners Jon and Sintra Constant, entertaining space was a must, but they also needed their home to function well for a young family. "With a youngster, a couple of dogs, a cat, and loads of parties, there were many users to consider," says designer Lathem Gordon. "It can be viewed as a challenge to have kids and pets running around, but that's what life is." In the living room, Lathem and partner Cate Dunning found balance through vivid abstract artwork mixed with accents in timeless blue and white. Robert Allen pillows continue the contrast with an old-fashioned floral against a contemporary animal print.







Jon and Sintra, who moved to the South from New England, tried to reconcile many ideals in their new home—an appreciation for heirlooms, as well as modern art and an affinity for tasteful entertaining, together with a desire for a family-friendly home base. Another consideration was the need to accommodate frequent visits from faraway family, which resulted in a doubleduty space the Constants' daughter could grow into. "We went with a palette and fabric patterns that were simultaneously youthful and sophisticated," the designers say. A polished pairing of neutral bases in the beds from Restoration Hardware blend with punches of color, like the local artwork by Hattie Pearson, to bring the look to life. They incorporated various prints with bedding and drapery by Duralee. In the powder room, the design duo created a "lighter, brighter space that speaks to the family's history and style." A Sister Parish wallpaper, originally given to Sintra's grandparents as a wedding present, sets the tone. A golden-glazed linen Roman shade highlights the shimmering dots along the walls. "They are this youthful family with this other leg in tradition," Lathem says. "Finding pieces and pulling a look together that reflected both tradition and current trends was a fun game to play."













From the palest hint of periwinkle to the deepest saturation of indigo, blue in all its beautiful shades strikes a happy note in interior design schemes. Something as simple as a pitcher of hydrangeas in gradations of blue (opposite), or the soft shades in a chambray tea towel lend a bit of buoyancy among otherwise neutral surroundings. Versatile striped ticking (right) is fashioned into a lavender sachet to bring a delightful scent that calms the spirits. When ninth-century artisans first brushed cobalt pigment onto pale earthenware, they launched a love for blue-and-white crockery that has abided for centuries. These lovely pieces (below) transcend mere utility to become eye-catching artistic displays that add warmth to any room.



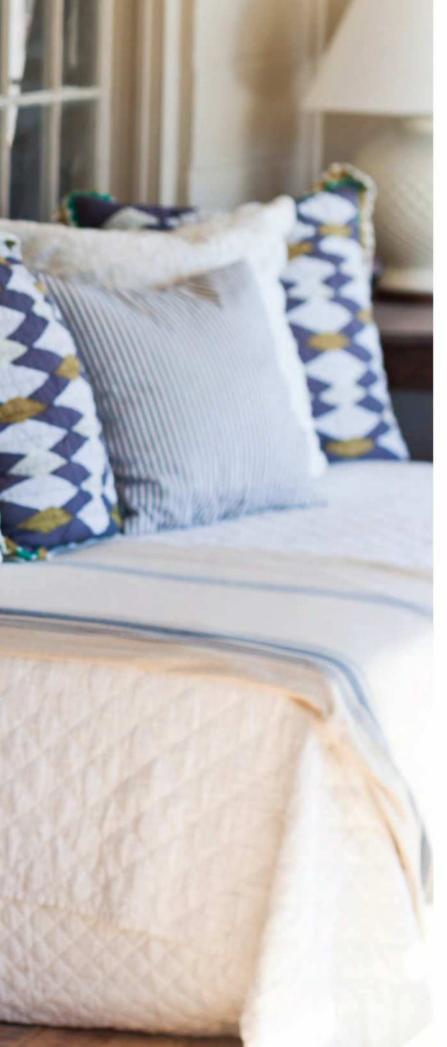














A woven basket filled with lace and linen (above) awaits a relaxing porch picnic softened by a passel of pillows and a quilted throw on a welcoming daybed (opposite). Croissants and jams highlight the afternoon tea served in pretty blue-and-white china that picks up the color scheme of the peaceful setting. Warm wood tones complemented by a blue rattan chair create a cozy spot to enjoy the delicious treats and a little thread craft.

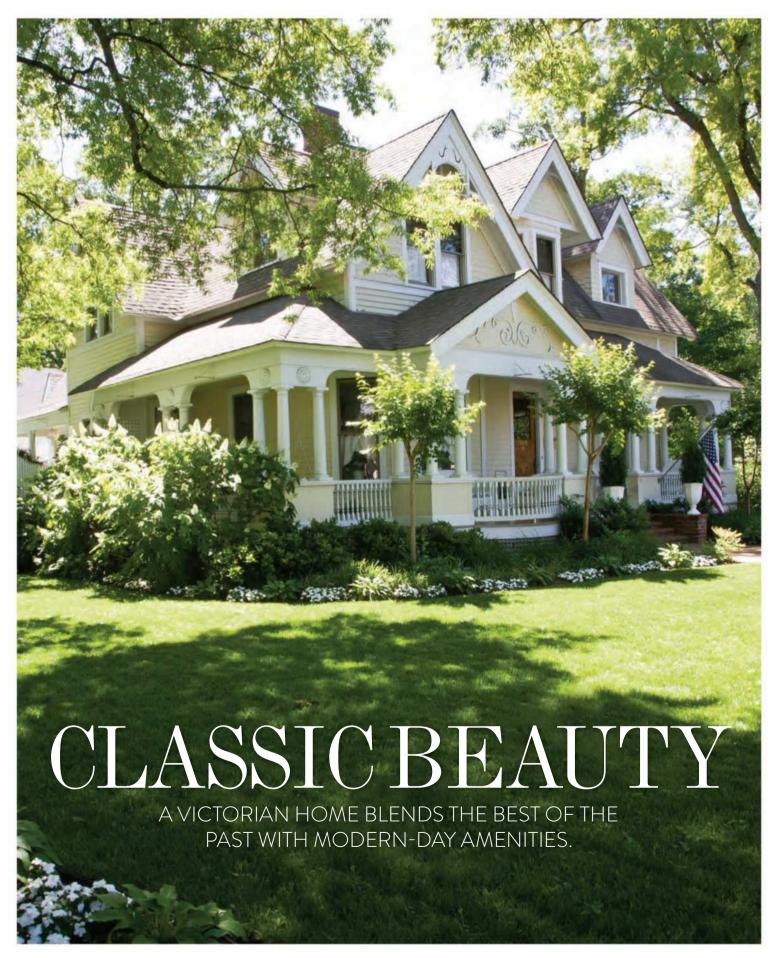




Blue-and-white accents and mindful layering capture attention throughout this home. In the bedroom, soft shams sit atop a muted gray plaid coverlet to blend with a cream backdrop. A pretty bedside vignette features a soft watercolor stacked upon a framed animal print, mixing textures for a casual ambience. A bold hydrangea bloom in a ceramic pitcher adds depth of color as cards and old photographs offer vintage cottage flair.

















Striped pillows provide a pop of color for the wood-framed sofa that is placed on casters for easy room rearrangement. A Roman shade subtly adorns the window for an airy look. (Opposite) In the dining room, simple tab valances frame the windows without blocking light, and a Victorian-style chandelier underscores the home's architectural design. An upholstered ottoman plays the role of coffee table in the living room.







A subdued palette flows throughout the home and features a scattering of white porcelain and crockery collections in each room. Victorian-era furnishings further the home's charm. In the gabled bathroom (right), a vintage pie safe is given new life as a lovely linen closet. Soft aqua bedding combines with ivory sheets to create a soothing scene in one bedroom (opposite), while an antique children's crib and trunk add an old-fashioned touch in another (below). The bureau beneath the window features tiny curtained-off spaces for storage.



















While their mother passed away during the decorating process, Lauren and her sisters found great solace in finishing the project in her honor. "Our mother was our best friend," says Lauren. "She was creative, wise, a comforter, a nurturer—a real Southern lady." In the kitchen, a playful arrangement of culinary items and gadgets that once belonged to the family's matriarch makes for a fun focal point that also pays homage to her memory. Shiny silver barstools and a narrow table are convenient for extra, easy-to-move seating, while tile flooring and a hardy seagrass rug make cleanup a breeze when all the sisters and their families come together. Built-in shelving lined with textured navy wallpaper not only provides storage space, but it also allows the homeowners to display a variety of white dishes, sparkling glassware, and a special collection of hand-painted plates bearing nautical motifs. One in particular denotes the family's simple name for this sentimental coastal escape: The Cottage.













The kid-friendly bunkroom was designed to sleep a whole crew, with a bunk bed, a trundle, a double bed, and a pint-size sloop. A bright-blue bicyle painting is a nod to the Weldens' favorite way to explore the town.







SERENE RETREAT

A ROMANTIC HOME AWASH IN WHITE BRIMS WITH SENTIMENTAL ACCESSORIES, CREATING A PLACE OF REST AND RELAXATION FOR A COUPLE LIVING ON FLORIDA'S GULF COAST.



Every corner of Susie and Mark Holt's relaxed residence is filled with pieces that hold special meaning for the homeowners. Built by Mark, the dining room table seats 10 people comfortably, a necessity for accommodating their large extended family. Frilly antique petticoats enhance plain white draperies, as natural light floods the ethereal space and glints off glass candlesticks and a crystal chandelier. A fanciful slipcover on the sofa (opposite) was made from layers of vintage French sheets, matelassé shams, and linen tablecloths. A decorative arrangement of mirrors creates a whimsical accent wall.





Elegant details teeming with Old-World charm reflect Susie's passion for collecting antiques. Intricate candlesticks, vintage rose-hued glassware, and crockery are just a few of the artful treasures the Holts have lovingly displayed throughout their coastal cottage. Susie asks, "Why buy something new when there are so many wonderful things already out there?"















History Refreshed

A 1917 ATLANTA ABODE HOLDS ONTO THE CHARM OF ITS PAST WITH FRESH UPDATES THAT HIGHLIGHT CRISP, CLEAN INTERIORS BALANCED BY TRANQUIL SOFTNESS.







When Meridy teamed up with the new owner of this suburban Ansley Park bungalow, the duo immediately united in their vision to turn the storied structure into a serene sanctuary. "My goal was to soften it up," Meridy says. To achieve a subdued environment, they began with renovations in the key living areas, integrating contemporary elements into the design. Knowing the family room would serve as an entertaining space for the homeowner's frequent visits from nearby sisters and other guests, Meridy opted for animation with colors and patterns. A classic blue-and-white scheme is enlivened with notes of salmon and vibrant prints, while grand windows let in natural sunlight and garden vistas.











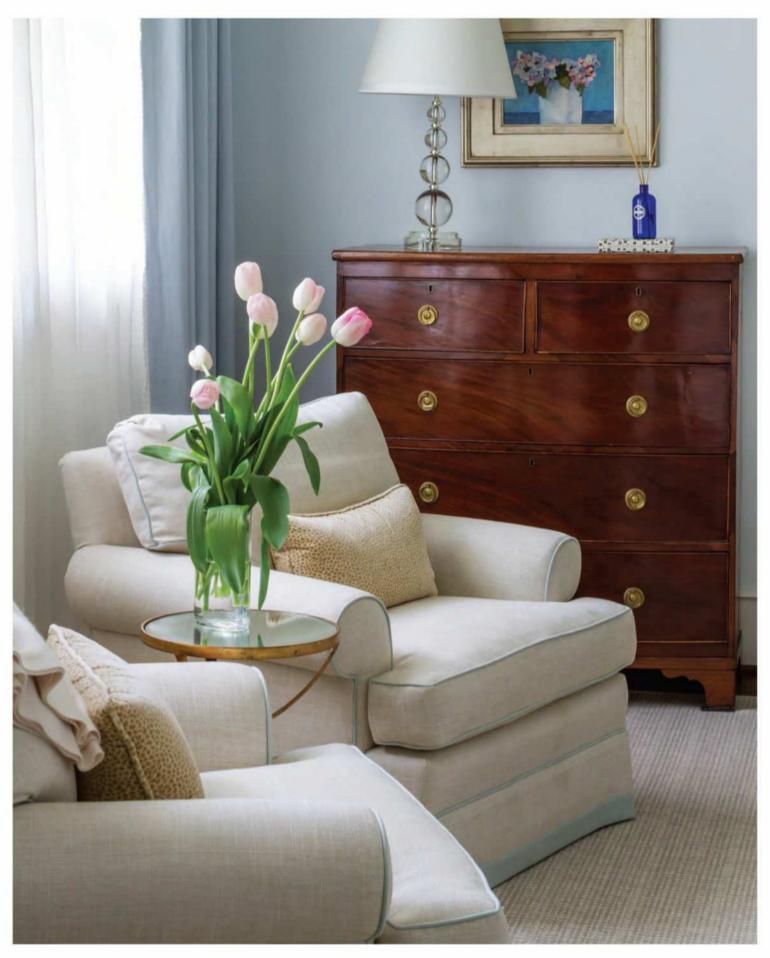




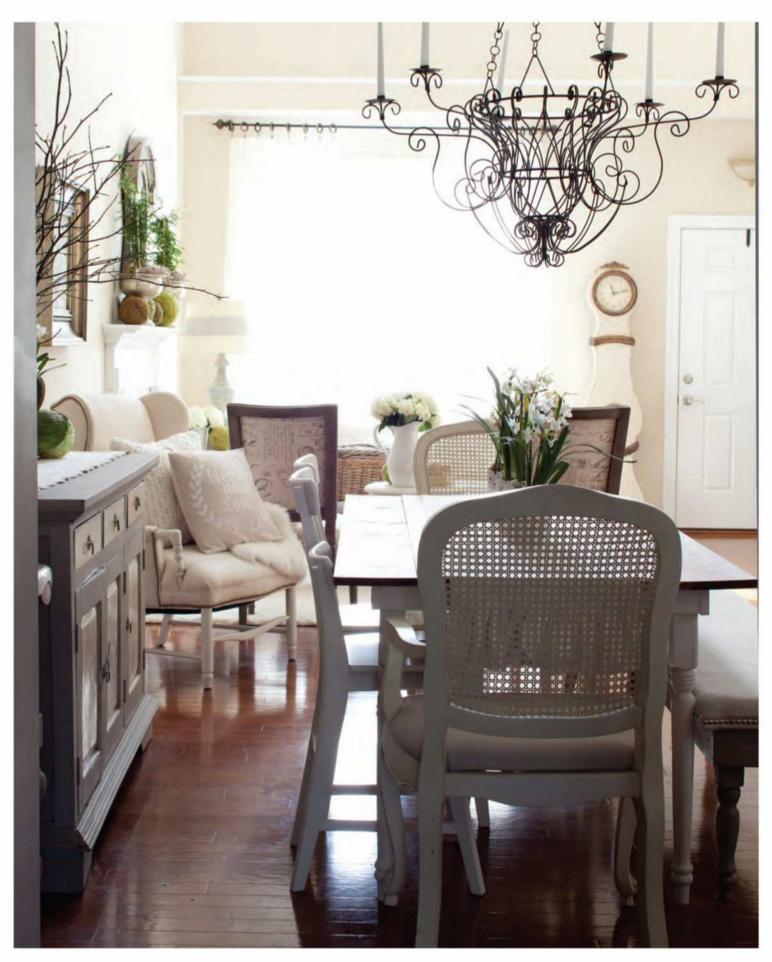
The kitchen, draped in pristine white, captures the upscale cottage feel of the home. Chic marble and stainless steel break up the whitewashed space, while pendants elegantly add texture with shimmers of gold above the breakfast table and the island. The subway tile backsplash adds refined rhythm, yet it also underlines the space's pure, uncluttered design.



















Walking through Jennifer Holmes's Williamsburg, Virginia, home is like strolling among clouds. Muted neutrals with accents of whisper-soft pastels envelop the spaces like a cocoon, creating a cozy abode that's instantly uplifting and undeniably cheerful. Little vignettes composed of enchanting elements—vintage books, framed sheet music, moss-covered orbs, and pitchers of fresh flowers—delight the eyes with their simplicity and charm. Founder of the online decorating shop and blog Dear Lillie Studio, Jennifer describes her style as "natural or rustic elegance." She also recognizes that her home must be livable. "As much as I love for my spaces to have an elegant feel, as the mother of two young girls, I know it's important that each room is comfortable and functional," she says. To achieve a layered look that reflects her personal style, the homeowner combines select high-end statement pieces with less expensive fittings, applying the same artistic grace to her interiors as she does her inventory. In the dining room, an iron chandelier and damask wallcovering bring movement into the subdued space and dress up the understated table and chairs. Distinctly feminine touches, such as linen runners with ruffled and scalloped edges, keep the ambience light and airy.







Preferring to use lots of white and neutrals, Jennifer always chooses sensible cotton and linen over fussier fabrics that are harder to launder and maintain. In a little girl's bedroom, framed articles of children's clothing become one-of-a-kind works of art, while gilded picture frames and a gold mirror add sparkle to the hushed color palette. The master bedroom (opposite) is equally appealing with its crisp linens, subtly striped curtains, and walls painted a sophisticated gray. Both spaces typify her comfortable yet elegant philosophy. "My style really is influenced by my family," Jennifer says. "As our family grows, I continue to make decisions that are practical and visually appealing."







RESOURCES & CREDITS

COVER

Photography; Stephanie Welbourne Steele.

BLUE HEAVEN

Pages 15-26: Photography; Stephanie Welbourne Steele. Construction; Scott Norman. Interiors; Cindy Thompson.

SOUTHERN COMFORT

Pages 27-38: Styling; Tracey MacMillan Russell. Photography; Mac Jamieson.

ARTFUL ABODE

Pages 39-50: Interiors; Pandy Agnew of Pandy Agnew Interiors. Photography; John O'Hagan.

RURAL SPLENDOR

Pages 51-60: Interiors; Eric Ross Interiors. Photography; John O'Hagan.

VERSATILE FLAIR

Pages 61-68: Interiors; Lathern Gordon and Cate Dunning of Gordon Dunning. Styling; Becky Goff and Kathleen J. Whaley. Photography; Mac Jamieson and John O'Hagan.

CHEERFUL & CHARMING

Pages 69-78: Styling; Missie Neville Crawford. Photography; Marcy Black Simpson. Resources: Large antique French map, and antique bicycle print; Arceneaux Art Gallery. Blue terra-cotta sculpture, white wicker chest, and white wicker table; Tricia's Treasures. Staffordshire Stripe woven cotton rug; Dash & Albert. Vintage sachet bags; Chelsea Antique Mall.

CLASSIC BEAUTY

Pages 79-88: Styling; Adrienne A. Williams. Photography; Kimberly Finkel Davis. Special thanks to Janice Gaultney.

SUMMERTIME BLUES

Pages 89-98: Photography; William Dickey. Resources: Pottery; McCartys Pottery. Teddie Tote Embossed Python in white by GiGi's New York; BellaChes.

SERENE RETREAT

Pages 99-106: Photography; Marcy Black Simpson.

HISTORY REFRESHED

Pages 107-120: Interiors; Meridy King of Meridy King Interiors. Photography; John O'Hagan.

NATURAL ELEGANCE

Pages 121-128: Interiors; Jennifer Holmes of Dear Lillie Studio. Photography; Stephanie Welbourne Steele.

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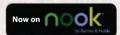
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