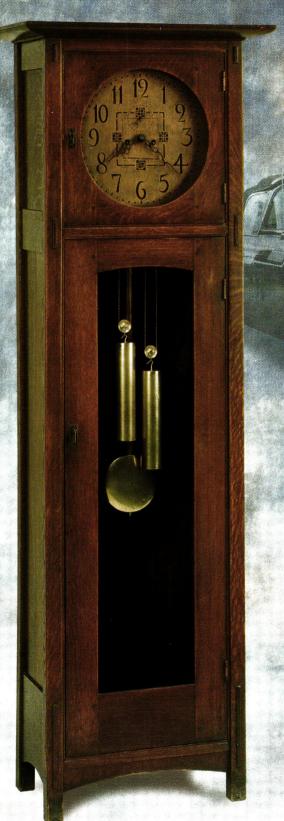
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JULY 2001





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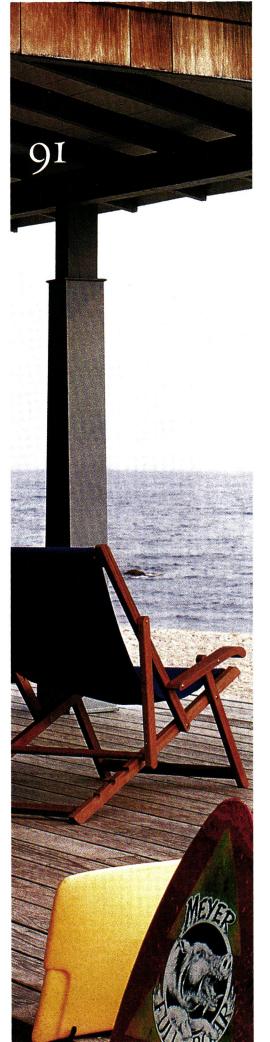




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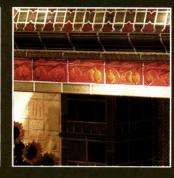
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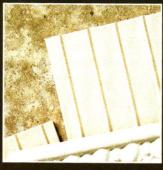
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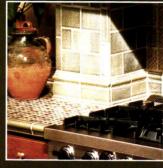
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## Road adventures

ITH ВОТН KIDS in school, I'm on the road again. Last month I drove from Gloucester all the way to the tip of Long Island (a big deal for a scaredy-cat driver). I went to see a great English Arts and Crafts house called the J. Harper Poor cottage. The owner joked that I got the assignment because of my last name. Over lunch I found that he'd written a novel (published!) and was working on another. "Oh, I want to write fiction, but I just don't have time," I rashly confided. Gary told me he found he can write only in stolen time; once, he had four years off to write and just couldn't settle into it. I came back from that trip with more than a completed interview. (The house will appear in our Oct.-Nov. issue.)

I attended the photo shoot at the Bates Mansion in Cavendish, Vermont (see page 58). Oh, the omelettes we ate in that generous kitchen, hazy sunlight slanting in! Homegrown herbs and tomatoes and exotic cheese cooked into soft eggs by Elena, a young woman from



The editor (middle) with photographer Carolyn Bates (right) and floral designer Susan Leiber, at a photo shoot in Vermont.

Siberia visiting the States on a work visa. Bullfrogs croaked ridiculously in a little pond when we went to the garden for flowers. You never know what you'll find just off the county road, or what unexpected people you'll meet.

Years ago, I got talked into giving a lecture in a small town far up the train line that runs along the Hudson. I ate dinner at home with the woman who'd organized the event. In the course of polite family conversation with this stranger, we

discovered that she had been my husband's babysitter when he was a preschooler. Growing up, they were neighbors in a rural New Jersey town. She remembered vividly the day his father was killed flying. All that night I lay awake, ruminating on coincidence and fate.

Which is to say: When, fighting hermit tendencies, I leave my private little editor's garret and go on the road, I am surprised and amazed by the people I meet and the stories they tell me. The pictures we publish are pretty (alone at the light table, sometimes I almost can taste them!). But it's the story that breathes life into a house, whatever its furnishings.

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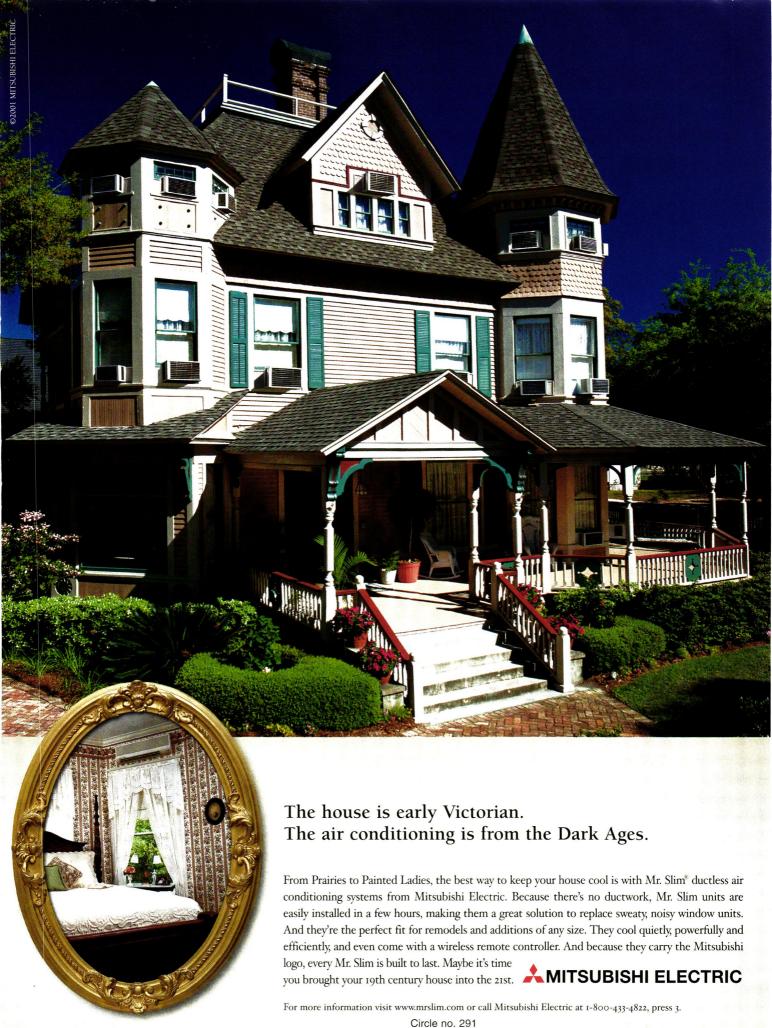
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Circle no. 201

# LETTERS from readers

#### SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

AN OVER-THE-TOP Victorian in only 800 square feet! ["Diminutive Perfection," May 2001.] Suddenly my cottage-size house seems the perfect scale—any bigger and I'd never get it done! Another thing: I'm going for Fireslate counters ["Counter Weight," p. 69, May]. Thanks for the tip.

—scott robinson

Pittsburgh, Penn.

#### **EARLIER INFO**

WE HAVE BEEN subscribing for only about a year, so you may have covered the topics that interest us before. Nevertheless: We own an old farmhouse built in 1819 and we'd love to see some articles on decorating pre-1850s

styles. You do a great job with post-1850s information but we haven't seen much that's really old. We're especially interested in kitchens, rugs, and wallcoverings (including paint colors) in farmhouses. We know that [is a] narrow audience, but it would be wonderful to have an account of the decorating spectrum from a time when things were more spartan.

—NANCY BRITAIN
White River Junction, Vermont

Our coverage extends from about 1720 to 1960 or so, but you're right: because most readers own houses built between 1865 and 1930, that's our emphasis. We've run articles on styles of the early 19th century, others on the simpler interiors of rural houses, and we'll do so again. Fortunately for you, the focus of a majority of period design books has long been on colonial, Federal and neo-

classical, and country houses, so you may find additional information at an architectural bookstore. —P. POORE

#### SALT LAKE TO SAN DIEGO

YOU CAN IMAGINE our delight when we opened the March 2001 issue and saw the article on architect Alberto Treganza's stunning Arts and Crafts house built in 1906 in Salt Lake City ["A Perfect Marriage"]. Alberto's parents moved to San Diego County in

1889 and to Lemon Grove in 1906, where they built the homestead that [is still in the family]. Alberto and his wife Antwonet moved here permanently in 1915. Many of his beautiful Monterey Spanish and Arts and Crafts homes remain in the county.

The Parsonage Museum presently offers "The Treganza Family in Lemon Grove," which details the accomplishments of this gifted clan in architecture, anthropology, medicine, theater, cinema, and art. It includes examples of Alberto's drawings and Arts and Crafts-style furniture.

—HELEN M. OFIELD Lemon Grove Historical Society Lemon Grove, Calif.

#### FAN MAIL

A QUICK NOTE complimenting you on the March 2001 issue. Loved your story on Orientalism and particularly Olana, which is my favorite historic house. This style has been a big influence in my house. Very nicely done. By the way, this is my first fan letter to a magazine ever.

> —vicki enteen Stroheim & Romann

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# news &



When the talk turns to antiques shows in the New York area, a Stella Show is usually the first to be mentioned. IRENE STELLA, the dynamo founder, produces over 120 antiques shows a year in the New York and New Jersey area. A warm and energetic woman, Irene began innocently enough, she explains, with her local Women's Club in 1967

"I was expecting my seventh (and last) child," Irene recalls, "and was asked to take over our local antiques show for charity." Irene was so successful managing the show, she began her own businessone that now employs all of her children as well as several grand children. Tips from Irene for navigating a large show: comfortable shoes, a bottle of water, and looking over the list of dealers before you start out, to focus your shopping. For a list of upcoming shows, call Stella Show Management: (212) 255-0002; or visit their website at www.stellashows.com. One of our favorites: the Gramercy Park Textile Show (October 19-21, 2001)

Crafts in Colorado

In a setting Gustav Sticklev might have wished for, the Colorado Arts and Crafts Society will hold its 2001 Show and Sale July 21-22 at the historic Boettcher Mansion in Golden. The 1917 Craftsman-style mansion, on a bucolic 110-acre preserve west of Denver, is a fitting showcase for Arts and Crafts furniture, pottery, metalwork, books, and jewelry old and new. Contact the Society at (303) 526-1390 for details.

#### American Folk

Nothing is more purely American than a fine example of folk art. "American Folk," an exhibit of 18thand 19th-century folk masterpieces, continues through Aug. 5 at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, 465 Huntington Ave. The 225 works on display include monumental family portraits, painted furniture, narrative quilts, and carved wooden sculptures. The show features a diverse collection drawn from the

MFA's considerable archives as well as contributions from throughout New England. Highlights include the painting "View of Boston Common," painted by schoolgirl Hannah Otis when she was 17, paintings by portrait artists William Matthew Prior and Erastus Salisbury Field, a wall of barnyard weathervanes, and the pictorial quilt shown here, made by African-American artist Harriet

Powers in the 1890s. A catalog depicting more than 60 items in the show (many never before published) is available from the MFA Bookstore for \$24.95 in paper and \$40 in hardcover. Contact (617) 542-4632, www.mfa.org.

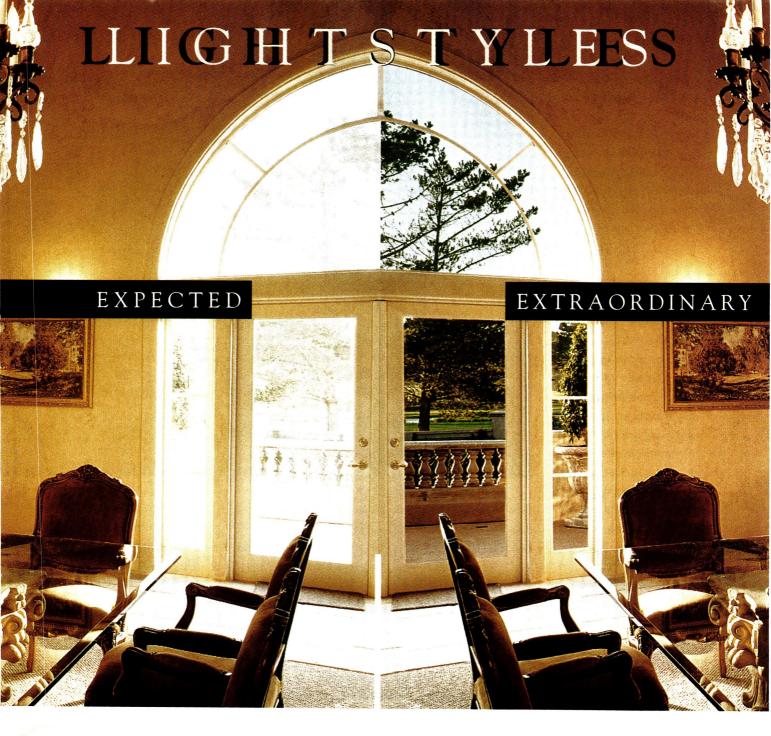
#### **Instant Referrals**

Just bought an older house that needs work in a new town? Wonderful! Now how long will it take you to find three people you trust to recommend a good [continued on page 16]



■ One of the most beautiful walls I ever saw consisted of whitewashed boards covered with a hundred regularly spaced horseshoes, and the man who did it had only patience, a good eye, and a hammer. 🤊 🤊

-Architect/designer George Nelson, on decorating vacation houses, Holiday, 1948.



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roofer? How about a plumber, an interior decorator, or even a dentist? Finding reliable contractors for much-needed services is the dilemma Angie's List addresses in a dozen cities in the East and Midwest. The service supplies ratings on nearly 200

categories of local business, based strictly on feedback from members. Members pay an annual fee (\$45) for unlimited access to the service by local phone, fax, or website (www.angies list.com). "No matter where you go, the best source of information has always been a neighborhood grapevine," says founder Angie Hicks. "Our job is to communicate that." Angie's List offers its service in Akron, Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Canton, Ohio; Boston; Indianapolis;



# Tile in a Golden Era

Knights galloping on horseback through a redwood forest. Floral tiles in Mediterranean blue and fiery orange? We tend to think of Arts and Crafts tiles in terms of the rich, muted colors and glazes of Henry Chapman Mercer, but in California in the 1920s much of the art tile was



as brilliant and sunny as a perfect Hollywood day. The California Heritage Museum in Santa Monica (310-392-8537) celebrates California's lost world of tile through Sept. 30 in "California Tile: The Golden Era 1910-1940." On exhibit will be examples from the nearly two dozen tile factories that flourished between the two world wars, including the famous Malibu Potteries, Claycraft, Batchelder Tile, Solon and Schemmel, Calco,

California Faience, and Muresque Tiles. Among the most spectacular creations of the era were scenic or landscape tiles. These rough-hewn tiles highlighted with vivid reds, greens, and blues depicted fantasy landscapes, Spanish courtyards, or galleons under sail. Look also for tiles in the Spanish-Moorish genre; glazers supposedly achieved that atomic orange shade with uranium.



Charlotte; the Tampa Bay area; Minneapolis/St. Paul; and Milwaukee.

#### **New England Houses**

June is prime time for house tours in New England. Hingham Historic Homes (Hingham, Massachusetts) opens doors to five historic homes and several historic buildings (including the ca. 1688 "Old Ordinary") on June 20, a Wednesday. Highlights include the Reuben Thomas House, a 1838 Cape, and the double Captain Benjamin Loring House. Contact (781) 749-1851. Options in the Victorian Willimantic Home Tour June 2-3 include guided tours of three, five, or 10 homes in the Victorian Hill section of this Connecticut town. Call (860) 456-4476.



OPEN HOUSE Beer baron and philanthropist Captain Frederick Pabst left a lasting legacy in Milwaukee when he built the Flemish Renaissance Pabst Mansion, completed in 1892. The 37-room mansion features outstanding interior decoration in the opulent Flemish Revival style, including priceless ornamental ironwork and carved panels imported from a 17th-century Bavarian castle. Even the kitchen sink has fancy nickel legs, a carved marble top, and an Eastlake skirt. Virtually the last untouched mansion on a street once lined with magnificent houses, the Pabst Mansion and its adjacent pavilion need \$1.2 million worth of restoration. Plans include re-roofing the entire house using the original tiles and re-

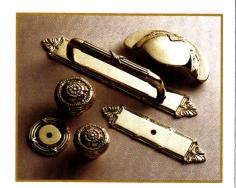
> creating the mansion's deteriorated exterior terra-cotta ornament. The mansion is open year-round daily except Monday. Contact (414) 931-0808, www.pabstmansion.com.

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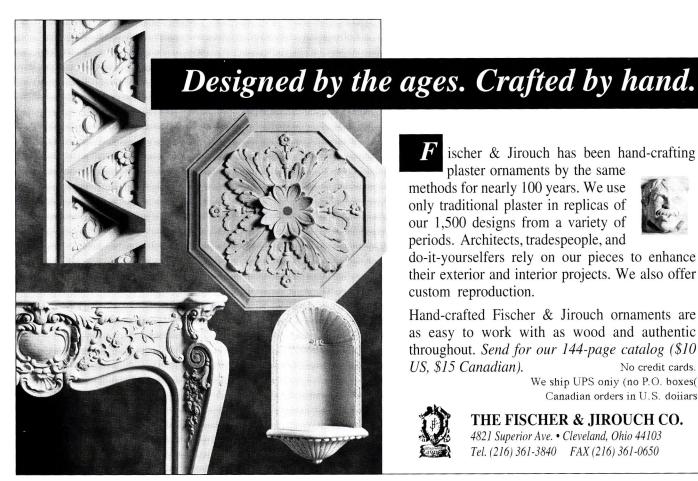
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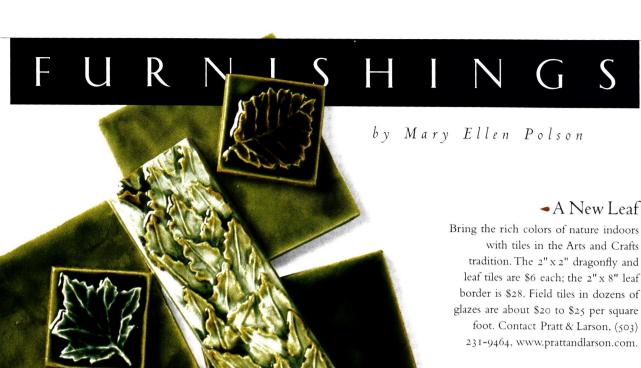
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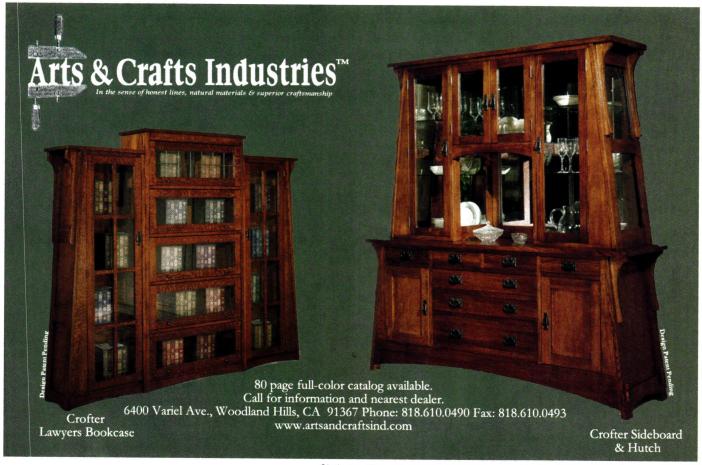
#### ▶ Portal to the Past

Make a grand entrance with a reproduction entryway built to your specifications. The broken pediment doorway with cross-buck doors and bull's-eye glass is based on an 18th-century original from the historic Connecticut River Valley. Stock doors in period styles are also available from Architectural Components, (413) 367-9441.









#### FURNISHINGS

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#### Victorian Trim •

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#### 

The Gazebo Collection wicker settee is handwoven in rattan with a warm umber finish and fitted with a tea-stained rose floral cushion. The matching openwork coffee table (\$299) has a low shelf to stow books or magazines. The settee is \$598, including the cushion. Crate and Barrel, (800) 323-5461, www.crateandbarrel.com.

#### Summer Souvenirs

Savor the scent and color of summer indefinitely with dried flowers made in this innovative microwave flower press. Where traditional methods take weeks, this hefty 6½"-square, four-pound terra-cotta press dries flowers in as little as 2 minutes. From Lee Valley Tools, (800) 871-8158, www.leevalley.com.

# Stitch your way into the heart of a William Morris pattern with Bluebells and Snowdrops, tapestry pillow kits designed by Raymond Honeyman. The finished pillows use Appleton wools and measure 15 1/2" square. They're both \$95 from Ehrman Tapestry, (888) 826-8600, www.ehrmantapestry.com.



#### 

The Plantation Long Chair is a wedding of tropical relaxation to English style. In black mahogany with a hand-rubbed finish and a durable wicker seat, the chair retails for \$1,072. The ottoman, also in black mahogany, is \$278. For showrooms, contact Palecek, (800) 274-7730, www.palecek.com.





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#### Blackberry Bramble •

Take a sweet sip of summer from Tiffany's Blackberry Collection tea set. The handpainted earthenware teapot has a 24-ounce capacity. Along with a 5" high covered sugar bowl and 3" cream pitcher, the set retails for \$125. Contact (800) 843-3269, www.tiffany.com.



#### Cool and Clear •

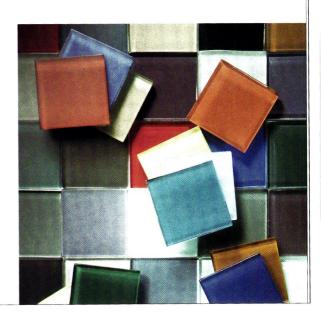
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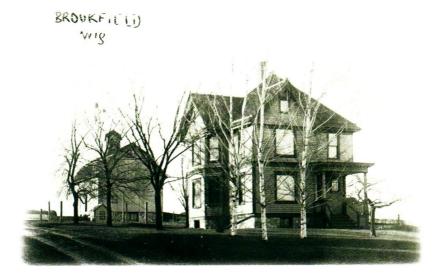


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"Get lost in the Details"





# Hints of Immortality

BY CYNDY SALAMATI

Something is always either falling apart or needing to be replaced on our 104-yearold farmhouse. Half the furniture is shimmed to accommodate the eastward slope of the floors, and not a single door hangs plumb. Gaps and cracks plague the hard-to-clean windows;

snow blows in between the panes in winter. From the basement to the attic, crevices as yet unknown are thoroughfares for mice and insects. Recently, I discovered a malignant split in the oak newel post, which threatens the sturdiness of the staircase. And the blistering plaster on the hall ceiling is a constant reminder of eight other projects on our perpetual home-repair list.

Like old soldiers, our house stands with six other nineteenth-century farmhouses in what was once called Brookfield Junction, Wiscon— I have sin. As far as Victorian houses go, ours is a rather simple one. The original owners were farmers, after all. But I acquired a 1907 picture postcard of the house from a former owner. Long before the front porch was ripped off, before the white aluminum siding was slapped on, this certainly was a handsome home.

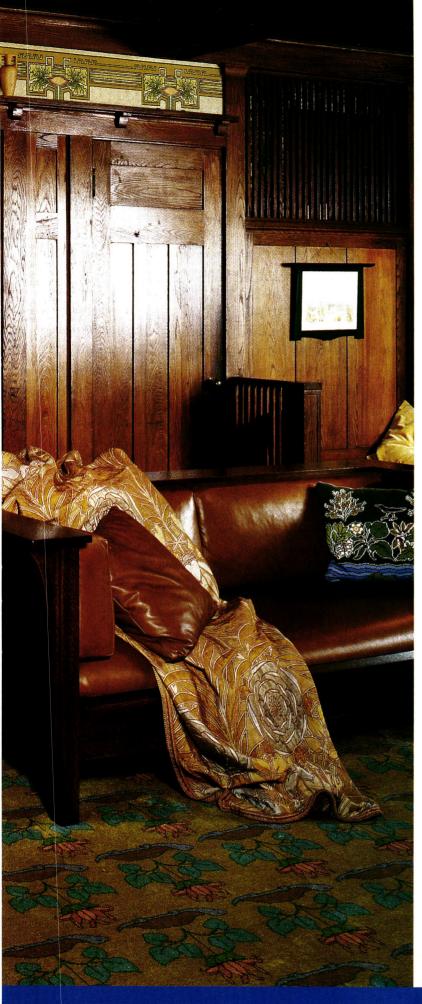
Now, in neighborhoods on all sides of our house, we are overshadowed by affluent subdivisions—beautiful new homes with "great rooms," first-floor laundries,

master bathrooms with Jacuzzis, and walk-out, finished basements. I'm sure all the floors in these new houses are level, the doors fit snug, and the windows are the energy-efficient kind, and tilt inward for easy cleaning.

Every time I'm invited into one of these modern homes for a cup of coffee, every time I hear a progress report from friends building a custom-designed new home, I am consumed by a wave of envy.

I have no one to blame but myself. It was I who wanted the old house to display my (and I use the term loosely) antiques. When my husband and I started house hunting I refused to look at anything built after 1920. It took some hard convincing, but my husband finally gave in to buying the old house.

I regretted my insistence when the roof leaked after a spring rain. My husband remained optimistic, however, as he climbed the ladder with a bucket of tar and sealed up the hairline crack he thought [continued on page 28]





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ing stuffy about decorating history, nothing to limit you. On the contrary, it's artful, quirky, bursting with ideas I couldn't dream up on my most creative day. Armed with knowledge about the period and style of your house, you'll create a personal interior that will stand



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was the culprit. Then he scraped, patched, and repainted the damaged plaster inside—to no avail. The next downpour left a darker and even more horrifying stain than the first.

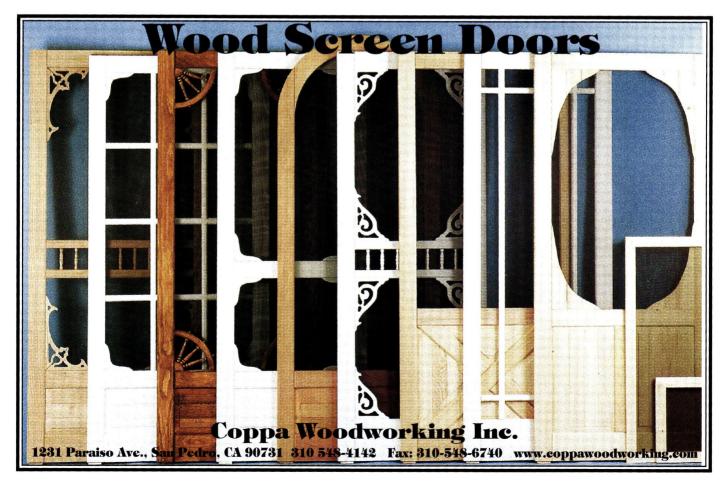
Just last week, while examining water oozing down the fieldstone walls in the basement laundry room, my two young sons asked me, 'Why can't we have a new house like Eric's? His basement looks as nice as the rest of his house."

Sternly, I informed the boys that there are many children in the world who would love to have a house, even an old, decrepit one like ours. Period. Then, in the next moment, I thought about all the redeeming qualities in our old house.

"Besides," I added, leading the boys upstairs, "our house is sturdy and well built. All the woodwork is clear pine. See how wide it is? Nowadays, they cut the trees down before they have the chance to get big enough for lumber like this." At the front hall window, I removed a loose board from the frame like a jigsaw-puzzle piece. I showed them the unfinished side, where it's written: Built by I.A. Robinson, Justice of the Pease [sic] 1897. The boys' faces lit up with surprise.

Their delight reminded me of my own, the first time the realtor walked me through the house and showed me that inscription. I'd been through each room, pleased to find the original five-panel doors with their ornate, though tarnished, brass hardware and doorknobs. Wavy glass in most of the windowpanes indicated that they were as old as the house. I could not resist running my hands over the satiny finish of the woodwork trimming the rooms. Its red-gold patina won me over immediately.

On moving day I discovered a bonus. I bumped the corner of a box into the heavy oak finial at the bottom of the staircase and almost knocked it to the floor. As I steadied it back into place I recalled one a favorite old movie, "It's a Wonderful Life." The downtrodden George Bailey laments that he and his family live in a "drafty old barn of a house." In one memorable scene he climbs the staircase and grabs onto the wooden finial, which comes off in his hand; he resists the urge to throw it across the room. There have been times when I've felt



the same—in particular, one evening when a dinner guest grabbed onto it for support and, much to her surprise, yanked it off.

#### For a moment she was speechless,

an astonished look frozen on her face, the palm of her hand still gripping the finial. Hot with embarrassment, I replaced it as gracefully as possible and assured her that it happens all the time. I have no intention of gluing the finial in place. Along with other quirky things in my house, such as the way the bathroom door swings shut without its doorstop and windows that have to be propped open with sticks, I've grown rather fond of the way it is.

So, in every decorating, remodeling, and repair project, my husband and I have been sensitive to the age and style of the house. The old furniture we've collected is suited to its character. It's a comfortable house, I think. I think it is not pretentious. Its rooms are small and cozy. Although it lacks the modern amenities of a new house, it has more than made up for them by accommodating a century of lifestyle changes.

The floors may creak under every footstep, but I like the lumber talking back after all these years. There are marks and scratches in the woodwork but I don't see them as damage; they are a reminder of the families who have lived here before.

I've often wondered if a baby was born in one of the bedrooms, if anyone was ever married or laid out in the front room. I imagine all the holiday dinners that took place in the same dining room where we now enjoy the good company of family and friends. Perhaps years ago some other little boys lined up lead soldiers on the landing where my sons play with plastic dinosaurs. I'd love to know the stories. Other than the 1907 postcard, I have no photographs or archives. There are no ghosts hanging around to clue me in on former residents. Of one thing I'm certain: that others loved this old house as much as we do. I hope my family leaves our own impression, so that people living here a hundred years hence will wonder about us.

CYNDY SALAMATI is a writer (and subscriber) in Brookfield, Wisc.



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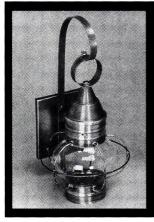
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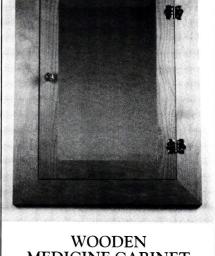
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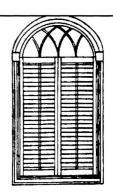
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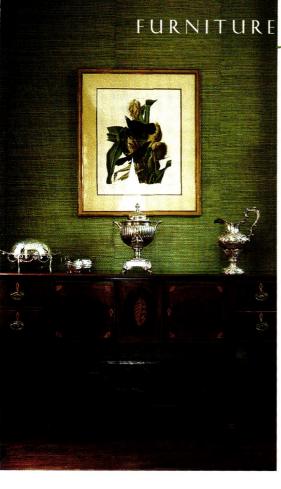
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# FURNITURE focus



The sideboard is the showpiece of any dining room. While styles vary from slender and graceful to massively carved, Americans have always preferred servers with a sense of history.



# With you by my sideboard

BY DAN COOPER



**ABOVE:** An early-19th-century tambour-front serving stand. TOP: A server in the Hepplewhite style from about 1800. TOP RIGHT: A reproduction Chippendale commode in the chinoiserie style of the 1770s.

T'S A FACT: You'll never appreciate a sideboard until you need one. Growing up, the sideboard was a fixture in the family dining room from which china and silver emerged three or four times a year while some roasted critter cooled on top before being torn asunder. You then left home and lived out of milk crates until you and a special someone decided to get a place of your own, a place where you could have people over for dinner with some amount of ceremony—whereupon you discovered that you, too, needed a spot to put your own roast critter. Or at least a lasagna.

A buffet by any other name is still a breakfront. Or a server. Or a credenza. Don't smirk. The latter term may be the oldest; its origins come from the Latin credere, "to believe." Before food was served to the nobility, it was laid out on the Roman version of the sideboard to be tasted for poison. (At least that's what the professorial type said at the Skinner auction one afternoon.)

In the Georgian and Federal periods of the late 18th- and early-19th centuries, the sideboard emerged as the focal point of the dining room and a means to display a family's prosperity to guests. Although dining tables were the primary functional object in the room, they were so covered with linens and place settings during a festive meal that it was impossible to see the surface. Even the design impact of finely made chairs could be lost as they were pushed up against the table in a tangled forest of legs and billowing skirts. The sideboard stood alone against the wall, a showcase as prominent as the mantel in a best parlor.

The basic 18th-century form was that of a long rectangular cabinet elevated on slender, graceful legs, rendered in the Sheraton, Chippendale, or Hepplewhite styles. Since sideboards were [continued on page 34]

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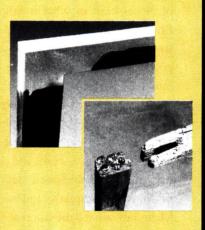
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extravagances, craftsmanship and fine materials were lavished on these case pieces. Façades were finished in fine veneers, such as figured mahogany, bee's-wing satinwood, and tiger or bird's-eye maple. Veneered panels, doors, and tops were frequently inlaid with bands called stringing; the best featured swags, shaded fans, and cascades of bellflowers.

During the Greek Revival era of the 1830s to 1850s, sideboards

RIGHT: By the late-19th century sideboards reached for the ceiling with tiers of shelves and ornate carving. FAR RIGHT: A vintage Craftsman-style oak sideboard with hammered copper hinges and cabinet pulls.



Since sideboards were extravagances, craftsmanship and fine materials were lavished on these case pieces. Façades were finished in fine veneers, such as figured mahogany, bee's-wing satinwood, and tiger or bird's-eye maple.

evolved away from the classic 18thcentury forms. The overall massing of pieces built in what is called the Empire style changed radically. Gone were the long, slender legs that supported a relatively delicate case. Squat bun feet bore the weight of huge, boxy carcasses whose cabinetry extended from floor to serving height. Pieces were ornamented with ogee mouldings, broad S scrolls, and columnar pilasters embellished with giltbrass plinths, capitals, and mounts. Mahogany was still the wood of choice, especially in bold swirls of crotch- or flame-grained veneer.

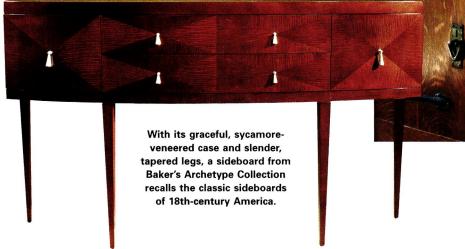
The early Victorian period of 1840–1870 witnessed an even greater transformation. Just as Victorian headboards kept climbing in stature to the point where scaffolding was required to safely dust them, backsplashes sprouted until they could easily reach seven feet in height. During the Rococo and Renaissance Revivals, this superstructure could house a mirror with an ornately carved frame or a series of shelves called an étagère.

Where earlier sideboards made much of marquetry and finely inlaid decoration, the Victorian sideboard flaunted full-relief carvings of fruit, vegetables, fish, dead bunnies, and the occasional buck complete with antlers. The most fashionable pieces were fabricated from black walnut or, better, rosewood. The mid-19th century also introduced the use of marble in lieu of wood for the serving surface.

Dining room case-pieces of the late-Victorian era continued to sport high-backed shelves and pediments. Influenced by Charles Eastlake, William Morris, and other proponents of Medievalism, cabinetry became more rec-

tilinear, carved relief was much shallower, and the use of decorative tile and beveled mirrors became commonplace. As the walnut forests were depleted, sideboards increasingly debuted in solid oak, chestnut, and cherry.

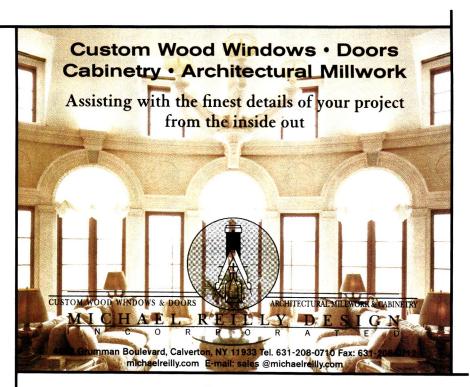
Towards the end of the 19th century, two new design trends competed for the attention of American homeowners. The first was the Colonial Revival, which had begun around the Centennial in 1876 but didn't truly manifest itself in mainstream furniture design for another decade or two. The other popular style was





## The Right SIDEBOARD

Don't be afraid to mix and match styles -eclecticism was as common 125 years ago as coordinated suites. It's not unusual to see late-19th-century photographs of an Eastlake dining table paired with a much older Federal sideboard, for example. Reproductions should accurately reflect their antecedents in terms of looks, proportion, materials, and construction techniques. If you're considering an antique, try to ensure that the piece is not missing its back gallery. Look for telltale peg holes in the top of the serving piece or strap marks on the back of the cabinet. Use the same healthy skepticism you would reserve for any other antique. Always shop with a tape measure, and take your room measurements with you.



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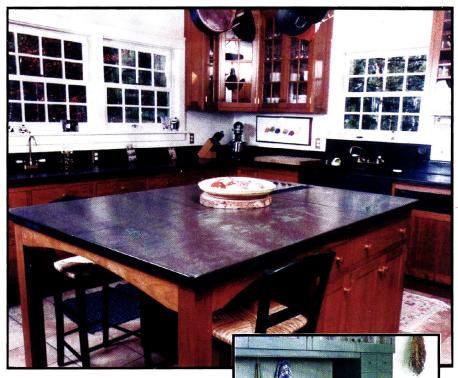


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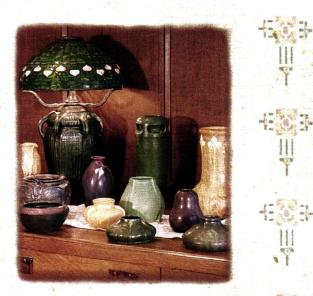


With Gothic touches and pleasing proportions, a French country cupboard from Marie Albert offers a restrained take on the Victorian style.

the now ubiquitous Mission or Craftsman style. Columns, scrolls, and clawfeet returned in tribute to both the Chippendale and Empire styles. Back galleries receded in height and became smaller, mirrored shelves seldom higher than 18 inches. Both Mission and Colonial Revival pieces were usually found in oak, although mahogany was another frequent choice. Interestingly enough, there were many hybrids of the two styles.

Even as Europe embraced Art Deco, Americans continued to reach for the past. Sideboards of the late 1920s and '30s were usually manufactured in a Jacobean/Elizabethan Revival style that featured bulbous turned legs, low galleries, and walnut veneers. Even with the advent of Modernism—and there certainly are Modern and contemporary dining sets—Americans seem to hold fast to their heritage where the dining room is concerned. The Colonial influence is always stronger here than in any other part of the house.

DAN COOPER is still using his table saw as a sideboard.



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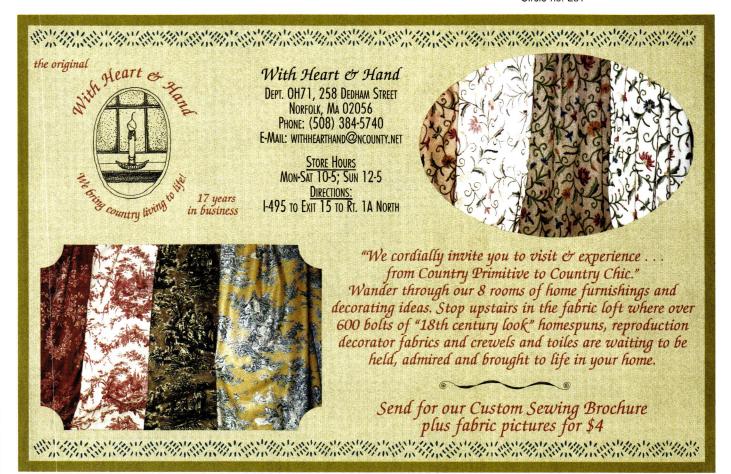
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T FIRST MEETING, Phil Porter is an arresting figure. His redsilk Chinese robe flutters as he strides along the cobblestone streets of his small English village. His Victorian house in the heart of town hardly seems the kind of place you'd expect to find a world-class collection of antique textiles from central Asia and the Orient. Then again, Phil

A jeweled and tasseled velvet valance accentuates the richly colored curtains in Phil Porter's meditation room—the Orient in England. RIGHT: Embroidered Chinese children's hats were fashioned with designs of butterflies and animals to fool away the evil spirits.





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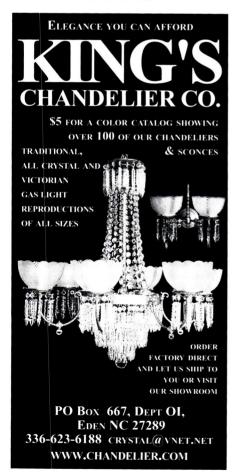


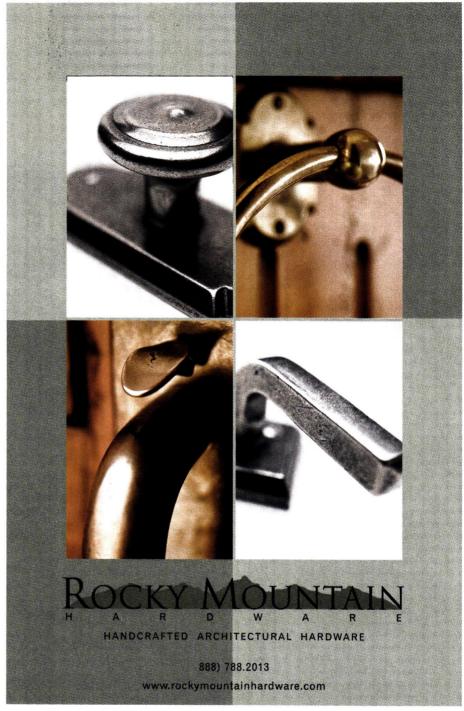
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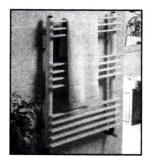
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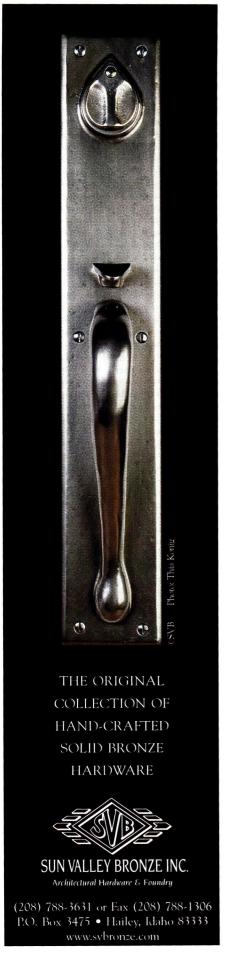
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Circle no. 161

Wall hangings, curtains, and portières can be made from Eastern textiles. Indian cottons have new life as bed hangings. Canton shawls, richly embroidered and fringed, become throws.





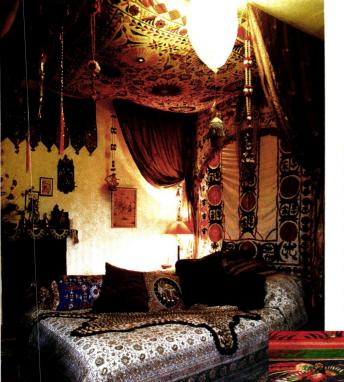
LEFT: A collection of Turkish caps are hung on pegs across a bedroom wall. RIGHT: Middle Eastern silks have been given new life as curtains.

is not your typical Englishman. An interior designer, Phil has collected oriental textiles since the age of sixteen. He travels every year to the Far East on buying trips, and he lectures about textiles throughout the United Kingdom. His 19th-century home testifies to his love of the East. It is a fine place to learn more about oriental fabrics—and how to use them in a period interior.

Color has great significance for oriental designs, Phil Porter explains, and in itself can introduce an Eastern look. Red was a favorite hue, associated with passion, and is often combined with black, protection against the evil eye. Phil unflinchingly hung striking, lacquer-red curtains in his parlor, onto which he appliquéd sinuous Chinese dragons in black and gold. (The project, all done by hand, took him more than six months.) Given new life as a pelmet (or valance) over the curtains is a hand-embroidered, 19th-century Chinese bai (banner) in red, portraying the Eight Immortals. Across the room the red is picked up in sequined bridal saris from India, which shimmer on either side of Indonesian teak doors, themselves gilded and polychromed. Phil installed these to frame the entry into the parlor. The threshold was raised up a step, to remind one to pause and reflect before entering.

Wall hangings, curtains, and door coverings (called portières) are all places to introduce Eastern textiles. Phil used an Indian arch, depicting Ganesh the Elephant God in cheerful oranges and greens, as a valance in the spare bedroom. Indian palampores-printed cottons-have new life as bed hangings. Moroccan sezanis of silk or cotton, originally made for tent hangings, can be hung behind the head of a bed, or elegantly spread as the bedcover. (This look is especially rich on an antique brass bed.) Chinese or Canton shawls, richly embroidered and fringed, become throws.

Phil has been creative in the ways he displays the oriental soft fur-



LEFT: A bed is draped with a mélange of Moroccan, Indian, and Middle Eastern textiles for an exotic effect. BELOW: (left) A latenineteenth century carved and polychromed Chinese medallion hangs on the parlor wall. (right) Shimmering red sequined saris are hung as portières in the parlor.



nishings he's collected. He has many infants' hats and shoes. Arranged among pillows and shawls on his Indian day bed, the tiny hats are intricately embroidered with rats, tigers, butterflies, and bats, to discourage the spirits into not taking the child (when infant death rates were very high). He hung another group of colorful East Asian caps on pegs across an entire wall in his bedroom. Glass-top display tables and glass-front cabinets also show off delicate collections while protecting them from damage.

DON'T PASS UP a textile because it is damaged or imperfect, Phil advises.

SOURCES You can have anything from a pillow to a chair and ottoman reupholstered for you, in a wide variety of vintage Eastern textiles, from BEIT SHERIF, my favorite place for oriental textiles in New York City: 818 10th Avenue, New York, NY 10019. Phone (212) 541-8070. E-mail: zachysherif@hotmail.com I recommend ARTISANAWORKS

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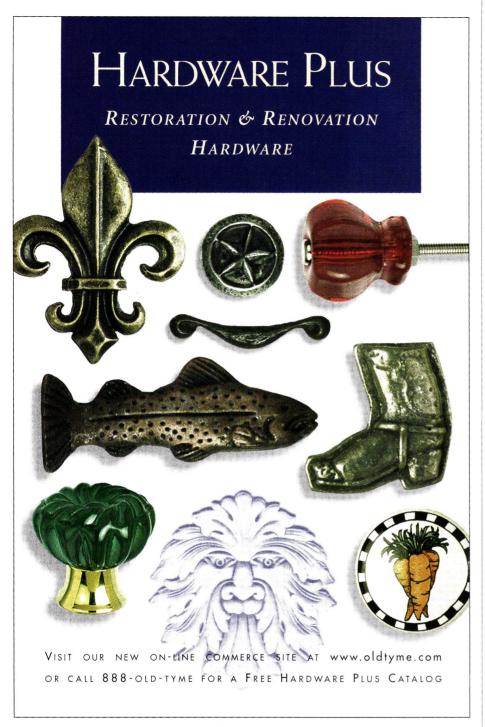
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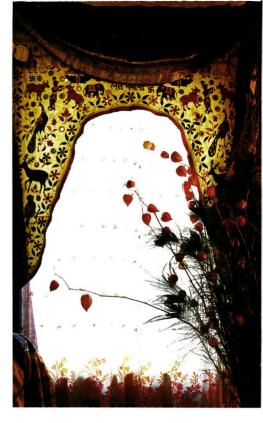
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An Indian Ganesh arch portraying the Elephant God brightens the window in the bedroom.

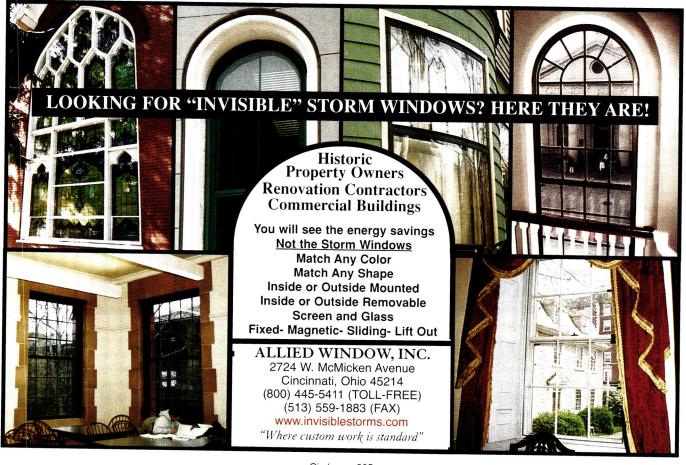
Even scraps of silk may have beautiful patterns and colors. Phil Porter salvages these to recycle into pillows, bolsters, and seat cushions. Try appliqueing a small (or too-fragile) silk scrap onto a piece of linen, then work the strengthened piece into a cushion cover.

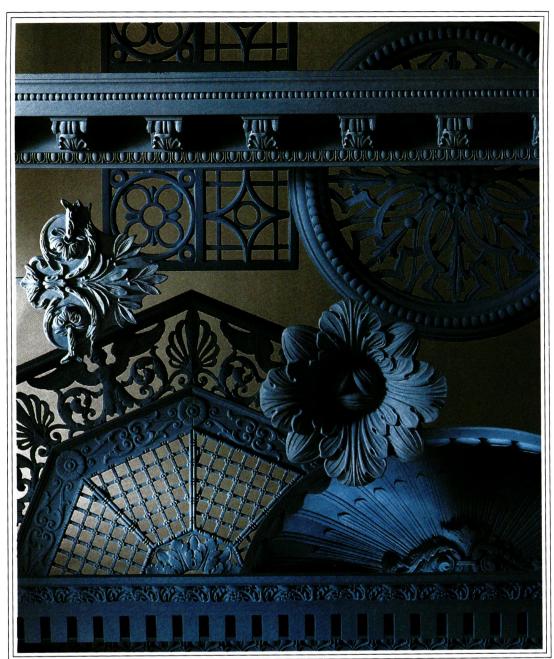
Kilims (flat-woven carpets) and rugs can be turned into upholstery fabric to recover a chair or an ottoman. And consider enlivening a modern fabric, suggests Phil, with a favorite old remnant. For example, he added antique Chinese braiding and tassels to a dark-green damask pelmet in his meditation room. (See the photo on page 38.)

Decorated with luxurious oriental textiles, Phil Porter's house is a delight and a surprise in the quiet English countryside. With some imagination and a collector's knowledge, he used textiles to add the beauty and exoticism of the Far East to an old-house interior.



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J U L Y 2 0 0 1

### **DIGNITY AVOWED**

A dream house in Vermont, its spirit enriched by weekend weddings, is an architectural tour de force. (page 58)



### THE BARNACLE

You'll find a rare, unretouched glimpse of old Florida ca. 1900 in this vernacular house, notable for its location on Biscayne Bay and its simple period interior. (page 54)





### SHINGLE-STYLE SUMMER

Lurking behind pink asbestos shingles, this family saw a classic. Their renovation got every detail just right. (page 46)



### **COLOR IN CONTEXT**

Using the same colors inside and out would be boring—but there should be a relationship!
Repeating key colors, too, is a way to narrow your choices. (page 64)



In Seattle, a Victorian garden of modest scale, intensely planted, proves that flowers should complement clapboards and trim. (page 68)







# A family's vision of summer in a Shingle-style house

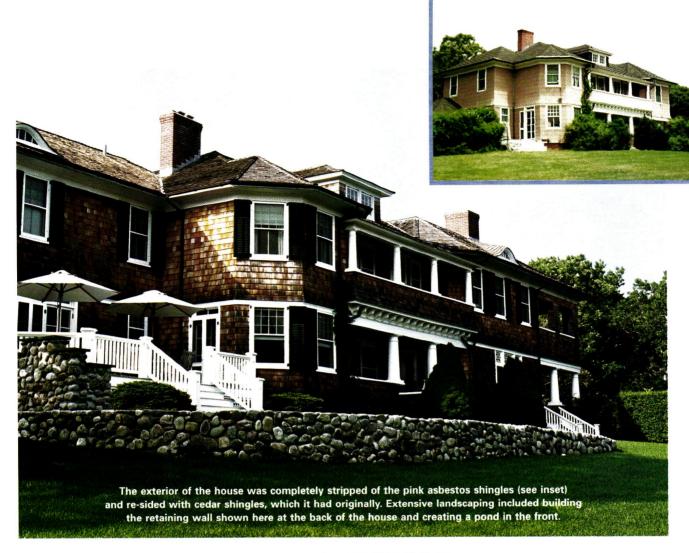
BY LYNN ELLIOTT I PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE GROSS & SUSAN DALEY

THE PINK ASBESTOS SHINGLES encasing the Shingle-style house in Long Island, New York, were hard to ignore. But Robin Strong, a goldsmith and jewelry designer, saw the potential for her family underneath the unappealing exterior. Inside, the house hadn't changed much since it was built in 1903. It was still a comfortable retreat near the beaches. They wanted to keep the relaxing atmosphere and turn-ofthe-century style of the house, but this family of six definitely needed more space.

That's where restoration designer Rick Esposito comes in. He took on the challenge of creating two additions that echoed the style of the house. "When it came time for the restoration and expansion, great pains were taken to restore the house with the same details as were there originally," says Rick.

The family wanted to maintain the relaxed atmosphere of the summer home, so they took a cue from the original house's porches (see right). Both additions have plenty of roomy outdoor living spaces, like this covered porch.







To start, the house was raised so that a new foundation could be laid. Then the additions were built onto both sides of the house.

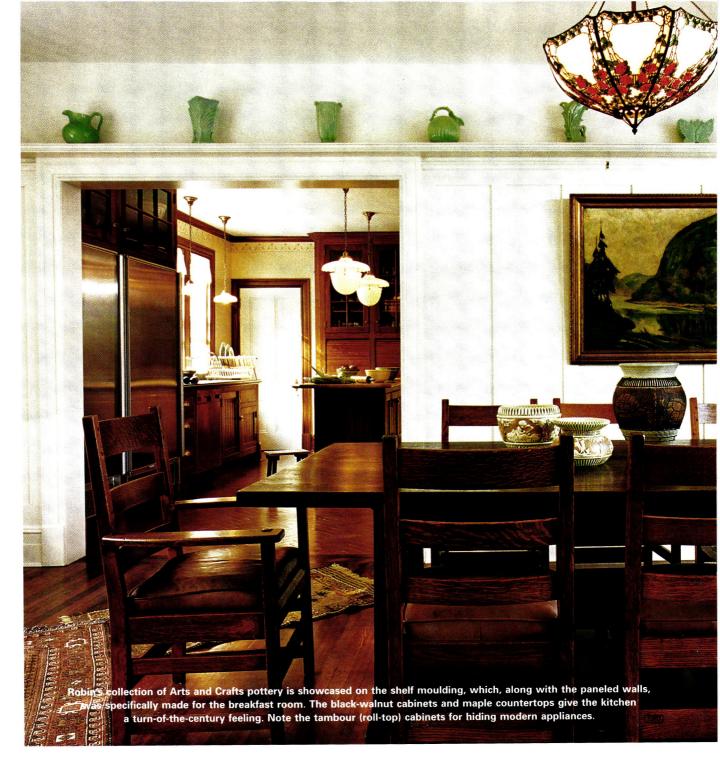
All of the new windows and doors were made out of cypress, like the originals, and have weights and pulleys. Throughout the house, antique lighting fixtures were used. Rick designed lighting for the porches from an original Arts and Crafts fixture. "We took it to that level," he says of the restoration. "We made lighting for the house."

Any tour of the house would start outside by the *porte cochère*, a part of the new addition that features a wainscotted storage space for bikes. Entry is into the mud room. Rick chose a tile floor in Grueby pottery green with copper and blue accents to give an Arts and Crafts feel.



Shield-back chairs have shirting fabric slipcovers. Lace panels and fine netting on the windows keep this formal dining room summery.

OPPOSITE: "It has a Tiffany quality," says Rick Esposito about the antique mosaic tile and glass fireplace in the library.



The large breakfast room is dominated by an Arts and Crafts library table surrounded by Stickley chairs. The ceiling fixture is an antique by Handel. Wainscotting topped with shelf moulding helps to blend this new space with the old.

The black-walnut cabinetry in the new kitchen was custom made in an early-20th-century style; the countertops are maple. "[The family] did not want it to look like a new kitchen at all. Nothing contemporary," says Rick. Robin asked that some of the cabinets have glass-paned doors to show off her collection of antique glass and pottery. The dining room, one of the original spaces in the house, is the most formal area. Eighteenth-century shield-back chairs are gathered around a 19th-century Duncan Phyfe table.

The new fover had been the original living room. All eyes are drawn to the diamond-paned French doors that lead to a porch. This transitional space is furnished simply with two Craftsman rockers (with green leather seats), and a writing desk made for a missionary priest.

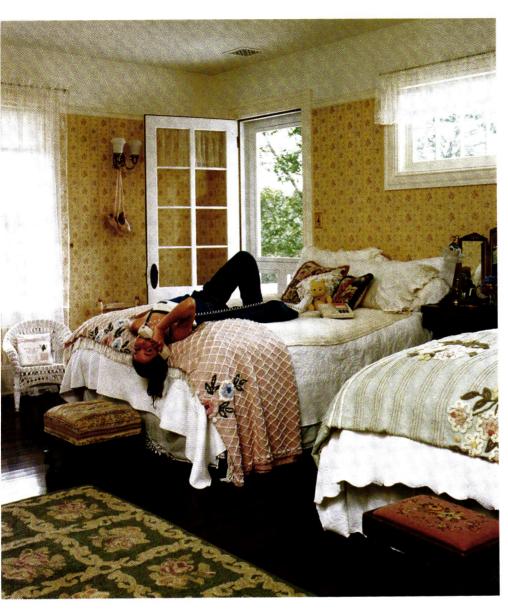
Beyond the foyer is the library, another one of the new additions to the house. Oak woodwork and shelves





ABOVE: The mantel was moved from the original master bedroom and placed in the breakfast room. The tile in the fireplace surround was custom designed and a cast-iron wood-burning stove inserted. BELOW: The door to the mud room was salvaged from The Creeks, a well-known Hamptons house that was renovated.





ABOVE: Antique lighting, vintage chenille bedspreads, and wallpaper copied from a historic print makes the newly built girls' bedroom seem original.

of books cover every wall. A Turkish rug and leather furniture give the space a gentlemen's club atmosphere.

Upstairs, a new children's room has Arts and Crafts bunk beds and antique lighting fixtures. The girls' bedroom, with a new bathroom, has 1920s reproduction wallpaper and access to the porch above the *porte cochère*. The original master bedroom is now the oldest son's room. An Eastlake suite and a striped wallpaper give the space a masculine air.

The new master bedroom and

bath suite, an expansive space, is above the library. It features a fireplace with a mantel shelf flanked by built-in bookcases. The walls are covered in a floral print with colors and patterns appropriate for the period. "It looks like something that would've been there," says Rick. A set of French doors lead to a private porch.

The family saved one of the original beach houses in the area. "Most people would've torn it down," says Rick. "But the house has integrity. We used it as inspiration.



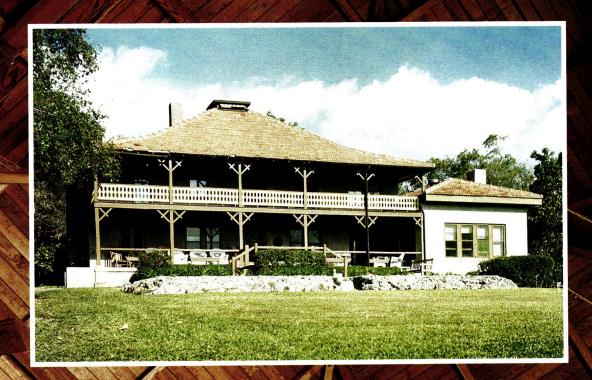




**ABOVE**: The 19th-century chest of drawers was rebuilt and refinished. BELOW: The oldest son's bedroom has a 1920s floor lamp with an octagonal mica shade. **BOTTOM:** Weather-resistant cotton duck cushions were made for the reproduction bamboo furniture in a 1920s design.

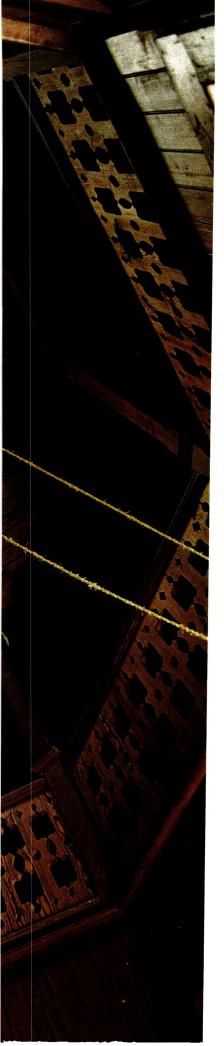






# The BARNACLE

The oldest house on its original site in Dade County was built in 1891 and expanded in 1908. Unassuming and comfortable, its setting a "tropical hardwood hammock," it offers visitors an unretouched picture of early Florida. by Patricia Poore | photographs by Steve Gross & Susan Daley



F YOU'VE DISCOVERED the architectural landmarks of early Florida, you know Vizcaya and Mar-A-Lago. But you may have overlooked a more vernacular house, notable for its location on Biscayne Bay-and for its remarkably intact rooms. It's called The Barnacle, and it was the winter home of yacht designer Ralph Middleton Munroe, a charming pioneer of Coconut Grove (near Miami).

THE HOUSE, a bungalow type with a high hipped roof topped by a ventilating clerestory, was built in 1891 by New York yacht designer Ralph Munroe, who came to South Florida as early as 1877. (He purchased 40 acres of bay-front land in 1886.) After a marriage in 1895 and the birth of two children, Munroe raised the house, which had been on pilings, and added

a complete first storey underneath. The only other notable change occurred after the 1926 hurricane, when an expanded and rebuilt kitchen was the result of damage sustained.

The architecture is unassuming, a form recognized from Tidewater Virginia to the West Indies. Walls are stuccoed and the roof, originally covered with wood shingles, is



The vernacular house is a kind of "raised bungalow." The hipped roof and what is now the second floor were built in 1891; in 1908 the dwelling was raised and the ground floor inserted. The gingerbread gallery probably dates to the earlier period; built-in furniture in several rooms, dating to 1908, shows Arts and Crafts influence.



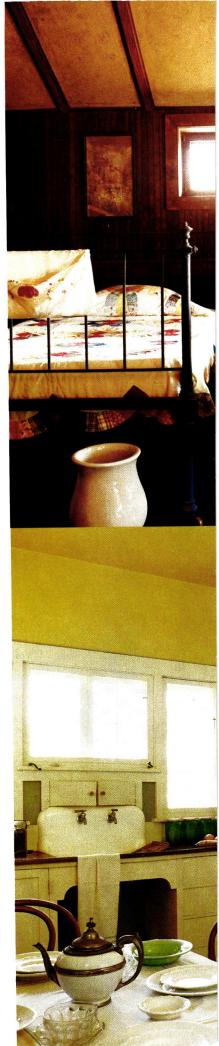
The main rooms downstairs, of course, were part of the 1908 expansion. The dining room's built-in sideboard is in an Arts and Crafts manner. The Chippendale-style chairs are Colonial Revival, so often the default style for dining rooms.

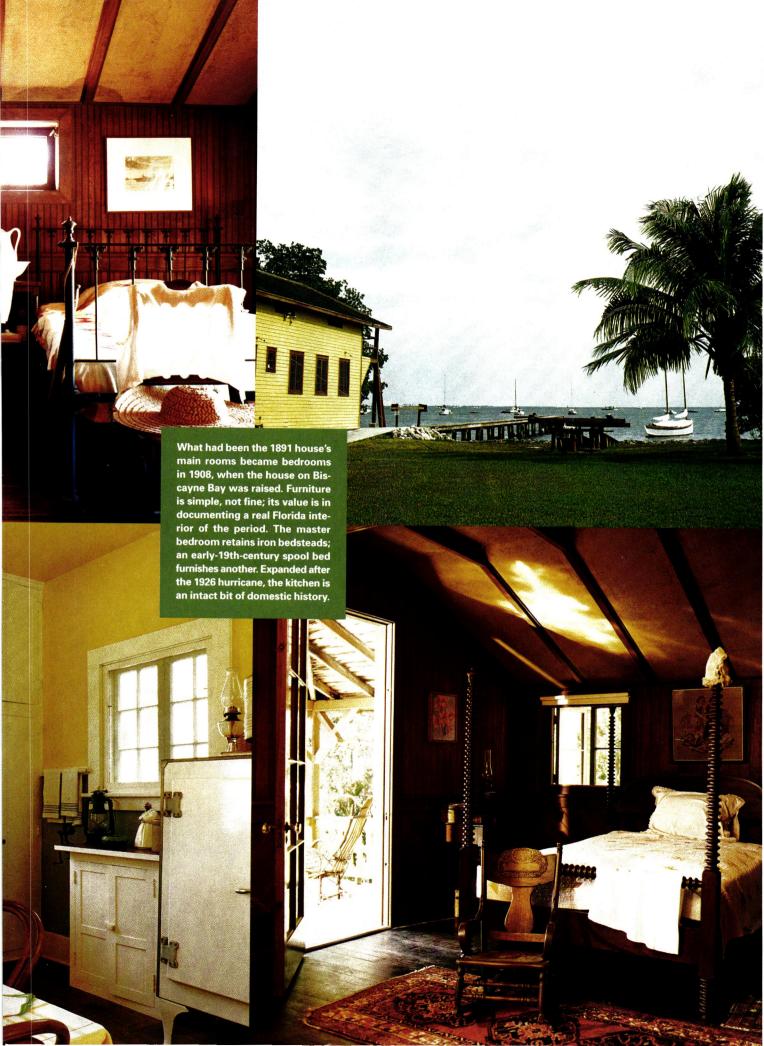
now laid with clay tiles. (That change was made, it is assumed, in the 1920s.) Galleries surrounding the main block provide outdoor living area, interior shade, and breezes. Munroe came to call his house The Barnacle—perhaps because the opening at the top of the roof is akin to a barnacle's ostiole; or perhaps because the house stuck to its wind-whipped site like a . . . (you know).

Inside, the house is warm and woodsy. The main room is octagonal, leaving wide areas at the corners of the wraparound porch. (Side porches were enclosed during the family's ownership.) Most of the interior walls are faced with Pensacola pine, now wearing a pleasing patina. Some of the wood used in the house was probably taken from wrecks, as Ralph

Munroe had been a "wrecker" (an adventurous profession that involved salvaging ships run aground on the Florida Reef). Approximately 90% of the furnishings in the house belonged to the family, and date from 1891 through the 1920s. It's rare to find such a relatively modest interior so well preserved.

Located just off busy Main Highway, the property takes visitors back in time. Suddenly we are surrounded by a forest called a "tropical hardwood hammock." It is one of the last places to see a remnant of the once-vast Miami Hammock. The place has been a public treasure since 1973, when Ralph Munroe's daughter-in-law and grandson donated the house and its remaining five acres to the State of Florida.







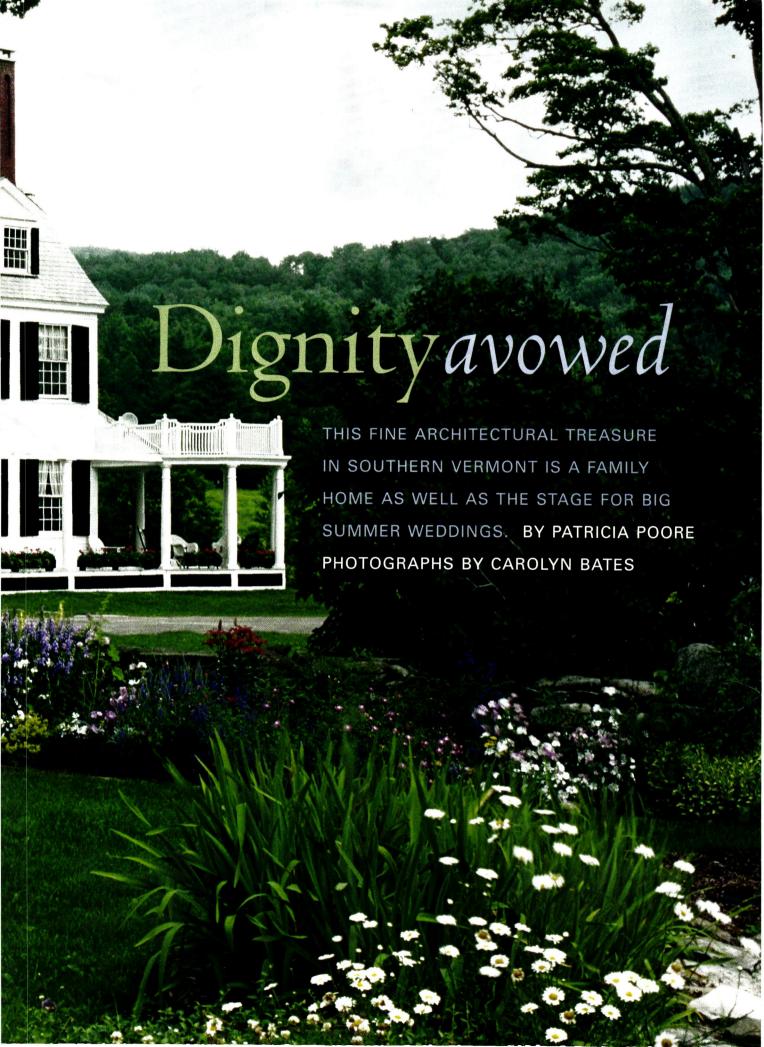
HE DAVISES—George, Diana, and their teenage sonhad a ski house nearby in Ludlow. On a wash-out day in 1987, they stopped for pizza. While they waited, they grabbed a real-estate pamphlet. The mansion out at make it a year-round home. Brook Farm was for sale. They drove to see it in the rain. On

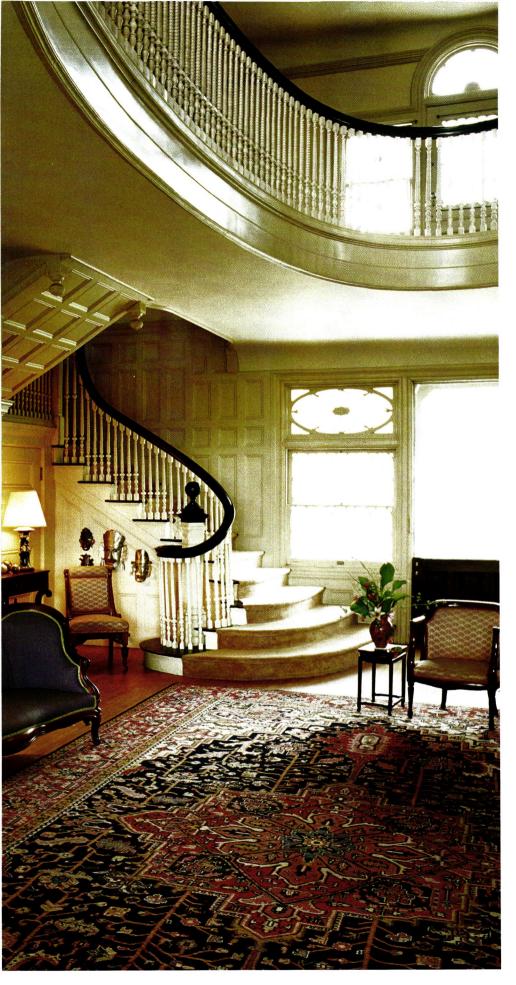
the market for four years with no takers, it needed everything fixed. They bought it that weekendnearly 10,000 square feet, twenty rooms, eight fireplaces. It took four times the purchase price to

"I backed into this wedding business," says handsome George Davis. It seems the couple got a call back in 1991 from the daughter of the man who'd sold them the house. She was born and raised there; would the Davises let her get married at the house?

Three of the 150 wedding guests later called to ask if they could get married there, too!

When the Davises bought the Georgian Revival house, the front and back porches were missing. The roof was leaking badly, the plaster was "near gone," and there was no insulation. Columns were stashed in a loft in one of the barns. (The property, a working dairy farm until the 1950s, has eleven buildings.)



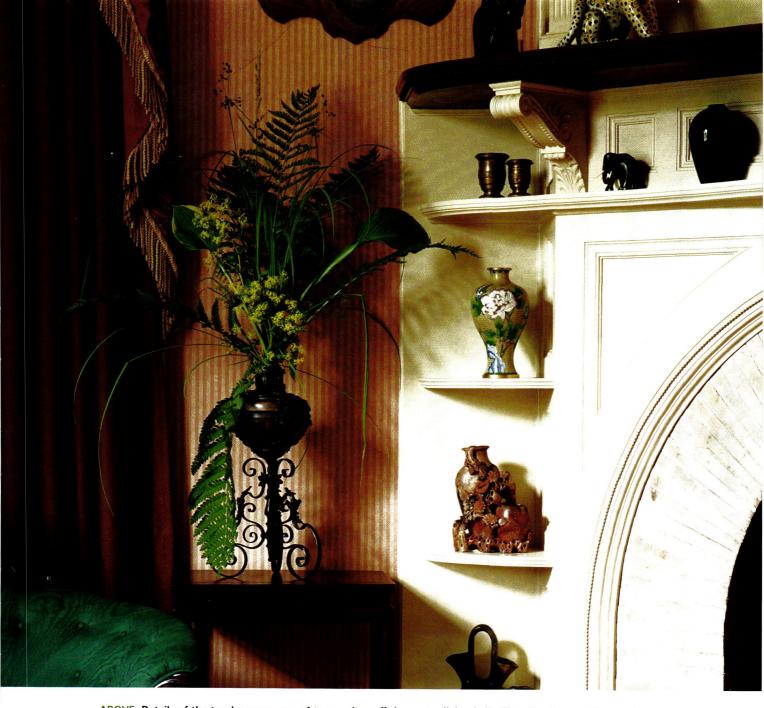




The house is magnificently architectural, its robust Palladian elements reading from outside to inside. Tripartite Venetian windows and classical symmetry boldly anchor well-proportioned rooms.

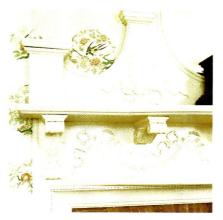
"RECENTLY WE GOT INVOLVED in the food part of it—caterers had been so inconsistent, and we wanted everything to go well." George hired a Czech chef who had done the Boston hotel circuit for twelve years, burned out, and moved to rural Vermont. "I met him at a specialty herb and mushroom farmstand," George explains.

Rural Vermont. Who would expect to find such an architectural tour de force in Cavendish? The Georgian Revival gem, built by an unnamed Middlebury builder, had seen neglect. A ski club had seasonally occupied the house for 22 years; the furnace burned coal and a wood stove had been shoved into each fireplace. The Davises bought the house and 60 acres from race-horse trainer Stewart Schmidt and his wife, who kept 400 acres. Stewy's grandfather had bought the place from the widow of James Bates, born on the site in an old farmhouse (since removed) owned by his cousin. Apparently Bates moved



ABOVE: Details of the trophy room, one of two parlors off the center living hall. (The other is a music room.) Each fireplace and mantel in the house is unique; this one has a brick arch and shelves for figurines. (Arrangements from the garden by Susan Leiber.) BELOW: Mantels in the dining room, the master or bridal bedroom, and the music parlor.

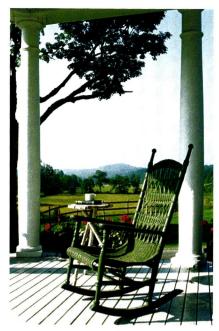
















The country kitchen has commercial appliances, but is nonetheless timeless, especially the non-business end (top left) with its plain furniture and colorful vessels. Owner George cooks breakfast (above). LEFT: An original bathroom sink has nickel legs.

to Michigan to homestead, then to New York City where he made some real money, probably in banking. In the 1890s he bought the Vermont farm from his cousin and built this grand house. George calls the house the Bates Mansion, a historically appropriate appellation but also a joking allusion to the motel of Hitchcock fame.

A non-practicing attorney who owns and manages real estate, George

doesn't mind sharing his dream house with wedding guests. "I love weddings-ours are three-day affairs, a party every weekend. And I realized we didn't have enough family and friends to fill this place . . . the house needs to be lived in." George and Diana maintain a private apartment on the third floor.

The just-right rooms inside are genteel and timeless, as if they had evolved over decades. Not true: the house sorely needed restoring and decorating. Glen Mead, a trained architect who prefers to do interiors, left well enough alone, respecting the house's excellent architectural details, and from 1988 until 1991 developed the comfortable colors and themes in each room. At furniture auctions, George the owner "buys what I likethen Mead decides what's allowed in the house." What's become of the disallowed articles?"They're in the barn." →



Many factors weigh into decisions about paint color: region and the quality of light, historical preference, architectural style, personal taste. One way to organize choices: assume a relationship between exterior color and rooms inside.

64 JUNE | JULY 2001

## COLOR in CONTEXT

PERHAPS THE SINGLE biggest decorating decision owners face is what color(s) to paint the outside of the house. Readers are often overwhelmed by the number of choices, or so it seems from their letters. When facing a blank

slate (or canvas, or sheet of paper, or primed clapboards), it's wise to remember that creativity needs limitation. In this case, context provides guidance, suggesting certain paths and closing others. To narrow your choices down to appropriate colors that please you, let paint color selection be a process of elimination.

First is the context of the house to its

surroundings: to neighbors' houses, to nature and the quality of light. Context is also provided by "given" colors: a red brick or cool granite foundation, weathered shingles gone brown or seagull grey, the color of the asphalt roof. Guidance comes from architectural context—the style and date of the house. I'd like

to suggest, too, that colors inside the house provide context for choosing exterior paint.

Using some of the same colors inside and out (or a tint or shade of the same color) helps you focus on a palette you can live with

> for a long time. It automatically creates an overall harmony that allows you to be creative with details. I've always found it a good idea to use the same paint-color collection both inside and out. Most companies offer free brochures that group colors into families, or even preselected combinations (body or wall color, trim, and accent). Interior and exterior colors may be



by Patricia Poore

the same or variants of each other; in either case, they are quite likely to go together.

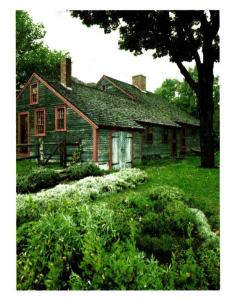
Generally, you can be more daring and use a greater number of colors inside. But some thread should connect the two schemes. On my house, the muted greens on exterior trim are found again in the beams and trim of the

OPPOSITE: Consider the neighbors when choosing exterior color—even in San Francisco, where schemes tend toward the boutique school. ABOVE: A color such as the greyed green above the wainscot may echo exterior color. Personal, jewel-tone colors like this red are best reserved for the interior. (The carpet in this row house is a copy of one at Honolulu's Iolani Palace.)

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Color is mutable; what you see is entirely dependent on the light, on surface texture and paint sheen, and on the adjacent colors. You must paint samples in place.

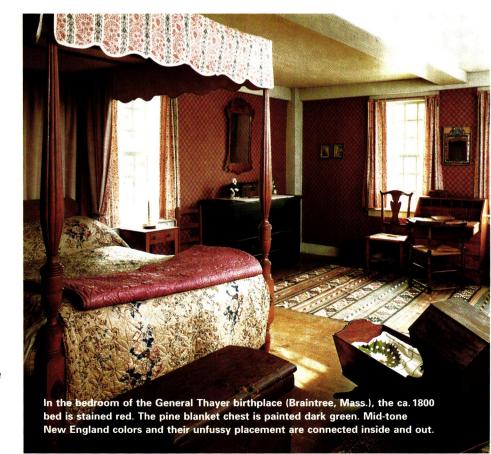
and late-20th-century Revival colors from Martin Senour (above).

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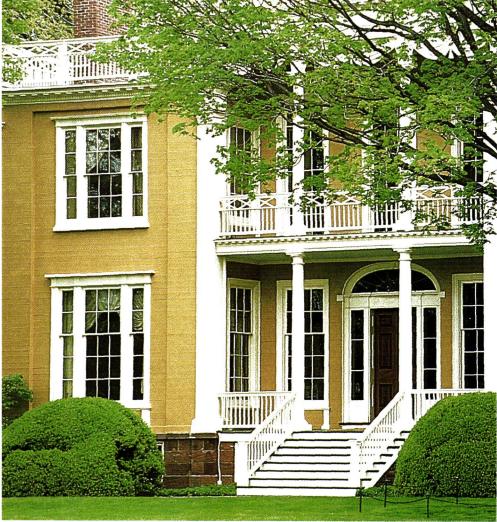
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**66** JUNE | JULY 2001





At Boscobel, a Federal neoclassical house in Garrison-on-Hudson, N.Y., ivory trim lends restrained elegance to an assertive body color, carried through in lively rooms inside. English chintz is in classic Pompeiian red, yellow-gold, and black. Wall color picks up the fabric ground. Striped blue, gold, and green bedroom paper after an 1805 original.

centrally located dining room; the same burgundy used on exterior sash and doors was picked up inside for French doors. Columns on the porch—which leads into the living room—are painted the same light putty used as trim color in the living room. Despite such repetition, the inside and outside have separate identities. The main "color" outside is that of the unfinished, weathering cedar shingles. Inside, I took off with brighter greens and a happy mustard.

A hint that bears repeating: You must paint large-scale samples of chosen colors in place. Buy quarts. Out-



side, paint a section at least four feet square where your body, trim, and accent colors come together (say, clapboards/corner board/shutter). Inside, paint on a primed wall or on a movable scrap of Sheetrock or Masonite. If you're dissatisfied with the sample, it's not back to square one. You'll know, looking at the color in place, what the problem is: the red is too orange, the green needs more yellow.

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JUDITH MILLER COLOR/PHOTO: TIM CLINCH OLD-HOUSE INTERIORS 67

# PAINTING with PLANTS

Strokes of color for the Vintage Garden

I DUG RIGHT IN WITH HOT PINKS, BLUES, AND YELLOWS.

TROUBLE WAS, WHEN THE WHITE VINYL SIDING CAME OFF,

MY COLORS WERE OFF, TOO. | BY BRIAN D. COLEMAN

EVEN BEFORE I closed on my house, I was plotting out the garden. Admittedly, the house needed work: its white vinyl siding (with black trim!) would need replacing, and there was plenty to do inside. Still, I couldn't wait to pull the dying holly tree out front and dig in. As far as I was concerned, the kitchen and the siding could wait.

I wanted bright, cheerful plantings—a riot of color under Seattle's frequently overcast skies. Because the house was white, strong colors looked great. Masses of vibrant, pinkeyed *Lavatera* "Barnsley" provided an anchor color from late spring through fall. I added Cambridge Blue lobelia, pale-yellow *Corcopsis* "Moonbeam," and silvery *Artemisia*, and by the end of our first summer the plantings had already grown into a lush and picturesque cottage garden with vintage appeal.

Well, it took six years, but I finally got around to removing the



vinyl siding. Opting for a Victorianera color scheme, I painted the restored clapboards deep forest green and used rich autumn accents of ochre, burgundy, and black. What I hadn't considered was the effect changing the color of the house would have on my garden. The pink Lavatera was a forlorn afterthought against the dark green body of the house. The flowers' primary colors made the ochre and burgundy trim colors appear muddy. I needed to completely rethink my garden.

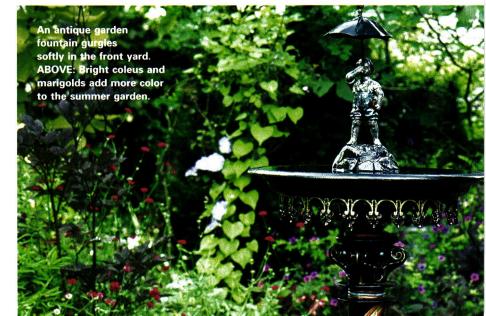
First step: deciding which of the existing permanent plantings

should stay. On opposite sides of the front yard I'd planted a red-leafed Japanese maple and a lavender lilac. The Japanese maple remained, as its rich reds harmonized well with the autumn palette of the house, but I replaced the lilac with a gold-leafed Catalpa bignonioides "Aurea," to stand out against the deep green.

The garden lacked a strong focal point. A fivefoot-long window box specially designed for the front of the house was the answer. Its carving-two crocodiles with big teeth

happily pursuing a fat baby—was inspired by William Burgess's Cardiff Castle in Wales; leaping frogs and buzzing dragonflies cover its sides. Three successive plantings, all harmonious with the new house scheme, keep the box lush and colorful. The fall planting, done in late September, provides visual interest through the winter. Conifers that here withstand the winter cold provide a subdued palette of golds, yellows, and variegated greens. Fruit-bearing orna-









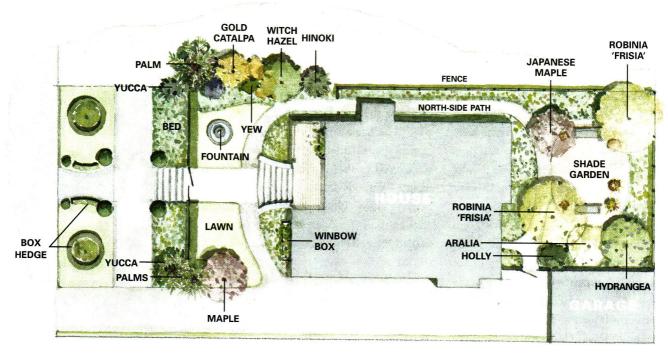






### A LUSCIOUS VICTORIAN PLAN

The intimate back yard is a shade garden centered on an ellipse of gravel, with a sundial in the center (see photo above). Two 20-foot yellow lotus trees offer shade and screen the neighbors. Covered with golden hops, clematis, and roses, a lattice and arbor fence lends privacy.





### A Pleasing PALET

The white vinyl siding had seemed to demand strong, even primary, colors in the garden. Springtime was especially riotous. When the siding came off and the house color changed, the garden plantings had to change, too. Compare the photo at right with the one on page 69.

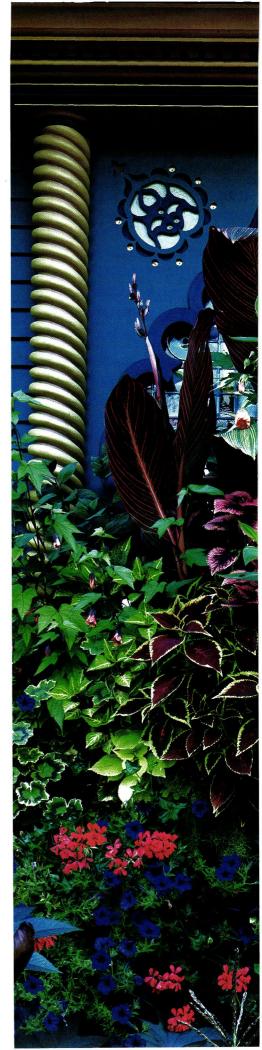


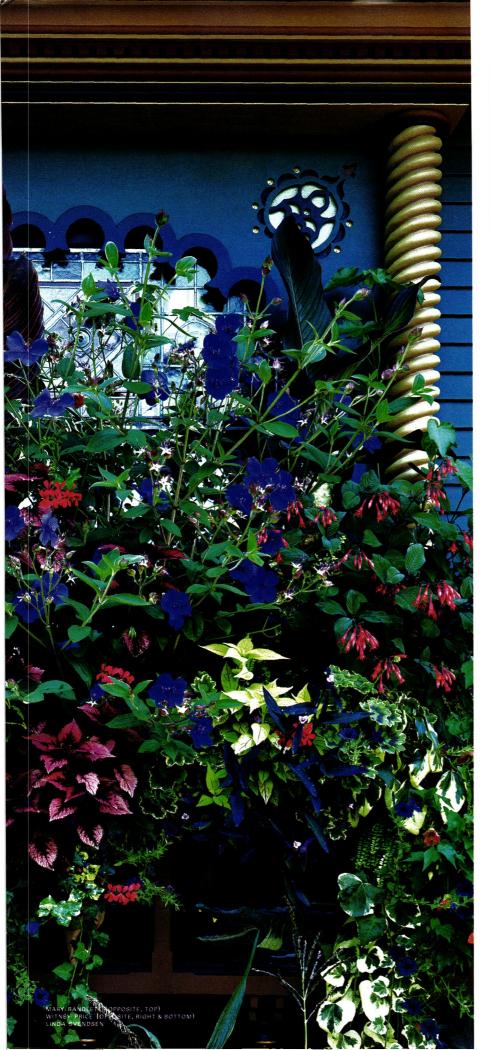


mental hollies provide accents of bright orange and scarlet, accompanied by winter pansies and ornamental kale.

I pot up spring color the previous fall, transferring these plants into the box by mid-March. Vibrant orange, red, yellow, and purple come from Fritillaria imperialis, two-toned daffodils, and multi-hued tulips. By early May the summer plantings are prepared, more bright and bold colors. Abutilon, brilliant scarlet geraniums, royal purple Tibouchina, and cascading violet "Carl Gustav" petunias combine to create a vibrant display until we start all over in the fall.

The back yard, meanwhile, became a shade garden. The lattice fence is covered with golden hops, palepurple "Ville de Lyon" clematis, and bright-yellow "Graham Thomas" and apricot-pink "Leander" roses. Purplefleshed "Niagara" grapes clamber across the arbor's top. Plants that flourish in the shade include creamy variegated hostas, spiky, prehistoric-looking horsetails (a Victorian favorite), and mounds of red and pink impatiens.



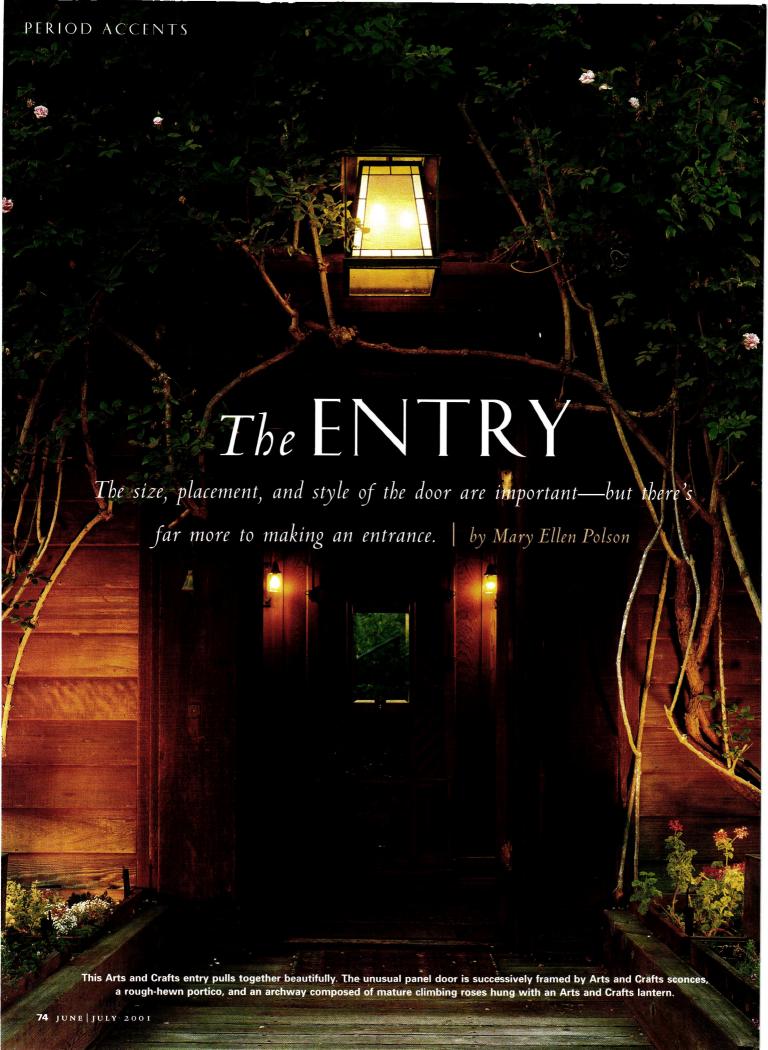






### Change with the SEASONS

The five-foot-long window box is replanted three times every year. Fall boasts colorful berries and conifers (top); springtime is marked by bright orange and yellow daffodils and Fritillaria (above). In the summer, the box is overgrown with the rich hues of purple petunias, Tibouchina, and Abutilon (left).





OORS STAMP a house as one style or another. We associate four- and six-panel doors with early styles like Federal and Greek Revival; arched, battened doorways trimmed in black wrought iron with colonial houses, and oversized doors with jewel-like leaded glass with Queen Anne.

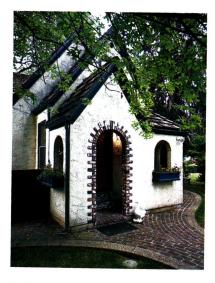
At its most basic, a door is a signal to enter a dwelling. The invitation can be classical and formal, rustic and charming, or just plain boring. At its best, an entryway can

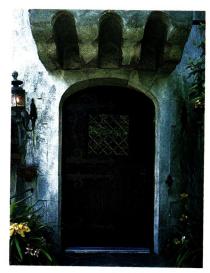
be a thrilling introduction to a treasured personal space.

The elements of the entry go far beyond that wooden slab we call a front door. By far the most critical factor is a successful position on the façade: the door must "read" as a portal to the interior space beyond, yet successfully make a distinction between outside and in, public and private. Not surprisingly, doors traditionally are placed front and center on the façade, or to one side. Some styles are even referred to by the placement of the door—







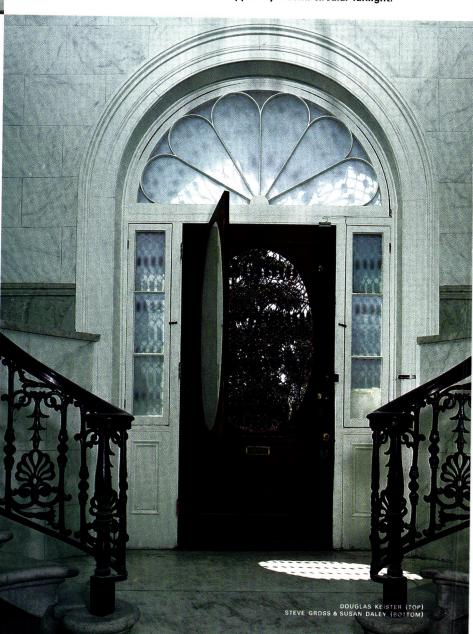


LEFT: Side by side doors mirror each other at an angle within a San Francisco Stick-style entry. ABOVE: (left) Decorative brick frames the entry to a Storybookstyle cottage. (right) An oak-plank door trimmed with hinge-strap hardware symbolizes Romantic Revival. BELOW: The Aiken-Rhett House in Charleston is a picture of classicism, its broad door topped by a semi-circular fanlight.

### For the DOOR

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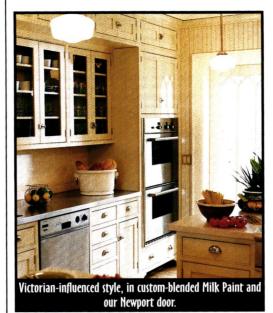
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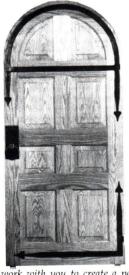
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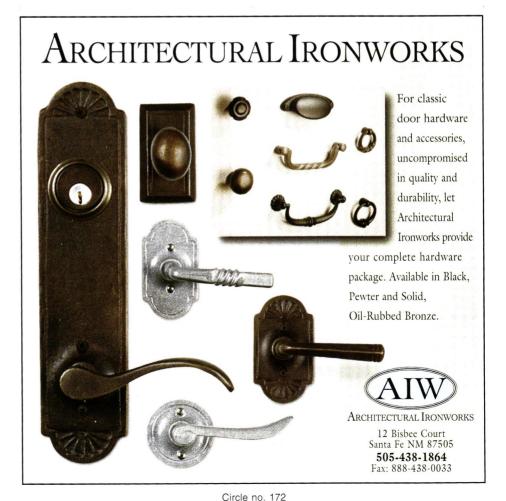
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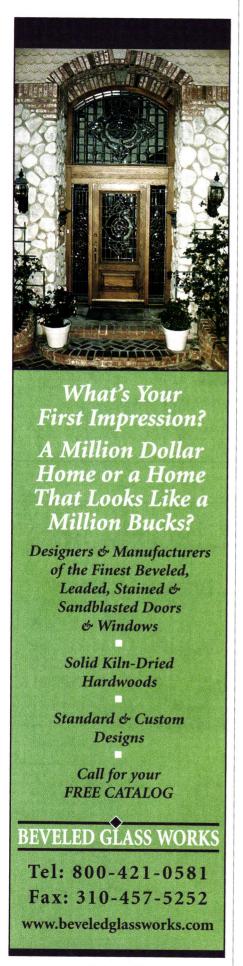


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side-entry Colonial Revival and center-entry Colonial Revival immediately pop to mind.

Then, a successful door must be in scale with the exterior façade. An oversized, 8' high door with Queen Anne glass would probably look out of place on a low-slung bungalow, just as a tiny door would be ill-suited to a Palladian mansion.

In classical architecture, even small doors were brought into scale with a variety of ingenious framing methods—a three-bay portico, for example, supported by colossal columns, or a colonnade pierced by five spatially proportioned archways, centered on a single door. The simplest frame is a plain wood door surround, with or without moulding. More elaborate framing includes the

ing shrubs; and decorative accents, such as lighting, pottery, statuary and urns, or even the cliché of a matched set of lions reclining on masonry piers. The approach can be as intimate as the doorway on page 74, or as grand as a mile-long allée of live oaks that frame the front door from down a country lane.

Finally, the details of the door should suit the house well. This includes the configuration of the door, hardware, essential supporting features like lighting, even the texture of the wood and its color or finish. This is where the elements of style all come together. Early American doors are usually composed of vertical panels held together by stiles and rails, while Arts and Crafts doors have fewer panels and include one or more

In classical architecture, even small doors were brought into scale with a variety of ingenious framing methods a three-bay portico, for example, supported by colossal columns.

decorative use of stone or brick work (see page 76, top center) or sidelights and fanlights (p. 76, bottom right). Although Georgian and Federal-style houses share some of the same major architectural elements, such as hipped roofs and boxy shapes, you can usually tell them apart by their door treatments. Doors in the Georgian style are typically topped with triangular pediments, while Federal-style doors are topped with fanlights.

The frame naturally extends itself into the approach to the door, which can be-and often is-much broader in scope. The approach can include architectural elements such as a porch or secondary roof; landscaping elements, including steps, a walkway, ornamental gates, planting beds, and climbing vines or flowerglass lights. You'll find wrought-iron strap-hinge hardware on batten colonial doors, for instance, but you'll also discover the same hardware is well suited to Tudor Revival and Mission Revival-style, 20th-century doors. On the other hand, lighting is usually singular to period and style (although it's worth noting that many Victorian dwellings successfully adapted colonial street lamps as entry lighting).

Texture can vary from the smooth painted finish often seen on Federalstyle doors (think of Charleston's side houses) to the almost rough, unfinished texture of a pecky cypress door on a Florida bungalow. Paint color is a wonderful way to bring an entry into focus: choose a color that plays up the best elements of your house, and you're home free.

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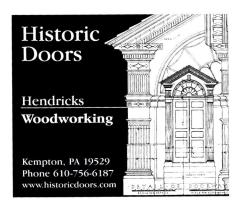
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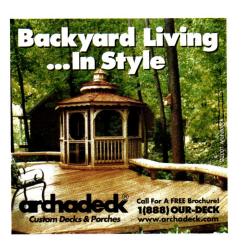


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Circle no. 163







The energy crunch is upon us, just as summer starts to heat up. Luckily there are much more attractive ways to keep your house cool than paying an outsized electric bill.



# Summer Window Dressing

BY MARY ELLEN POLSON

HOSE OF US with houses that predate air conditioning are usually fortunate enough to inherit some built-in ways of keeping cool. Along with high ceilings and oversized windows, your house may have some vintage Venetian blinds or pull-down roller shades; perhaps your pre-Civil War-era house still has the original interior shutters. Even if you aren't blessed with any of these early heat-beating devices, many window treatments new and old are ideal for letting in ventilation and light while keeping heat out.

#### CURTAIN & SHEERS

IF YOU HAVE heavy Victorian draperies, you won't suffocate provided you use them properly, as the Victorians did: close the curtains during the hottest

part of the day to minimize heat build-up, then pull them back late in the afternoon, exposing a lace panel or sheer over the open window.

You may want to dispense with elaborate window coverings altogether when the weather gets hot. The classic summer window treatment is the sheer or glass curtain. The glass curtain was historically a first layer, a sort of petticoat intended to go inside the window casing, with heavier drapery in layers over it. Beautiful period looks range from simple linen and gauze curtains for Arts and Crafts windows to delicately patterned lace panels in late-19th-century designs, such as J.R. Burrows' Nottingham Lace curtains. Other intricately patterned sheers that cast beautiful shadow effects are silk and cotton blends from Yves Gonnet,

in classic designs inspired by Louis XIV motifs.

Even when they cover the entire sash, a light sheer won't block the breeze. If it makes you feel cooler, however—or if you simply like the effect—hold your sheers open with ribbon, silk loops, or period tiebacks.

#### BLINDS & SHADES

BLINDS AND SHADES are among the most versatile of window treatments—and among the most poorly understood. Blinds are wonderful ventilators, while shades can keep a room cool without blocking whatever fitful breeze ventures into the window.

Blinds come in standard louver widths of 1" and 2", with some manufacturers offering widths of 3" or more. Many [text continued on page 84]

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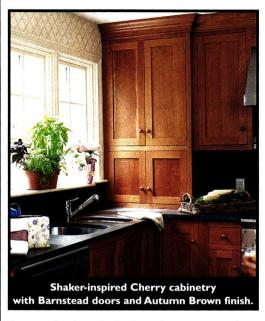
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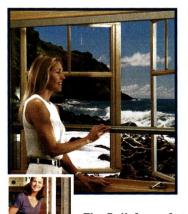
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Pull-down shades need not be white (or worse, yellowed). Rue de France has linen-textured fabric rollup shades with decorative trim, such as a scalloped hem-stitched edge, a scalloped lace, an eyelet band, and repeating cutwork triangles of embroidery. A lovely period look for summer is Smith + Noble's casual Roman shade. Thanks to an inverted pleat at the top, the sheer panel drapes into a shallow, unstructured swag as it's lowered. Another innovation is the top down shade—an ideal window treatment when you want

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#### **SCREENS**

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There are screening options even if your windows are unusual shapes or you have casement win-

It may seem obvious to recommend using screens, but many of us tend to move from air-conditioned house to car to office, without drawing a breath of fresh air all summer.

to cover the lower half of a window, but allow light in at the top.

#### SHUTTERS

INTERIOR SHUTTERS have never been more popular. They look appropriate in many period rooms, and louvered interior shutters offer a pleasing combination of privacy and ventilation. Interior panel shutters can be even more effective against heat than heavy drapes: shut them during the heat of the day, and open them after the sun goes down to let in cooler air. For another cool summer effect, choose fabric shutters. They afford full privacy, yet let in air and some filtered light.

Don't overlook the possibilities of exterior shutters, especially if you live in a hot or sultry climate. Kestrel dows. Pella, of course, originated the Rolscreen back in the 1920s. Petit Industries offers a pull-down "Hide-Away" screen that works similarly to a roll-up shade. You simply open the window and pull down the shade, which attaches to the sill magnetically. When you don't need a screen, it rolls up out of sight.

#### WINDOW FILMS

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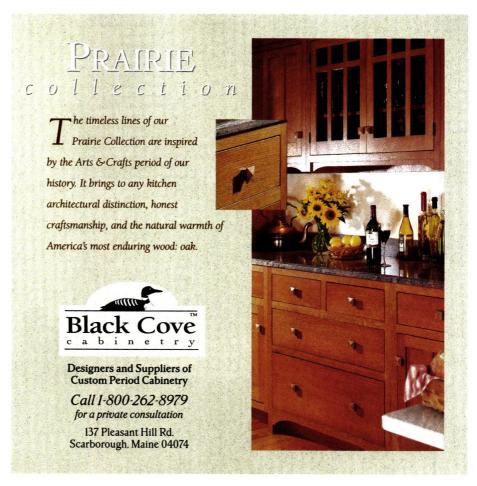
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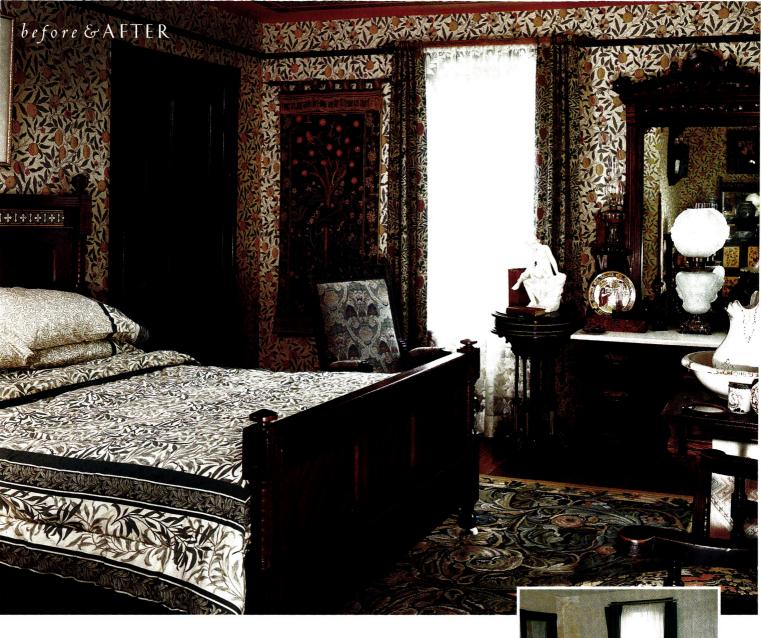
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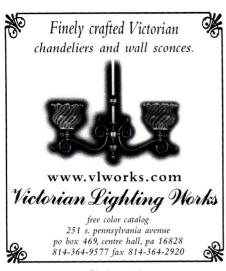
"WHEN YOU FIND something you like, bite the bullet and buy it," says Wayne Mason, as his wife Cheryl Wolf nods vigorously in consent. "We bought the curtain fabric for our back bedroom ten years before we used it."

Look at these "before" pictures and you'll see a middle-class Victorian house like thousands of others. Wayne (an engineer for Avaya, formerly part of Lucent Technologies) and Cheryl (a graphic designer and accomplished quilt maker) have transformed it into an Aesthetic Movement fantasy. The bedroom is "really a free mix of old stuff and new stuff... we don't get purist... if it looks right we'll use it," reports Wayne. This New Jersey house, they insist, was not intact enough to demand true restoration to an earlier period. Instead, it has been a laboratory for the creative couple. "'Let's try graining' we'd say, or 'Let's wallpaper a ceiling'."

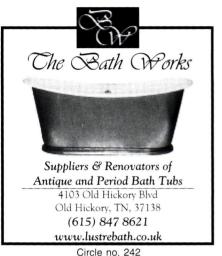
They didn't hesitate to buy the *chinoiserie* cabinet, owned by a museum director who was moving away; Cheryl the seamstress snapped up

The bed was bought for \$600, a good investment under yellowed varnish. The dresser, too, came from a local auction during the 1980s—"not anymore," says owner Wayne Mason.

bolts of Morris-designed fabrics, which, for a while, had been sold retail by ABC Carpet and Home; they pounced on the right rug that just happened to come from IKEA. Elements were [continued on page 88]



Circle no. 4



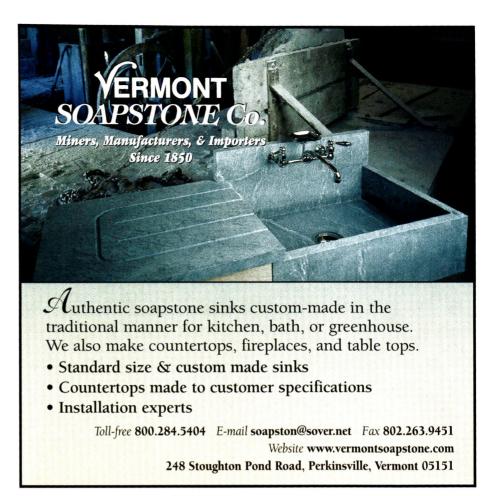
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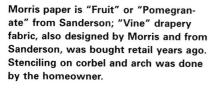
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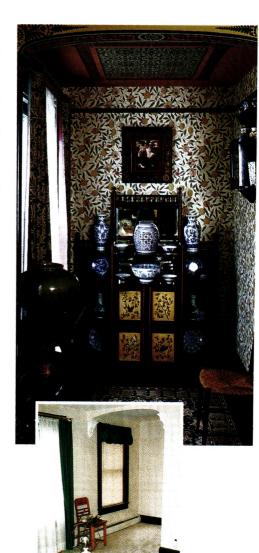






collected over time, and from eclectic sources, but the room came together beautifully. "I do like rooms that are a complete thought," muses Wayne (whose Mackintosh-inspired bathroom was published in the Summer 1997 issue).

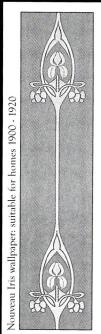
A few sumptuous details are fool-the-eye—like the floor. It's just pine (painted purple before they scrubbed it with TSP, "which virtually stripped it"). Wayne got down on hands and knees to grain it, and now it looks like oak. (He dismisses the idea that graining takes a lot of talent: "Look at the graining on [19th-



Previous occupants had tucked a closet into the area behind the arch. The antique *chinoiserie* cabinet is English.

century] cottage furniture," he challenges. "It's kind of hyper—that's no burl found on *this* planet.")

The antique Eastlake-style bed, with damage from a belt sander, was just one bargain Wayne and Cheryl found and made right. They credit their eye for period furniture to attending Victorian antiques fairs in New York City. "We pet the high-end stuff; you have to look at the good stuff to know what's acceptable in the lower end," they explain. So, you see, this exquisite room was created by a couple of self-taught decorators.



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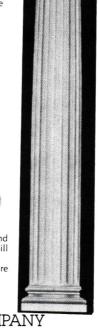
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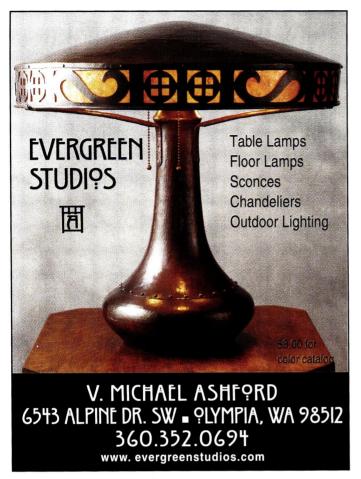
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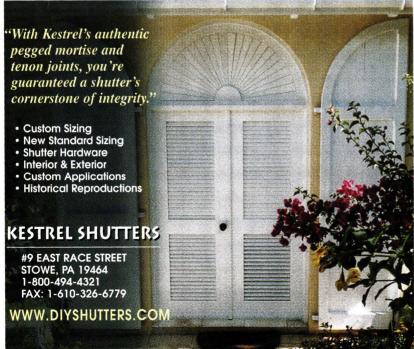


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In the mountains, at the shore: the houses we escape to are full of lessons about how to live a happier life every day.

# Away From It All?

what's so appealing about having a weekend house? Now you have a second mortgage, another roof to inspect, another lawn to mow. Maybe the real appeal of these "away" houses is that they afford an opportunity to be more ourselves . . . to choose—just because we love it—a location, a style, a paint color, a chair.

Whether in the mountains or the middle of a seaside resort town, retreats often have themes in common. One is a greater use of color than might be seen in the workaday house: a sky-blue bedroom, the front door painted orange, wildly clashing annuals in the flowerbox. Away from the house where we keep up appearances, we edit ourselves less. Lines between indoors and out,

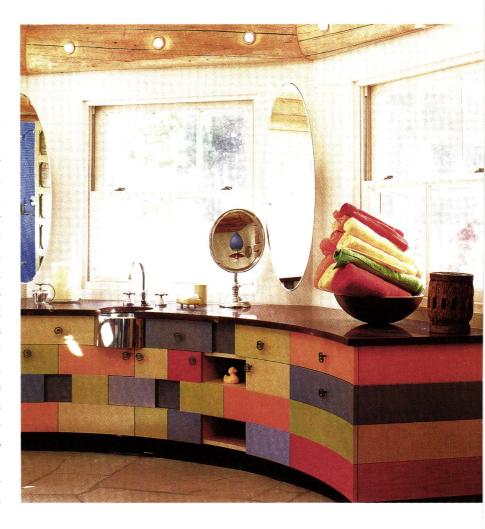
Sitting "at the end of the earth," where the ocean is a constant, healing distraction (Westport, Conn.). INSET: Wood on wood in a house built of old log barns in Montana.

Traditional or modern, owners are likely to indulge themselves. RIGHT: Bathroom color in Aspen. BELOW: A dining room inspired by Carl Larsson.

public and private are blurred.

Maybe, by studying the appeal of the weekend house, we can learn something about how to live happier during the week. That'd be my suggestion to readers of Penelope Rowlands's picture book Weekend Houses (Chronicle). She tells the stories behind 27 weekend retreats and summer homes photographed by Mark Darley. Don't expect all log cabins and beach houses: the Greek Revival farmhouse is neat as a pin with its Empire furniture and crystal chandelier; the shingled Foursquare in Southampton was decorated by Mario Buatta. Still, they have a common thread: a comfortable sense of relaxation. Quirkiness is evident in rooms that seem to say "because I like it."

The book is organized by setting (not by house style): retreats on



It's not our main house so we let the architect do his thing, said one owner about a weekend retreat.

In another, the antique glass-front cabinet is stuffed with birds' nests, rocks, and feathers.



sacred land from Tesuque, New Mexico, to Brattleboro, Vermont; houses among vineyards, on the coast, in the mountains. Owners say they fell in love with the region or the site first, and only then bought or built a house. Water figures prominently, it seems. The book is full of ponds, pools, ocean views, and mountain lakes.

We love to look at pictures of cheerful, cozy houses. The premise is not without irony, however. These part-time homes are often vacant and arrived at only after a commute. This is "the ultimate guide to leaving it all behind," promises the jacket copy. "Most of us . . . live from weekend

to weekend," says the publisher's press release. Happy pictures, sad words.

"More whimsical things seem allowable here whereas they wouldn't be back home," says Berta Shapiro, whose ivy-curtained window is pictured left. Why is that? Maybe we should think less about getting away, and more about letting go.

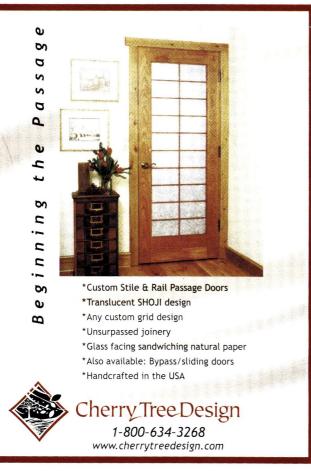
REVIEWED BY PATRICIA POORE

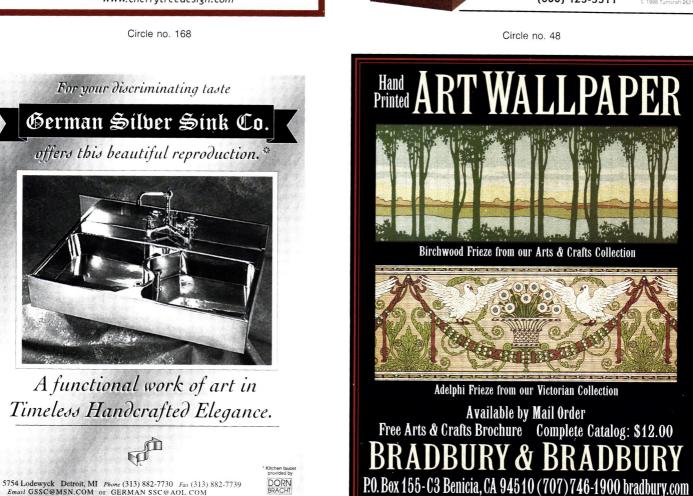
#### Weekend Houses

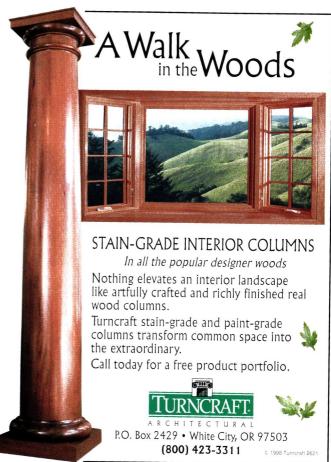
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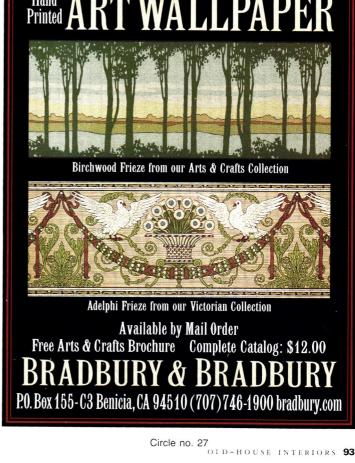
by Penelope Rowlands photographs by Mark Darley Chronicle Books, 2000. Hardcover, 204 pages, \$40 Through your

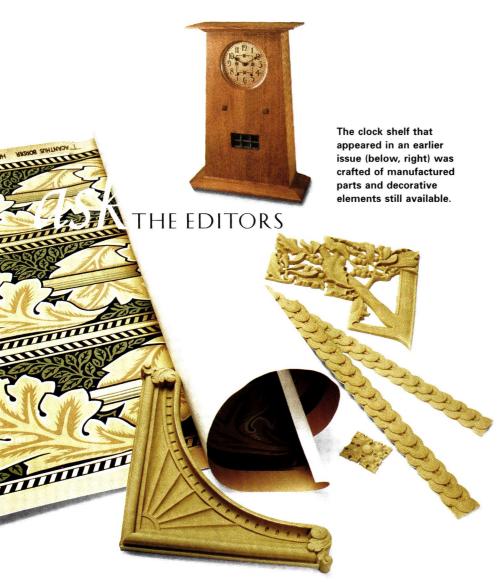












Creating A Clockshelf

I was intriqued by the shelf shown over a William Morris fabric curtain in "West Side Magic" [November 2000, p. 47]. I would like to re-create it. How did the owner do it?

LADY JUDITH ROXBURY-WEAVER FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA

hat artist Robert Braun has created in his New York apartment is an oversized clock shelf. Popular in both Victorian and Arts and Crafts kitchens and parlors, clock shelves held-yesclocks! Braun made an elegant version that works well with the high ceilings of his parlor. Surmounted by his own hand-painted frieze, the shelf is the focal point of the room. Braun used readily available materials. The brackets and Louis Sullivan-inspired frieze are composition ornaments from

THE DECORATORS SUPPLY, (773) 847-6300, decoratorssupply.com. A clock shelf should, of course, have a clock, and Braun chose an Arts and Crafts reproduction from STICKLEY (315) 682-5500, sticklev.com. BRAUN would love to handpaint an Arts and Crafts frieze for you (212) 799-6282. Or try an art wallpaper version, such as BRADBURY & BRADBURY's 18" Kelmscott frieze (above) from the Morris Collection (707-746-1900, bradbury.com). —B. COLEMAN

#### **Educating Your Mate**

What happens when your own "aesthetic vision" is more highly evolved than that of the person you live with?

TRICIA GUILD CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

ow that's a subject. It seems impossible to me that anyone would buy plastic flowers, or place objects in a collection around a room without any focal point. And office clutter-don't get me started. I have used passion ("Honey, you have to understand—it actually hurts me to look at that [wallpaper, lamp, etc.]"), hoping that my partner would relent in order not to cause me physical pain. I have let drop basic decorating dos and don'ts. I have moved slowly, remodeling, tidying, and buying (often picking up the other person's colors or style preference). Most people have no design education, and they're busy. They may come to appreciate the comfort and beauty you create. -P. POORE

#### Shingle Decorating

We live in a Richardsonian Shinglestyle house built in 1895. The fireplace has been "modernized." We would like to know what the fireplace would have looked like-also, can you offer any suggestions on decorating the interior? JAN S. ENNS ADRIAN, MICHIGAN



ou may find clues at home (the original panel detail may be hidden behind the 1960s-era mirror); visit other houses of the same style and vintage in your town; look at architecture books. Many books on classic and colonial houses have pictures of mantels similar to the one in your house, which appears to have Colonial Revival-style woodwork.

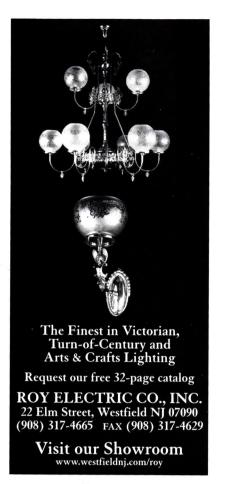
The 1880s and 1890s saw the blossoming of the Aesthetic Movement and English Arts and Crafts style, oriental exoticism, and the birth of a sweeping Colonial Revival. See two recent books: Shingle Styles, with photos by Bret Morgan (Abrams, 1999, \$49.50), and The Houses of McKim, Mead & White by Samuel G. White (Rizzoli, 1998, \$70). -P. POORE

#### A Knock at the Door

I am looking for a brass or pewter door knocker with an Arts and Crafts motif. Can you suggest resources?

CATHY BAKKENSEN ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

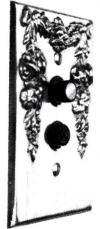
corn Iron Art [(800) 835-0121, acornmfg.com] makes medieval, ring-style door knockers suited to Arts and Crafts and Romantic Revival doors. The 5" knocker in antique pewter or antique brass is about \$155. An 8" stylized U-shaped knocker is \$264 in the same finishes. Rocky Mountain Hardware [(888) 788-2013, rockymountainhardware.com] offers two ring-style door knockers in its Rustic Collection. The 4" sells for about \$208, and a 7" is about \$364. The white bronze-dark finish is closest in appearance to pewter. Last but not least, Craftsmen Hardware (660) 376-2481, craftsmenhardware.com] has a 41/2" ring knocker in an oil-rubbed brass finish for \$139. They also offer an escutcheon-style knocker on a 31/2" x 7" rectangular plate for \$179. -M. E. POLSON



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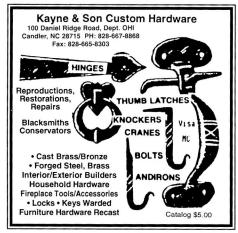


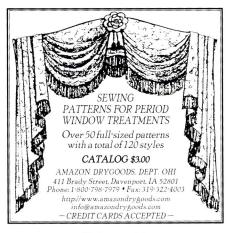
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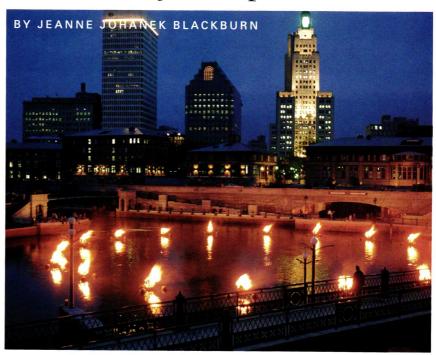
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# Providence: a fired-up renaissance



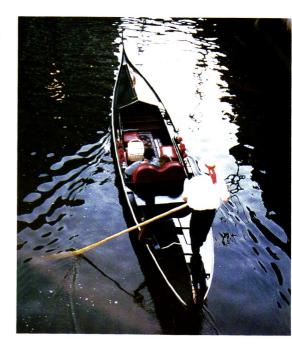
LEFT: (top) Inside the McKim, Mead and White Capitol. (below) Federal-era houses survive in Providence. ABOVE: WaterFire, a sculptural installation and festival. RIGHT: Gondolas on the river, downtown.



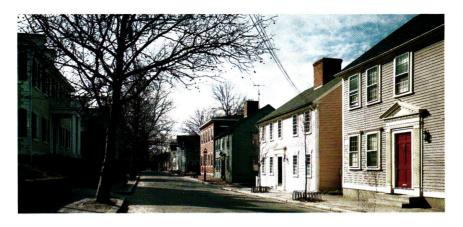
T'S ALL ABOUT THE RIVER. In 1636 the beauty of the river captivated Roger Williams as he sought religious and ethical freedom from Puritans in Salem, Massachusetts. The renegade preacher drank from the natural spring he discovered in what is now the center of Rhode Island's capital city, thanking "God's Providence" for his good fortune. Unlike other settlers, he paid the Narragansett Indians for the eighteen acres of land he claimed, and it became the cen-

ter of a thriving farming community.

Providence's strategic location at the head of Narragansett Bay led to its prominence as a shipbuilding and shipping center, creating a merchant class of residents during the 18th century. The power of the river propelled Providence into America's Industrial Revolution, initially as a mill town, then as a metal- and jewelry-manufacturing city. Today the Providence River is the center of The Renaissance City, considered by



It's The Renaissance City, considered by many one of the most successful urban-renewal projects in the country. Visitors are treated to a rich history—and new attractions.





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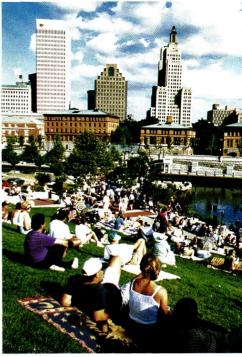
ROGER WILLIAMS PARK includes an award-winning zoo, carousel, naturalhistory museum, and planetarium amidst lakes and walkways on 435 acres of rolling hills. • WATERPLACE PARK is easily accessible in the middle of town, featuring a natural amphitheater with pond and fountain. • Ride a GONDOLA along the rivers of downtown Providence aboard a Venetian-made river boat propelled by gondoliers trained in Venice. • HORSE AND CARRIAGE RIDES reveal the northern corner of Providence and the East Side.

Benefit Street on the East Side offers an exceptional walking tour. LEFT: The Nightingale Brown house is a large woodframe Federal mansion. RIGHT: Civic improvements include WaterPlace Park.



many one of the most successful urban-renewal projects in the country. Visitors are treated to not only a rich history, but also to such new cultural attractions as WaterPlace Park and River Walk. New bridges near downtown reproduce those of Venice. The redesigned riverfront, with its cobblestone walkways and authentic (imported) gondolas for hire, is augmented by WaterFire, a festival designed by Providence artist and Brown University alumnus Barnaby Evans.

WaterFire Providence is a sculptural installation of forty bonfires in braziers in the Providence River, running for half a mile under bridges and along the River Walk. It blends the elements of fire, water, earth, and air with street performances, art, and



ethereal music collected by Evans from around the world.

"I wanted to create an atmosphere that would suggest the passeggiata and the passeo and bring people together in the city," he says, speaking of the European tradition of urban strolling for pure enjoyment. Charmed by the juxtaposition of primal elements in the middle of a city, people linger for hours. The sensual beauty feeds the soul, engages the senses, and sends sparks flying on more than the breezes off the river.

Across the river on the East Side, two short blocks up the hill, is BENEFIT STREET and its famous "Mile of History," the center of historic-architecture preservation in Providence. Here are more intact Colonial-era and early Federal buildings than in any other city in America. The "Banner Trail," a self-guided walking tour of historic Benefit Street, Downtown Providence, the Capital Center area and the East Side, is an architectural showcase. Many of the buildings along the Trail are private homes or offices; some belong to Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design; others are churches and art galleries. [continued on page 100]



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Benefit leads to WICKENDEN STREET with its eclectic mix of antiques shops, galleries, and small restaurants. Parallel to Benefit is South Main with a slightly more upscale mix of shops and cafes. Buildings of historical significance are The SULLIVAN DORR HOUSE (109 Benefit St.) built in 1809, The **OLD STATE HOUSE** (150 Benefit St.) built in 1762, and SHAKESPEARE'S HEAD-Providence Preservation Society (21 Meeting St.) built in 1772, one of the few pre-Revolutionary, threestorey wood-frame dwellings in Providence. Two charming old homes offer bed-and-breakfast accommodations in the area: CC Ledbetters (326 Benefit St.) and The Cady House (127 Power St.). Local folklore has it that Benefit Street is also "home" to a couple of ghosts: the mistress of Edgar Allen Poe and an old soldier looking for a smoke.

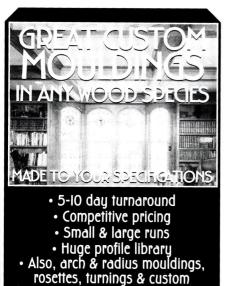
No trip to Providence would be complete without a culinary visit to Little Italy on **FEDERAL HILL**, a revitalized area with Italianate street lamps, the Arch over Atwells Street, and a fountain at DePasquale Square.

JEANNE JOHANEK BLACKBURN is a Maryland-based writer with a passion for old houses (and a son in Providence).



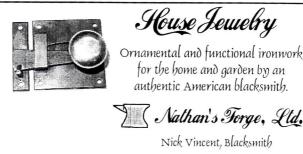
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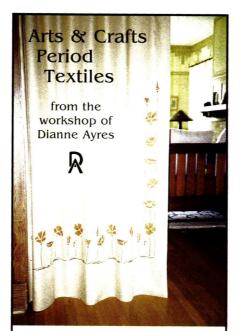
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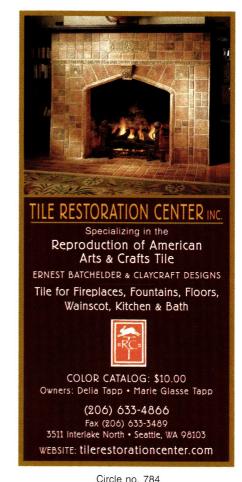


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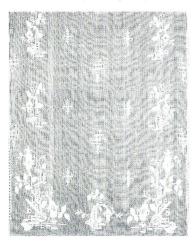
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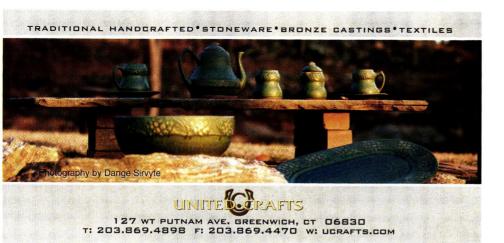
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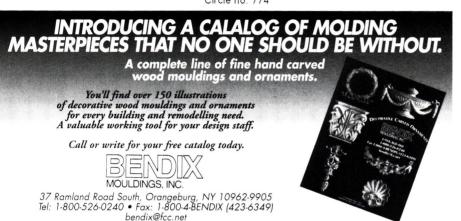
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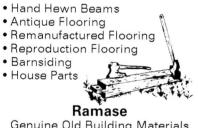
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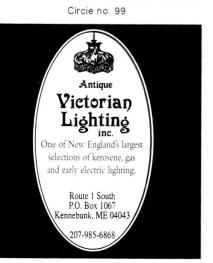
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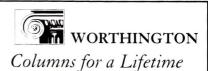
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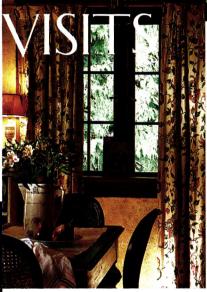
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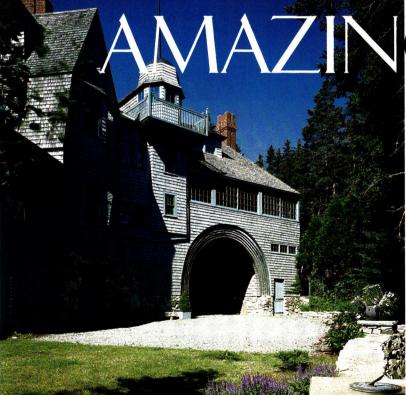
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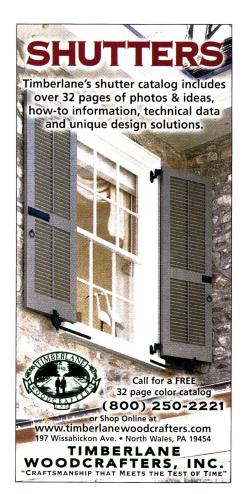
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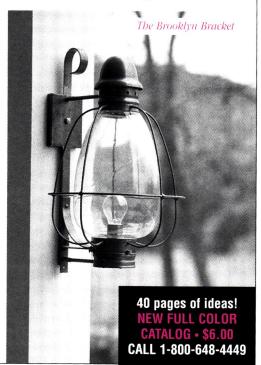


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The editors have compiled this section to give you more information about products and services in this issue. Objects not listed are generally available, or are family pieces or antiques.

#### Furniture Focus pp. 32-36

p. 32 Antique Hepplewhite server in dining room of Dr. Charles Dubs House, Natchez, MS. Tambour-front serving stand ca. 1805-1815 probably by Thomas Seymour, Boston. Reproduction Chippendale commode from Victoria & Albert Museum Furniture Collection by John Widdicomb: 800/847-9433, johnwiddicomb.com. **p. 34** Six-drawer sideboard with mitered sycamore veneers and zinc tassels is from Baker's Archetype Collection. For dealers, contact Baker Furniture: 800/592-2537, bakerfurniture.com. Reproductions of Craftsman furniture, Stickley: 315/682-5500, stickley.com; also Warren Hile Studio: 818/355-4382, willowglen.com. p. 36 Imported French cupboard from Marie Albert: 631/288-0413.

#### Family Shingle pp. 46-53

Contractors: R G Hampton Construction, 631/329-7308 • Girls' room: lighting fixtures, Barry of Chelsea Antiques, 212/242-2666 • Foyer: rocking chairs, Beach Plumb Antiques, 631/537-7403; lighting fixtures, Chameleon, 212/343-9197 • Dining room: table and chairs, 203/263-2431; chandelier, Augustiono Antiques, 212/533-3355; window treatments and slipcovers, Martin Keehn, 718/384-8400; wallpaper, Sanderson, 212/894-8400 • Breakfast room: table, chairs, and lighting, Gallery 532, 212/219-1327; fireplace tile, Country Floors, 212/627-8300 • Living room: chairs, George Smith, 212/226-4747; drapery and pillows, Rubin Ruenes, 201/863-6902 • Porch: porch furniture, Palecek • Boy's bedroom: bed set, Welcome Home Antiques, 212/362-4293; iron lamp, Gallery 532, 212/219-1327; wallpaper, Sanderson (see above) • Mud room:tile floor, Country Floors, 212/627-8300 • Master bedroom:armoire, Nelles of Amagansett, 631/267-1000; curtains, Martin Keehn (see above); lighting fixtures, Clary ET Co. Antiques, 212/229-1773.

#### The Barnacle pp. 54-57

The Barnacle State Historic Site, 3485 Main Highway, Coconut Grove, FL 33133. (305) 448-9445.For information about Florida's State Parks, visit www.dep.state.fl.us/parks

#### Dignity Avowed pp. 58-63

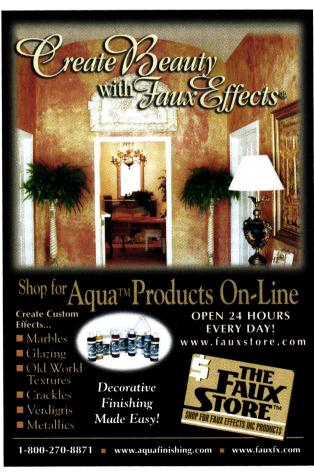
Floral arrangements: Susan Leiber, Dreamscape, 617/244-8500 (Newton, MA). Stylist: Kathleen Monahon. Bates Mansion: 802/226-7863

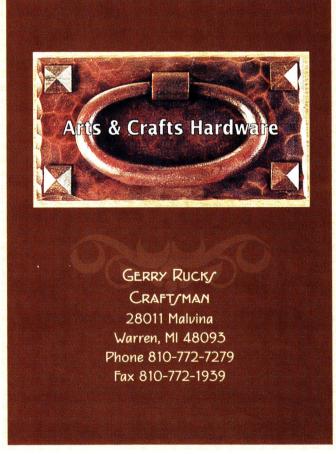
#### Painting with Plants pp. 68-73

Garden design and maintenance: Charles Price and Glen Withey, Withey–Price Landscape Design (Seattle): 206/364-2225; e-mail, witheyprice@home.com

#### Travel pp. 97-100

Providence Tourism Council, 55 Dorrance St., Providence, RI 02903. 401/861-0100; tourprovidence.com; Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau, One West Exchange Street. 02903. 800/233-1636; providencececvb.com; WaterFire Providence, 101 Regent Avenue, 02908. 401/273-1155; mail@waterfire.org; Providence Preservation Society, 21 Meeting Street, 02903. 401/831-7440; ProvidencePreservation.org





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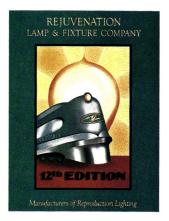


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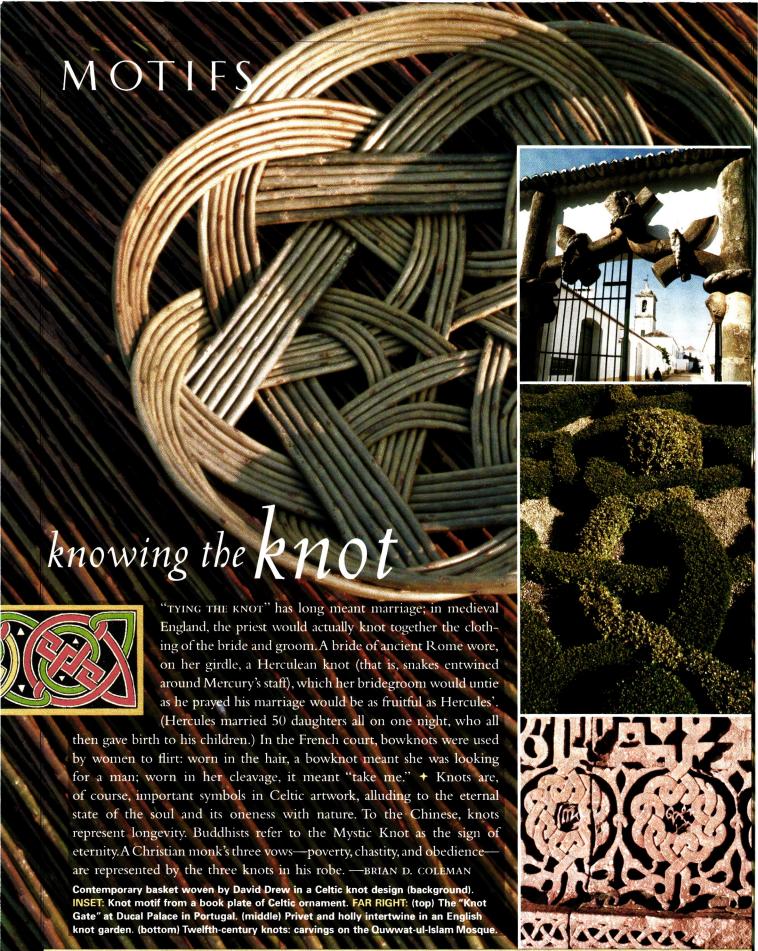
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