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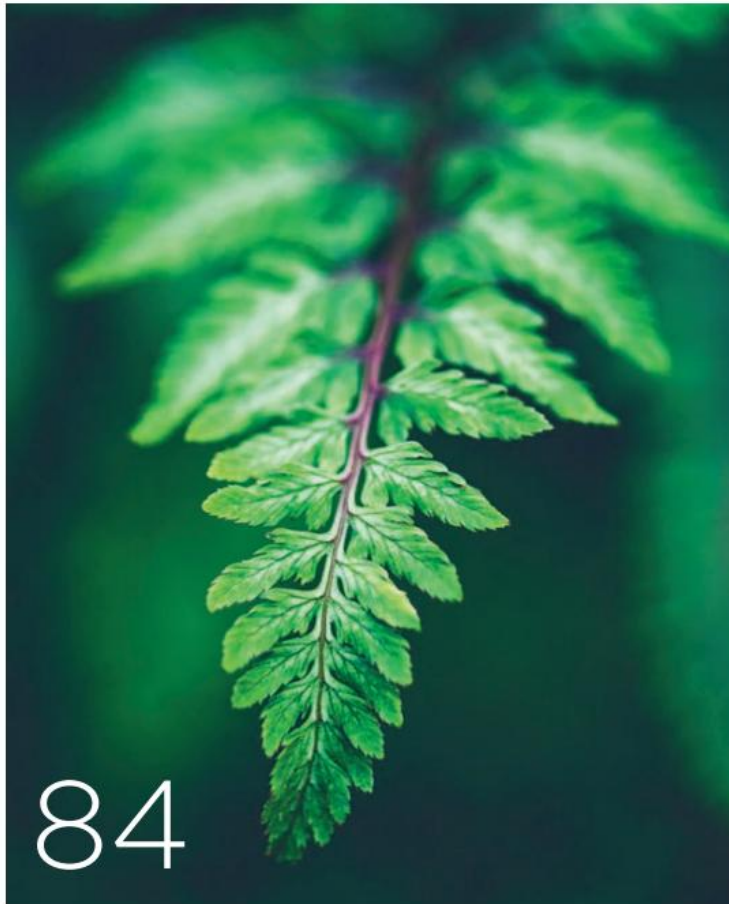
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LOCAL *editor's note*



- Daylight Savings Time ✓
- Redbud, Bradford Pear, Daffodil in bloom ✓
- Spring Vacation ✓
- St. Patrick's Day ✓
- First Day of Spring ✓

All of those check marks indicate it must be spring in the Roanoke Valley! I'm hoping by the time this Spring issue is in your freshly-washed hands, winter is a mere memory and we are now witnessing a full-on greening of the Valley.

The Spring issue of Roanoke Valley HOME is my favorite. From cover-to-cover the colors of spring abound. It's time to emerge from our seasonal hibernation and get outside! Our readers will certainly enjoy reading about and planning a day trip to one or more of the beautiful public gardens in the Commonwealth. A day enjoying flora and fauna outdoors might be ideal given the social distancing advisory we are currently under.

Spring is the season to venture into the vegetable garden, and Becky Calvert's article on companion planting will help you pair vegetables that grow well together, making your summer garden flourish. Perhaps your yard has a low light or a moist area; our feature on ferns will help you transform that spot into a shade-loving cool green oasis.

These warm months have us thinking of improvements and enhancements for our homes. This issue will assist homeowners in making informed decisions on the upgrades that offer the most return on investment. Design styles come and go, and

our feature on design trends over the last decade highlights the home decor that has withstood the test of time. The home of Paul Economy and Randy Craver, this issue's featured home, inspires us all with its outdoor living area and expansive views of the Roanoke Valley.

Now that we have more daylight, it's a great time to get back to entertaining outside (or inside). We offer tips for hosting an effortless happy hour, the perfect opportunity to bring friends together for a casual occasion. Warm weather does allow many more opportunities to venture out, to catch up with family, friends and neighbors. We at HOME hope you glean fresh ideas on design, improvement and gardening with this issue, and, as you make your to-do list, please be sure to add, "Live the life you love" to the list!

*Thank you for reading,
Anne Marie Poore*



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HOME

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 2

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Roanoke Valley HOME is published five times annually by West Willow Publishing Group, LLC. For an annual subscription, please send \$20 and your name, address and telephone number to: Roanoke Valley HOME 2003 Graves Mill Road, Suite B, Forest, VA 24551

For advertising information please call (434) 386-5667 or sales@westwillowpublishing.com. To discuss coverage of an event relating to home or garden, please contact Roanoke Valley HOME at info@westwillowpublishing.com.



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PUBLISHER'S *note*



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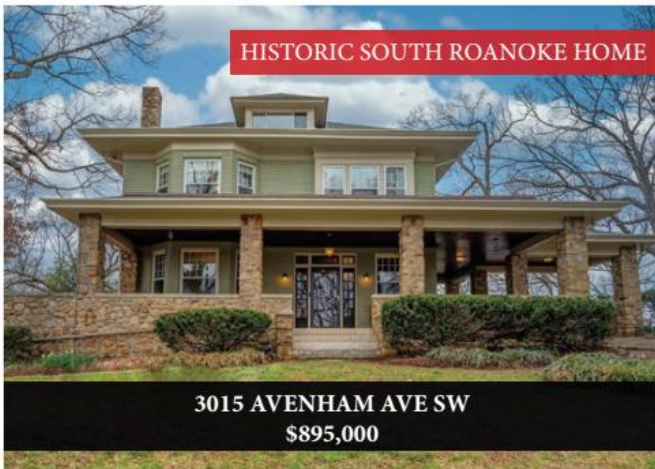
Though we don't play favorites, the spring issue of HOME magazine is always a delight to put together. Our energies turn to seasonal renewal and our content is full of ideas for home and garden improvement, entertaining, and events that are focused on engaging and energizing after cold winter days.

And yet, at press time, as we are ready to hit the proverbial print button, our world is changing rapidly as government officials ask us to come together to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Businesses are making big adjustments to schedules in the interest of public health; we are all navigating uncharted territory, day by day. But we're doing it with hope, knowing that we will get through this if we stick together.

Some of the events you'll find in these pages have since been postponed or cancelled; some of the ideas about parties and projects will wait. In the meantime, please know that we value our readers and advertisers, and appreciate your continued support. We look forward to continuing to provide ideas and inspiration for your home and connecting you with the businesses that can help make it happen. Now more than ever, we are grateful for the homes that provide us shelter and comfort during challenging times.

*Thanks for reading,
Julie*

*Julie Pierce, Publisher
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HOME UPGRADES THAT PAY DIVIDENDS

BY CHRISTY RIPPEL

Home building and design projects are about creativity, better living—and the bottom line. It can be tough to know where to allocate dollars and which upgrades warrant a splurge when you are in the thick of planning. To steer you in the right direction, start with asking yourself some key questions. The answers can serve as guidelines, so you can upgrade your existing or new construction home with confidence.

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Home renovation

How long will we be in this house?

You can't see what the future may hold, like an amazing job offer in another state, but you can think about what your future plans will be as you see them now. Are you ready to move in five years, when your youngest graduates high school, or do you see yourself staying in your home for the next decade or more?

If you plan to list your home within five years, consider your neighborhood before investing your dollars. Use Zillow and other real estate websites to get a handle on what homes are selling for in your area, and what buyers want. If you're unsure, contact a local real estate agent. Many will take a look free of charge and give you advice on home improvements that attract buyers in your market.

The danger here is both over-improving, and choosing fixtures and finishes that will appear dated in a couple of years. For example, a buyer may not be interested in paying for a built-in fridge versus a nice free-standing model, but the cost of making this decision to you is several thousand dollars. Or, going with an ornate wood-grain cabinet in the bathroom, which could be a turn off for many potential buyers, versus widely appealing, classic white Shaker-style cabinets.

According to a recent national survey on remodeling costs versus value, a minor kitchen remodel will pay back 81 percent of total cost, while a major kitchen remodel will pay back only 59 percent of the cost. If moving is on the horizon, a kitchen facelift might be the best option instead of a total gut remodel. Other smart uses of upgrade dollars, according to the survey, are front door replacements, siding upgrades, bathroom remodels, roofing replacements and deck additions.

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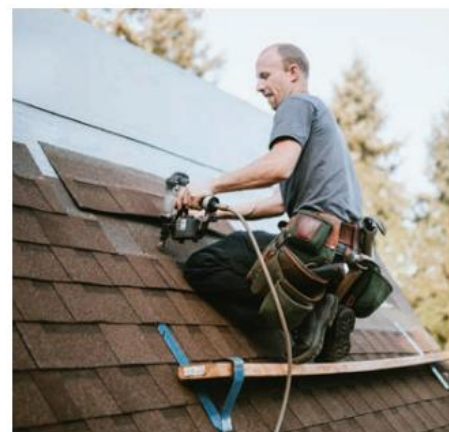
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What's bothered me most about this house since we moved in?

The benefit of living in a home before considering a remodel is that you understand how your home functions, and what it is lacking. No home is perfect, but what bothers you most about yours? Do you have several children, and need a mudroom to corral bookbags and coats? Do you have a large, empty front room that you never furnished and don't spend time in? If you're staying put for several years, you don't have to think about the resale factor as much as someone who plans to leave in a couple of years. Make your home function well for you in your stage of life. For example, a contractor could turn that front room into a homework area with built-in desks and cubbies for your children's clutter, which may improve your daily life in a significant way.

Grab a pen and paper, and brainstorm some ideas. If your giant tub is the elephant in your master bathroom, and you dream of a luxurious walk-in shower instead, put it on the list!



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How will this renovation change the way I enjoy my home?
There are upgrade dollars that you won't get back when you resell. If you have a fancy dining room chandelier that costs \$2,500, some homeowners won't know the difference from one that costs \$250. However, if you love it and it is something that will make you smile every time you walk in the door, it could be a worthy expense for you. Also note that items that are easily changed out, like appliances or expensive window treatments and light fixtures, can be swapped before a house is listed. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, as they say, and worthy upgrades can be a matter of opinion.

While a large new deck to replace a smaller, rickety one is money you'll see back, a luxury composite deck with outdoor fireplace and built-in grill won't yield the same return. Same goes for fancy hardscaping, landscaping, pools and hot tubs. Also of note—pools are sometimes deterrents for Virginia homebuyers who have young children or don't want to deal with the upkeep and relatively short pool season.

However, if these things bring real value for you and your family, and you've always wanted, say, an elaborate hardscaped patio with built-in firepit to gather the family around, go for it. Just know that you may not recoup all costs if you decide to sell.



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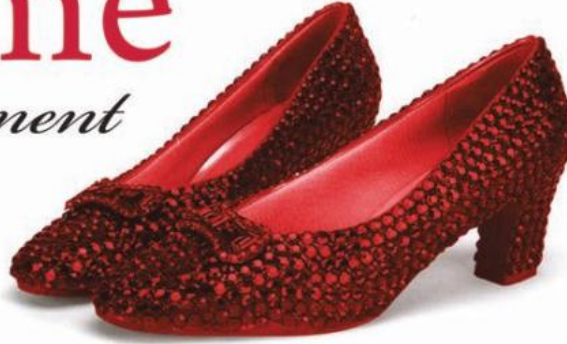
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New construction home

What can I change easily down the road with little aggravation and expense?

A new home project can be daunting. There are so many decisions to make, and upgrade costs can pile up faster than you imagined. Depending on your arrangement with your bank and homebuilder, these costs may have to be paid upfront, making those decisions even more critical. Make a list first of the things that can be changed easily later, once your bank account has had time to recover from the hit. These include light fixtures and nice hardware, but with the caveat that you should plan ahead for these changes. For example, if you'll add sconces later, have the electrician install the light box now. If you have nice hardware in mind, pick out cheaper pulls that fit the builder allowance, but be sure that the holes will line up with the hardware you want to purchase next year.

Also think about what will be difficult or impossible to change in the future. Higher ceilings are a worthy upgrade, and will make your square footage feel more expansive. Quality wood flooring will wear well, and extending it throughout the first floor prevents rooms from appearing choppy when broken up by different flooring. Consider sticking with builder basic carpeting in the bedrooms, but upgrade the carpet pad. It will provide a softness underfoot and extend the life of the carpeting for a fraction of the cost of upgraded carpeting. It's probably worth the extra cost to have walls and ceilings finished smooth, instead of textured (like popcorn ceilings). This can be upgraded later, but is a messy project.

Basements can be set up for finishing later, and consider plumbing rough-ins for wet bars or bathrooms. The cost to do it while the house is under construction is a pittance compared to what it will cost later. Electrical upgrades are cheap at this stage, too, so really think through the electrical plan. Extra outlets, more recessed lighting or light switches are only a few dollars each and are always worth it. Consider outlets on a kitchen island to plug in computers or portable appliances, and think about where you'll charge electronics and add outlets there. How about a switch near your bed to turn off the ceiling lights, so you can reach without getting out of bed? These small upgrades can make a big difference in how your house lives day-to-day.



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What do buyers expect to find in newer homes, if I need to sell mine in the future?

Buyers have come to expect some upgrades in newer homes that they might not expect in an older home. Thankfully, many of these things don't cost much to implement. In the kitchen, spotty granite is on the way out, so opt for granite with a more uniform appearance (black granite with a honed or weathered finish can be a good budget option), or go with marble, quartz or quartzite. Also in the kitchen, integrated trash and recycling bins have become standard issue and are expected, as are taller upper kitchen cabinets that go to, or near, the ceiling, along with cabinet molding. Under-cabinet lighting is a nice touch, and delights buyers.

In the bathrooms and kitchen, soft-close drawers and cabinets with pull out trays are a nice upgrade and appreciated by discerning buyers. Tile flooring in bathrooms and laundry rooms (instead of laminate) has become a standard expectation, but steer clear of the 12x12 size, as it looks dated. On the floor, bigger tiles look more current. Consider rectangular tiles in a zigzag pattern. Your install costs will be higher, but it will make a big impact. A mudroom or cubby area in a new build is a worthy investment, especially if your home is in an area that appeals to younger families. ♦



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WINNING COMBINATIONS

COMPANION PLANTING IN THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

BY BECKY CALVERT



Plants, like humans, do best when they have friends. And just like humans, particular plants get along with some plants better than others. When planted near each other, simpatico plants can have an effect on how each other flourish. This is the basic concept behind companion planting in the garden: planting friends near friends. Plants, like people, compete for resources and space. Some grow fast and take up a lot of space; other plants need more shade or perhaps support to grow to their full height. Some plants add nutrients to the soil, others deplete it. Still others repel insects with their scent while attracting others that may be more beneficial to the garden.

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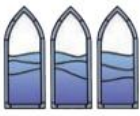


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Nature has been shown to prefer biodiversity, so while we humans love the look of neatly planted rows, it's been proven that planting in smaller groupings with herbs and flowers mixed in with your vegetables makes it more difficult for pests to find your vegetables. Additionally, this approach can maximize your available growing space. Planning your garden to accommodate these characteristics is not just smart gardening; some say it may actually make your harvest taste better, although that hasn't been fully scientifically proven.

Some of the more popular examples of companion planting include the "Three Sisters," a Native American tradition of grouping corn, squash and beans together. The corn stalks grow tall, offering support to the climbing beans. The beans add nitrogen to the soil, helping the corn's nutritional needs. And the squash, sprawling around the bottom of both plants, helps block weeds from sprouting with its large leaves. Another well-known method of companion planting is the practice of planting basil, marigolds and nasturtiums around tomatoes. The colorful blooms of the flowers as well as the fragrant herbs repel many a pest that might otherwise try to make a nice meal of your tomato plant.

Beyond those popular examples are many other lesser known pairings, like carrots with tomatoes. Carrots are heat sensitive, so planting them in between tomatoes helps provide them with some shade during the heat of the summer. As root vegetables, carrots help aerate the soil around tomatoes, allowing more air and water to reach the roots of tomatoes while the tomatoes produce a natural insecticide, solanine, that targets carrot-loving pests. Radishes scattered among the carrots are a friendly addition as well. They germinate faster than carrots, making an easier task out of weeding; the row will be clearly delineated thanks to the radishes, so you'll avoid plucking what you think are weeds until carrots are fully up. Radishes are also harvested in a shorter time span than carrots, helping to loosen the soil around the carrots as radishes are harvested. This is also about the time carrots start to take off, enjoying their newfound leg room.



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Planting vegetables with shorter-to-harvest life among those with a longer time to harvest is a good practice in a few areas of the garden. Consider planting lettuces and radishes with your melons or winter squash, for as your squash plants start getting leggy and need room to sprawl out, the lettuces and radishes will have been harvested, freeing up garden space after keeping it free of weeds.

By the same token, some plants need to be kept separate from others. Aromatic herbs, such as sage, stunt the growth of cucumbers. Peppers don't care to be planted near beans; they get overshadowed by the vines. Basil, onions, spinach and tomatoes are a better neighbor to your pepper plants. Beans, meanwhile, get along swimmingly with members of the Brassicaceae family, better known as cabbage and other cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower. And while beans are a great companion to the tall corn plants, that fondness does not translate to other tall plants like sunflowers. Sage, which might not be preferred by your cucumbers, is a great addition to your cabbage patch as a deterrent to the



NATURE HAS BEEN SHOWN TO PREFER BIODIVERSITY, SO WHILE WE HUMANS LOVE THE LOOK OF NEATLY PLANTED ROWS, IT'S BEEN PROVEN THAT PLANTING IN SMALLER GROUPINGS WITH HERBS AND FLOWERS MIXED IN WITH YOUR VEGETABLES MAKES IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR PESTS TO FIND YOUR VEGETABLES.

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cabbage moth. And even though cabbage and cauliflower are related, they need their space in the garden, as they don't grow well near each other.

Thankfully, the humble marigold is a friend to almost every plant in the garden, repelling nematodes that attack the roots of many plants as well aphids and beetles. Nasturtiums are also equally helpful in deterring aphids, in addition to being edible and a lovely addition to salads. Both marigolds and nasturtiums attract pollinators, helping to increase the fruit set of tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, peas and more vegetable plants. Both should be planted liberally throughout the garden.

For resources on the best planting combinations for your garden, start by asking your local nursery for suggestions. For more a more in-depth look, there's plentiful information online and in books dedicated to the subject, although sometimes, the best knowledge comes from the experience of keeping a garden year in and year out. Keep a record of what does well and see if you can find your best companion planting combinations. ♦



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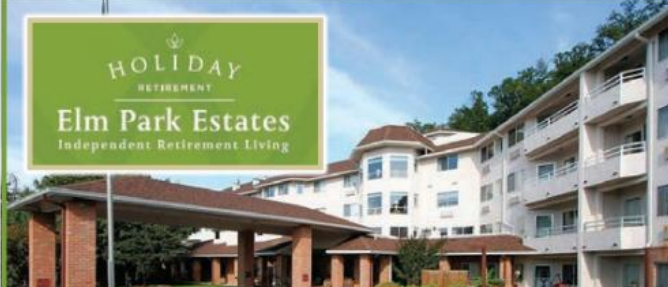
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outside of going into any Grand Home Furnishings and speaking to one of our highly qualified specialists, where do you even start? The answer is you start here. Just for you, we've condensed years of mattress expertise to four simple steps to help you find your perfect mattress and get the most out of each night's sleep.

1. IS IT TIME FOR A NEW MATTRESS?

As a rule-of-thumb, mattresses usually last roughly 6-8 years, but most people change their mattresses every few years. Vice versa some people wait too long for a mattress which can directly affect your sleep and even your mental and physical health.

2. DECIDE ON A BUDGET

It's imperative that you first determine how much you can reasonably spend on a mattress. The average mattress price hovers anywhere around \$600-\$800 but can also run as low as \$150 and up to price points eclipsing \$5,000. So, you want to be clear what your budget is for the size and quality of the mattress you're looking for. Also, keep in mind that price (in this context) does not always equate value

3. KNOW YOUR SLEEP STYLE

We're all unique in how we sleep. Some of us sleep on our stomachs, while others sleep on their sides, and some on their backs. No two people have the same sleeping style, and no one person sleeps in one position the entirety of the night. The position you find yourself curling into at night can determine how firm you'd prefer your mattress. Those of us who tend to sleep on our side would do better with a softer mattress, while those who prefer to sleep on their stomachs or backs tend to sleep better with a medium to the medium-firm mattress.

4. WEIGHT MATTERS

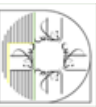
Weight is a key determining factor in your next mattress purchase; which adds to the complexity of finding the right mattress for you. Support, hug, feel, sinkage and even cooling will depend on your body type and weight. Lighter sleepers (150 lbs. or less) would benefit from a mattress in the 3-6 firmness range, while heavier sleepers (200+ lbs.) would want to compensate for sinkage (which could adversely affect pressure points in the back and side) by purchasing a firmer mattress.



We hope these mattress buying tips help you find the right mattress.

If you require more support (pun intended) visit your local Grand Home Furnishings and make use of our ZEEZ diagnostic system. Our system analyzes your sleep positions and body pressure points to determine the right mattress for how you sleep. From Grand's huge selection of nearly 70 mattresses, ZEEZ narrows down your choices to the best mattresses for your needs. Then one of our sleep experts will help you find the perfect mattress match. So, no matter how you sleep, we'll help you find your perfect mattress.

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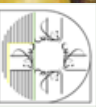
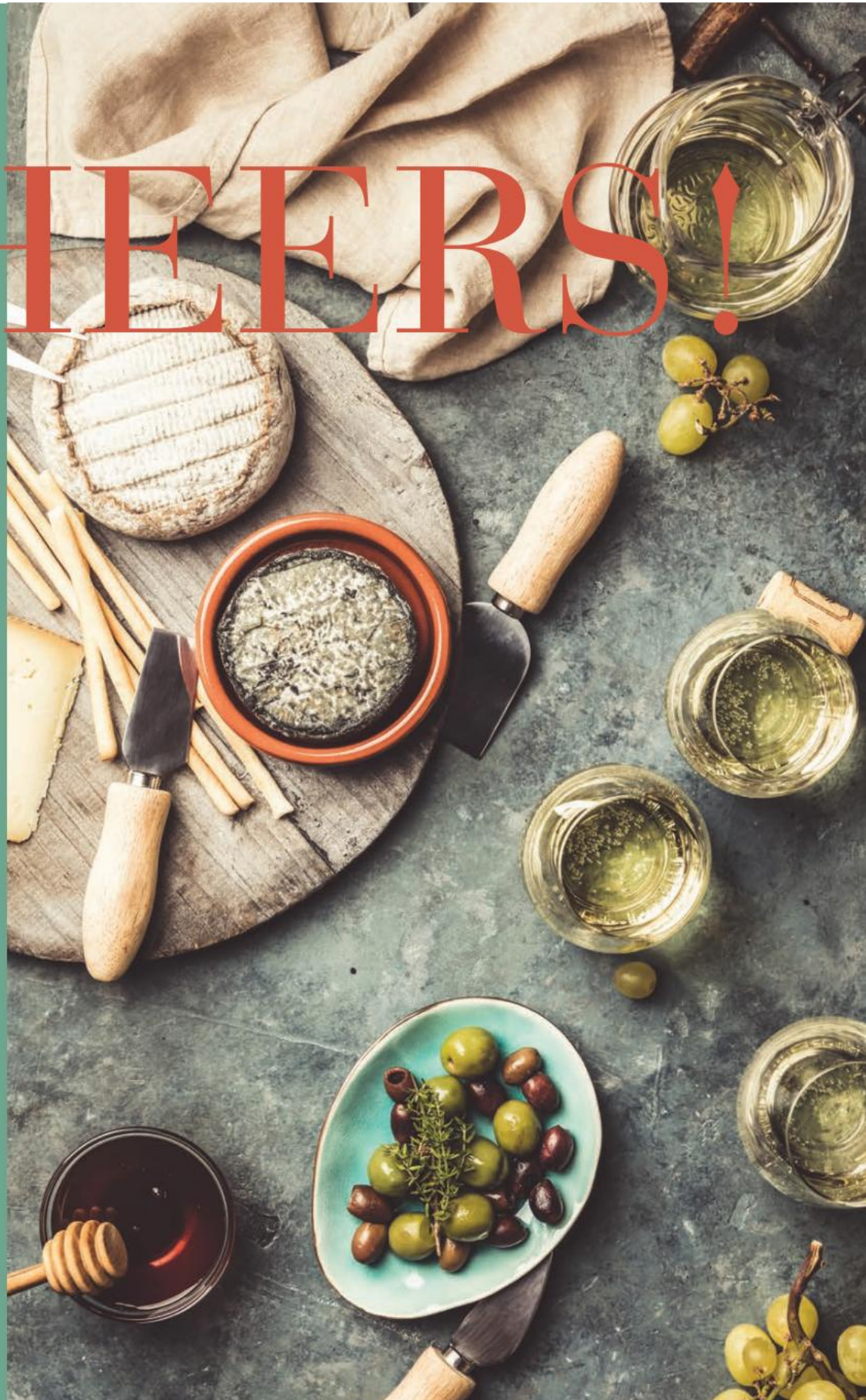


CHEERS!

HOSTING A HAPPY HOUR AT HOME

BY MARSHA GALE

Hosting a happy hour is one of my favorite ways to entertain; the name "happy hour" just sounds like it will be a good time. It's a low-pressure, low-commitment alternative to the traditional dinner party, for both the host and the guests. Most importantly, it accomplishes the main goal, which is to reconnect with friends you may not have seen in a while. Keeping some simple tips in mind can make this kind of entertaining easy, budget-friendly, stress-free and, most importantly, fun.





Timing

Happy hour is usually from 5 to 7 p.m. Make it clear when you invite your guests, via email, text or evite, that it's ok if they have dinner plans afterwards, and that they can drop in any time during that period. This way they'll understand they won't be served an entire meal, and it increases the chance that friends will stop by, even for a little while.

Food

One of my favorite quotes from noted chef Ina Garten is, "Food is not about impressing people. In fact, it's just the opposite: it's about making them feel comfortable." I find that if I am a relaxed host, my guests are comfortable and enjoy themselves no matter what food I serve. Some of my happy hours that turned out to be the most fun were impromptu affairs, made possible by items I already had on hand.

Items that every well-stocked kitchen should have for drop-in guests are foods that have a long shelf life in the pantry and go well with a cocktail or a glass of wine: think olives, nuts, mini-pickles

and crackers. A wedge of cheese is also easy to keep on hand in your deli drawer. Just arrange the snacks in pretty bowls or on a large platter and serve with some napkins and small plates.

Of course, if you have more time and want to be a little "extra," the sky is the limit. If I plan a happy hour ahead of time, I like to make an overflowing charcuterie board using a big wooden lazy Susan or a large wooden cutting board saved just for these purposes. You can also use any large, flat platter.

Elements of a great charcuterie board include a variety of flavors and textures. For a basic arrangement, start with a bunch of grapes or a pile of strawberries, slightly off-center to add interest, color and height. Then place four different kinds of cheese around the platter with a small spreader or cheese knife for each cheese: soft (goat, Brie, or Boursin), stinky (blue, Camembert), semi-hard, (cheddar, Havarti, Gruyere), and hard (manchego, Parmigiano-Reggiano, aged Gouda).

Next place condiments in little bowls or jars, such as fruit paste or jam, or honey and a good stone-ground mustard. Add cured meats like slices of salami and prosciutto, as well as crackers and

ITEMS THAT EVERY WELL-STOCKED KITCHEN SHOULD HAVE FOR DROP-IN GUESTS ARE FOODS THAT HAVE A LONG SHELF LIFE IN THE PANTRY AND GO WELL WITH A COCKTAIL OR A GLASS OF WINE: THINK OLIVES, NUTS, MINI-PICKLES AND CRACKERS.



baguette slices. You can also include olives and cornichons, placed in small shallow dishes so the crackers don't get soggy.

Even though your board is likely very full by now, fill in with nuts such as Marcona or smoked almonds or roasted macadamia nuts, and dried fruit like cherries, apricots or figs. You can also include some fresh veggies like baby carrots and cherry tomatoes, until it looks plentiful but not messy.

Drinks

Wine is a classic offering at happy hour. Keep it light, such as a white, rose or pinot noir, since most people prefer heavier wines with dinner. It's good to offer beer and hard seltzer since it's so popular right now, and it's easy enough to keep some stocked in fridge. Alternately, you could offer one special cocktail, either as a make-ahead, big-batch pitcher drink that guests can serve themselves, or set up a small bar with just enough ingredients for guests to make their own.

Atmosphere

Put on some great music at a volume where people can relax and talk easily. Arrange the food on a kitchen table, island or coffee table so people can sit around it and nibble as they talk. If you expect a larger crowd, you can set up food in a few different locations to provide cozy, intimate settings for your guests. Also, if the weather cooperates, take it outside on the patio or deck. Cheers to some great happy hours in your future! ♦

Oven Roasted Garlic Butter Shrimp

If you feel like cooking, make something super easy and flavorful, like this shrimp recipe.

- 2 pounds extra-large or jumbo shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- 4 tablespoons butter, softened
- Pinch of freshly chopped parsley for garnish (optional)
- 1/2 lemon

Place the shrimp in a 13x9 pan and toss with the oil, salt, pepper and garlic. Roast at 350 degrees for 6 to 8 minutes, just until the shrimp are pink and cooked through. Immediately add the butter and stir until melted. Pour into a large shallow bowl, sprinkle with a bit of parsley if desired, and squeeze the lemon juice over all.

Toss and serve with toothpicks and slices of baguette to mop up the juices.

1, 2, 3 Grapefruit Cocktail

This easy cocktail is a personal favorite, and makes a delicious "mocktail" without the alcohol.

- 1 part grapefruit vodka, such as Deep Eddy's
- 2 parts club soda
- 3 squeezes lime juice

Combine, stir, then add a few ice cubes.



Photo courtesy of Phillip Barrett, Jr.

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out-of-this-world KITCHENS

DREAM APPLIANCES FOR A NEW DECADE



BY CAROL J. ALEXANDER

You drop by the grocery on the way home from a rough day at work. A meeting dragged on and on and you missed lunch. Now famished, you weigh your options—a frozen pizza or a can of soup. You really want the pizza but waiting on the oven sounds like an eternity. You pop the soup in your cart.

Imagine, if you could tell your oven to preheat from your phone while you're checking out at the store. That would make the pizza just as fast as heating the soup. Sound like something out of the Jetsons?

"No," says Paul St. Clair, store manager of Vinton Appliance Center in Roanoke County. "WiFi-enabled appliances are becoming the norm. With some ovens, you can even ask Alexa (or Google) how much longer until the pie is done while sitting in your easy chair."

One thing's for sure, these appliances are smart.

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PHOTO: FERGUSON/MICHAEL PATCH



More tech in the kitchen

Ovens aren't just remotely controlled, they take control. If your mother-in-law complained of your dry turkey last Thanksgiving, this year let a new oven tell you what went wrong. Between preset recipe settings and probes that tell the oven when the turkey is done, your mother-in-law will be making plans to return for Christmas dinner, too.

Ovens aren't the only tech-savvy domestic devices. Forget to buy dishwasher detergent? No worries. The Wolf Subzero Cove dishwasher will automatically add it to your Amazon Prime order. Smart refrigerators have dedicated zones set at different temperatures, so you can keep your milk icy cold and your lettuce, in another compartment, not as much. There's even a "soft freeze" area that keeps meat fresher, longer, according to St. Clair.

Who makes these dream appliances? "Every brand has something that connects to WiFi now," says Casey Leach, showroom manager of the Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery in Lynchburg. But, she says, the most exciting technology in the kitchen is GE's Kitchen Hub.

"It's like a computer monitor built into your vent hood," she says. And this thing does it all. Functioning like an iPad, but the size of a small microwave, it controls all the appliances in the kitchen and streams your favorite shows while you cook.

"You can pull up recipes, or a cooking guide," Leach says. "It takes a lot of the guesswork out of cooking." Hands covered in ground beef and you need to turn on the oven? GE's Kitchen Hub is voice-activated.

Smart appliances don't just make your life easier. They make the repair technician's life easier, too. Many appliances self-diagnose and alert you to which part needs replacing or they give an error code to pass on to the technician. This eliminates a trip to your house to diagnose, saving you both time and money.

Alternative cooking methods

Real foodies cook with steam, says Leach. Using water supplied by either a dedicated line or a tank, these steam ovens deliver delicious and nutritious meals that retain their moisture.

"They're popular with people who want to eat healthier," says St. Clair. "And



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they're idiot-proof. You can't overcook your food in a steam oven." If you're adding steam to your "dream" list, get a model with a convection option for the browning ability.

Another trending item, he says, is the induction cooktop. This glass surface only heats where the pot connects with the glass. And according to St. Clair, it's faster and more responsive than gas.

The minimalist kitchen

If you've joined the throngs of people keeping only things that bring them joy, replaced your upper cabinets with floating shelves, or otherwise don't like cluttered countertops, appliance drawers are for you.

That's right, push a button and a drawer slides out. Insert leftovers, press a few buttons, it closes and cooks. Voila! A microwave in a drawer. According to St. Clair, these babies are a hot ticket item.

Need more fridge space? Consider a cooler drawer. It looks like any other drawer in your island or butler's pantry but inside



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it's a mini fridge. They're popular for keeping bottled water, kids' drinks, or even wine.

Speaking of the refrigerator, it's not just for keeping your food cold and dispensing ice and water anymore. You can order a Keurig coffee maker to fit your GE Cafe or Profile door. "It's good for the coffee lover who doesn't want to give up the counter space," says St. Clair.

Snazzier than Grandma's avocado green

Stainless steel is still the most popular choice in the kitchen. But hot new finishes include slate, black slate, black stainless and matte, in both white and black, according to St. Clair.

But Whirlpool has a Sunset Bronze that Leach says is absolutely beautiful. And if you want to add color to the kitchen, she says to do it with accessories, like lighting.

From smart technology and new ways of cooking to hidden appliances and fun new finishes, the appliances for the 2020 kitchen are out of this world. ♦



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DESIGN THROUGH THE DECADES

TRENDS ENDURE TO CREATE TIMELESS, COLLECTED INTERIORS

BY RORY RHODES

The saying "everything old is new again" has been around for centuries. It's true in many contexts, among them design. Home trends come and go through the decades, so if you hang on to something long enough, it could make a comeback.

Today more than in any recent design era, the emphasis is on individuality and unique finds, handmade and repurposed over mass market. The result is the freedom to use whatever you love in unexpected ways. If you don't have anything from a bygone era, antique and consignment shops can yield a treasure trove. Here are some trends from previous decades that we've noticed are making reappearances.

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PIECES FROM DIFFERENT DECADES LEND DEPTH AND ORIGINALITY, THE ANTIDOTE TO "NEUTRAL" OR "TRANSITIONAL" SPACES. PULLING INSPIRATION FROM PREVIOUS ERAS ALLOWS YOU TO CREATE AN INVITING HOME FILLED WITH THINGS YOU LOVE THAT EXPRESS YOUR PERSONAL STYLE.

EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Penny tile—small circular ceramic or porcelain tile so named for being about the size of the coin—has been around for over 100 years, but has recently returned as a popular look. Once used predominantly for bathroom floors, there are many ways to use it in a modern context. In the bathroom, penny tile looks great as a shower or accent wall, especially in water-themed shades of cerulean and aqua. In the kitchen, penny tile is a fresh take on the backsplash. It's a glam finish for everything from a wet bar to a fireplace surround. White grout with colored penny tile is both a clean and interesting aesthetic in many applications, but one word of caution: It's a LOT of grout to clean if the area gets traffic. So for a bathroom floor, white tile and gray grout might serve you better.

Freestanding tubs were the bath de rigueur until the advent of the built-in shower/tub combo after World War II, but in recent years they have returned once more as a symbol of luxury. Today's freestanding tubs feature sleek curves and modern lines, often with a Japanese soaking tub aesthetic. Finishes range from white to wood to copper, and are at home in a range of decor styles, from minimalist to farmhouse.

Velvet is another design trend long associated with luxury. But modern velvet furnishings have little in common with the stiff Victorian vibe of 100 years ago. Easy-to-care-for finishes and an array of vibrant colors have taken velvet out of the parlor and into the mainstream. One tip to make velvet look fresh is to use it as an accent: a side chair in an unexpected color, throw pillows on a textured sofa, a pouf, headboard or quilt. For drapes, stick to modern hardware and forgo the tassels to keep it looking current.



1920S

The Roaring 20s ushered in the Jazz Age and Art Deco, which was known for bold geometric shapes and metallic accents that created a sleek, sophisticated aesthetic. Art Deco style is seen again now in furniture with curved lines and glossy gold or chrome trim. Paired with an exotic animal-print accent, it lends any space cosmopolitan flair and keeps it firmly grounded in the 21st century.

An angular Art Deco mirror or mirrored chandelier contrasted with modern art creates a stunning effect. Anything that speaks of luxury—lacquered finishes, leather, inlaid wood—is a reflection of the elegance of this period. On a smaller scale, glass and crystal accessories, such as champagne coupes and crystal or cut-glass decanters, add a bit of Gatsby glam.



1930S

Glamour continued into the 1930s with Hollywood Regency style, known for its lavish details. The modern iteration tones down embellishments while keeping the glitz. Furniture such as tufted sofas and headboards are emblematic of this style. The era's oversized mirrors and mirrored furniture are chic again.

Black and white was a popular 1930s color combination that seems to be making a comeback. Black and white geometric-tiled bathrooms are on trend, and the color combo has expanded into other home areas as well. "Tuxedo" kitchens pair white upper cabinetry with black lower cabinetry. Alternatively, black and white checkered floor tile packs a design punch in the kitchen or any space.



1940S

Post-World War II design was marked by a desire for welcoming interiors. Wartime shortages meant that furnishings were short on metal, so wood finishes and making do were the order of the day. Popular elements from this era which have reemerged lately are cozy florals, ruffles, and knitted and crocheted textiles.

The 1940s also ushered in the beginning of midcentury modern design. Hairpin metal table and chair legs, born of post-war scarcity, were a minimalist departure from heavy table legs and are in style again. Plywood became popular, with Charles and Ray Eames debuting their first molded-plywood dining room chair, en vogue again in recent times.



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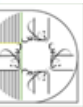
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1950S

Midcentury modern style has been firmly ensconced in home design for a few years now, and no wonder—so much from that decade still feels fresh in contemporary homes. Airy white and neutral palettes, clean lines and minimal bric-a-brac are easy on the eye. In addition to the Eames Lounge and Ottoman chair (released in 1956), famous names like Eero Saarinen and Hans Wegner gave us iconic shapes such as the tulip table, the womb chair, and the wishbone chair, which are all in demand today.

Bar carts are back, that sleek, space-saving alternative to a built-in bar. They still feel chic in glass and metal, and even rattan. Use it to serve up a Manhattan or a Gin Rickey and you'll be as hep now as a pack of Chesterfields at the sock hop.

In the kitchen, retro appliance brands like SMEG and Big Chill feature 50s-era refrigerators, stoves, toasters and coffee makers in pastel, chrome-trimmed hues. They are at home in a variety of design styles, from cottage to farmhouse to bohemian.



1960S

The midcentury modern movement continued into the 60s, joined by space race fervor. Atomic-inspired shapes such as Sputnik chandeliers and shiny plastic finishes are still à la mode today. A mix of natural and synthetic materials works best now as then; unless you want your home to look like The Jetsons, be sure to ground those funky boomerangs and starbursts with some furnishings featuring straight lines and organic finishes.

The late 60s evolved from mad for modern to flower power, bringing in a mix of earth tones with lively folkcraft and bohemian touches. This look is definitely still on-trend, with flokati, rya, and other long-pile rugs an easy way to evoke the era. Bold colors and mixed patterns combined with wood furnishings capture a groovy vibe without veering into full tie-dye psychedelia.

1970S

Nature was front and center in a lot of 70s design, and that look is back in a big way. Houseplants were and are all the rage—grassy spider plants, trailing philodendron, jungly monstera, and spiky snake plants offer an array of textures and bring the outdoors in, whether in floor pots or macramé holders.

Speaking of macramé, it was macramé all day then and now. Combined with rattan furnishings, it's full of warmth and natural texture. Avocado and mustard colors are with us once more, updated as an accent rather than a wall-to-wall hue ... phew!

Turntables, once relegated to your parents' wood-paneled basement with the foosball table, are back on display and spinning vintage vinyl LPs.

1980S

The Big 80s were loud and lavish both in fashion and home design. Memphis design (think DayGlo and squiggles), pop art, and jungle prints are all bold, colorful statements that have returned—in doses. As with avocado, these are not looks you want all over, but are perfect for a focal point or statement piece.

Eighties patterns like chintz and Southwestern also seem to be back on the scene, especially in bedding. Channel-tufted headboards with padded bed frames are another 80s reemergence, as is Lucite furniture. A Lucite side table or chair is elegant and especially useful in small spaces, where it has an almost invisible footprint.

Cesca chairs—those bouncy cantilevered chairs made from tubular steel and six-way cane—were actually designed in the 1920s but graced many an 80s dining room. Cesca and other cane chairs are having a serious moment in dining rooms, breakfast nooks, and on patios.



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1990S

Poufy curtain valances, sponge painting, silk plants and wallpaper borders might come to mind when you think of 1990s decor. A soft-edged reaction to the excesses of 80s decor, 90s style is best mostly left behind for now, but a few elements seem to have resurfaced, especially amongst nostalgic millennials.

Pastels look to be returning on both furnishings and walls. Conversely, hunter green is also coming around. It's not far removed from trés chic emerald and likewise pairs delightfully with shiny brass accents. Blue and white, a popular 90s palette, still looks fresh on a collection of ginger jars or in a bright and crisp living room.

Blonde wood can be found again in home design. It pairs beautifully with white, and is seen on open kitchen shelving, bathroom cabinetry, dining chairs and headboards, updated for the new century in sleek straight lines.



21ST CENTURY

In the past 20 years, interior design has become increasingly environmentally conscious, favoring ethically sourced, sustainable and recycled materials and furnishings.

It has also become more democratic, embracing eclecticism, global influences and personal style more than ever before. Many homeowners are seeking spaces with soul and warmth that feel collected rather than decorated.

One of the best ways to express this aesthetic is to embrace contrasts—in color, texture, shape and style. Pieces from different decades lend depth and originality, the antidote to “neutral” or “transitional” spaces. Pulling inspiration from previous eras allows you to create an inviting home filled with things you love that express your personal style. ♦



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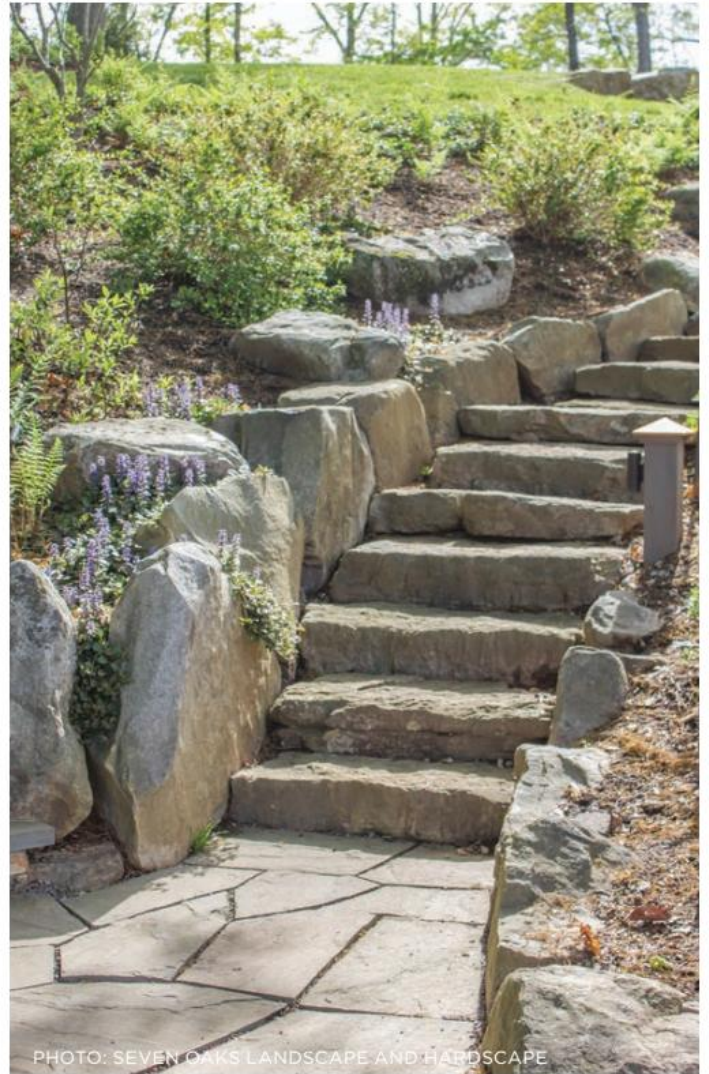
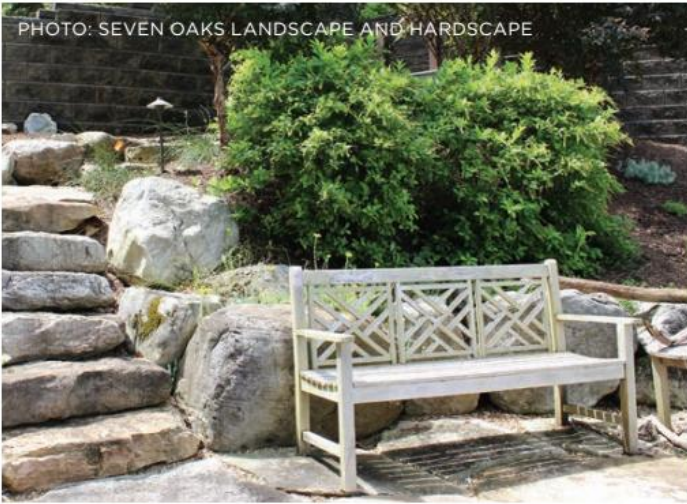
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retaining walls

WHERE FORM MEETS FUNCTION



BY PAULA PETERS CHAMBERS

Few landscape features combine aesthetics and function as well as retaining walls. These sculptural elements can be simple or massive, hidden behind a living green screen or showcased with plantings designed to draw attention. While energetic homeowners might be willing to jump into building a wall themselves—emboldened by the many do-it-yourself videos readily available online—experts advise careful contemplation and a thorough understanding of what's needed.



When to use

Retaining walls can be placed to add visual interest to a yard, creating planting beds for flowers, vegetables or herbs. Or they can define space, separating a driveway or walkway from an adjacent area. They can also create usable space, taking a sloped portion of a yard and leveling it so that a terrace, patio or fire pit is possible. Sometimes, retaining walls are needed to fight erosion, to actually prevent ground from falling away.

Ronnie Mitchell, of Ronnie Mitchell and Son Landscaping in Rocky Mount, says walls are useful in virtually every yard.

"Many times, they are to create a level back yard, so there's a play area or a space for games," Mitchell says. "You can also put in a patio or fire pit, or create a parking area."

Brad Austin, project manager at Seven Oaks Landscape and Hardscape in Rocky Mount, says before any project gets underway, homeowners need to identify their goals and the evaluate the space available.

"You have to understand why you want a retaining wall, what you're trying to do with it," Austin says. "You have to think about how to tie it in with everything else around it, so it looks neat and natural versus something big and ugly."

The basics

To the casual eye, a retaining wall might simply appear to be a stack of bricks or rocks nestled comfortably into the earth. What's not seen is the deliberate architecture and construction that bolsters the wall and ensures its stability.

A properly dug footer is needed for a solid foundation. The wall needs to be placed at a slight angle (the "batter") so that it leans into the ground, usually 1 inch off vertical for every 1 foot of wall height, creating stability. Behind the wall is drainage stone protected by filter fabric (to prevent soil infiltration), weep holes and a footing drain. The wall also needs adequate backfill, so pressure from ground that swells during wet periods can be absorbed.

Before any brick, block or stone is laid, a plan is essential. The scope of the plan is determined by the wall's size. Homeowners must contact their building inspection office, as regulations vary by locality. In some cases, a building permit may be required for a wall taller than 3 feet. In other areas, the limit could be 4 feet. Over that height, walls have to be designed by an engineer and installed by a professional.

Homeowners also have to consider whether the wall is purely decorative or will have to hold weight at the top, for sitting or walking.

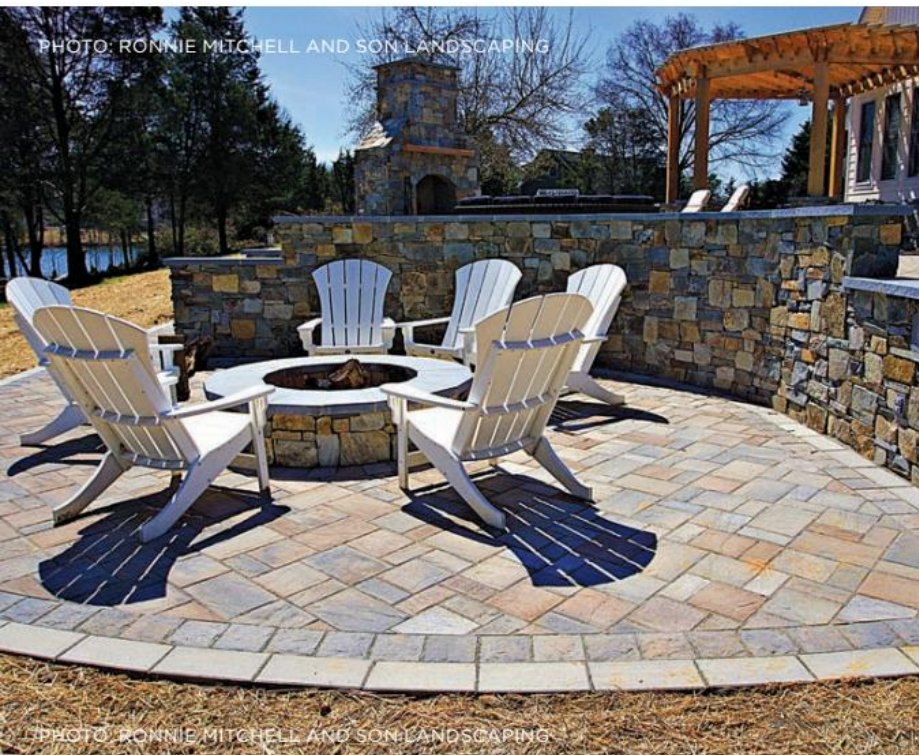
"You have to make sure it's safe and secure, because it's a built structure," Mitchell says.

Austin adds, "You have to be very careful with DIY projects. People think they can go out on a weekend and throw up a retaining wall, but you need to have backfill compacted properly and good drainage."

The look

A variety of materials can be used to make retaining walls: timber, bricks, natural stone, manufactured blocks and poured concrete.

RETAINING WALLS CAN ADD VISUAL INTEREST TO A YARD, CREATING PLANTING BEDS, OR THEY CAN DEFINE SPACE, SEPARATING A DRIVEWAY OR WALKWAY FROM AN ADJACENT AREA. THEY CAN ALSO CREATE USABLE SPACE, TAKING A SLOPED PORTION OF A YARD AND LEVELING IT SO THAT A TERRACE, PATIO OR FIRE PIT IS POSSIBLE.



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Different materials yield different looks and have different costs, so it's advisable to get a handle on pricing early in the process. Aesthetics should also be considered.

Boulders are good for creating appealing walls, Mitchell says, so long as the wall isn't high. "Anything over 3 feet needs to be a block wall, with good grid reinforcement," he notes.

Even manufactured blocks can be appealing, Austin says. "You can use different block textures—a weathered block or a pattern look," he says. "You have to think about whether you want a formal or natural look."

Once the wall is built, it can be enhanced or screened with the addition of plants. Bushes at the base of a tall wall will grow and eventually draw attention away from the wall. Climbing plants or trailing vines can soften what would otherwise be a harsh façade.

The ultimate goal, of course, is to have a functional wall that benefits a landscape without creating problems in the future.

"They're not making land anymore," Austin notes. "Retaining walls allow you to build on properties that before would not have been appropriate. Or you can create outdoor living areas that are aesthetic as well as functional." ♦

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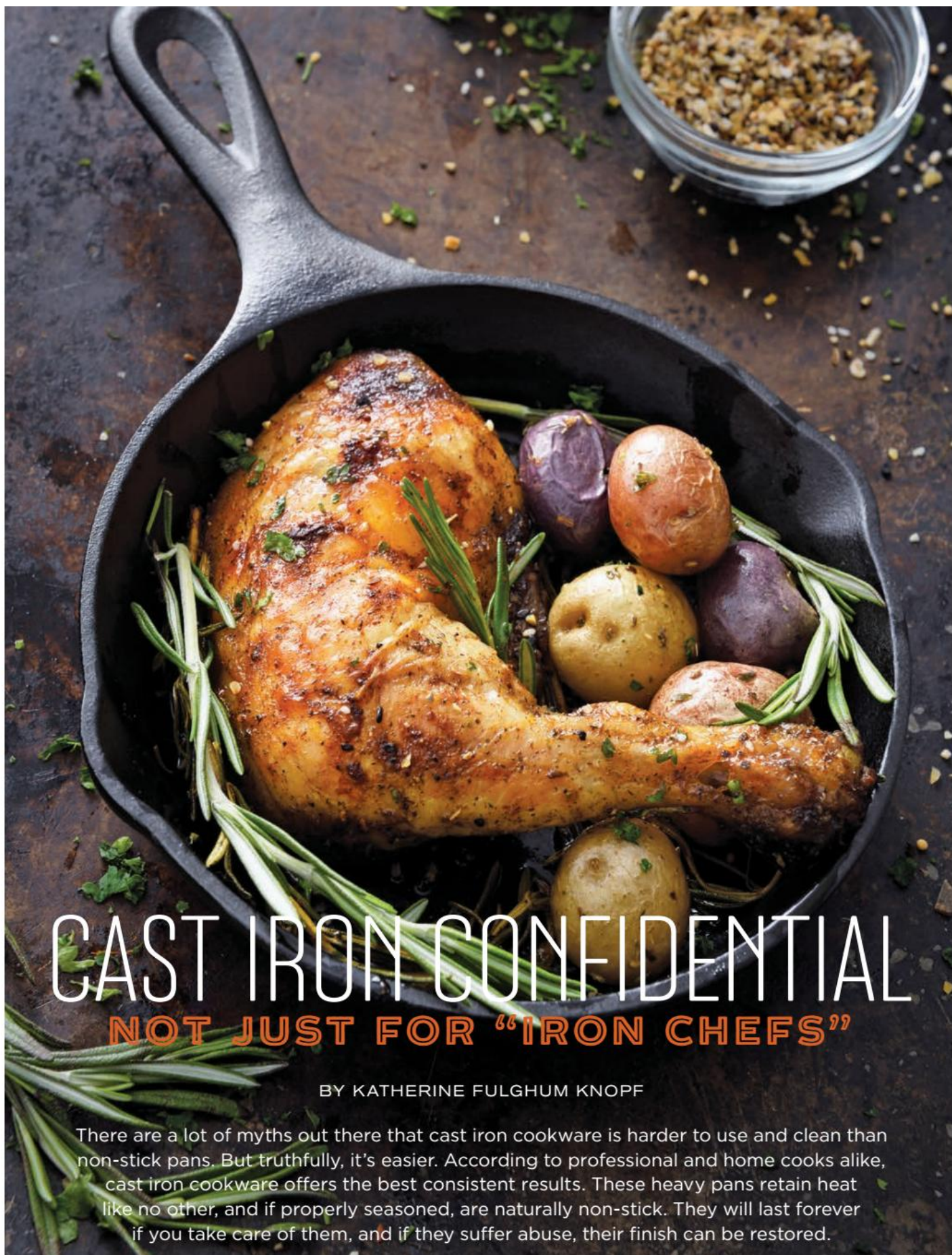
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CAST IRON CONFIDENTIAL

NOT JUST FOR "IRON CHEFS"

BY KATHERINE FULGHUM KNOPF

There are a lot of myths out there that cast iron cookware is harder to use and clean than non-stick pans. But truthfully, it's easier. According to professional and home cooks alike, cast iron cookware offers the best consistent results. These heavy pans retain heat like no other, and if properly seasoned, are naturally non-stick. They will last forever if you take care of them, and if they suffer abuse, their finish can be restored.

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Just a little TLC

Cast iron pans used to be family heirlooms passed down from one generation to the next. Everyone coveted that dark finish that shines after proper cleaning. Clean up is easy: After each use, while the pan is still warm, use a couple of dry or slightly damp paper towels to wipe the skillet inside and out to remove any food particles, then run it under hot water. If there are any cooking bits left, use a non-metal scrub brush to clean anything still attached, and finish with another rinse of hot water (and yes, you may find that you need this step after cooking eggs and seared meats). Dry it inside and out with a dishtowel, then apply a little oil (1/2 teaspoon) to keep it from being dry or developing rust patches. This maintenance must be done after each use before your skillet is stored. Just like a fine piece of wood furniture, cast iron loves oil.

What oil is the best to use? Notable cooks offer various opinions from flaxseed to sunflower or low-cost soybean oil. Note that the higher the polyunsaturated fat, the better it binds to the cast iron and protects it. That protective oil binding to the iron is the process that cooks refer to as “seasoning” for cast iron pots. That said, any type of vegetable oil will work; just don’t use olive oil as it flames at a much lower temperature than vegetable oils.

One cook’s secret tip is to use an old pastry brush to coat the oil on the clean pan, then pop it in a warm oven for a couple of minutes to spread the oil and make sure no moisture is left in the pan to cause rust.

Cast iron is almost indestructible, and these pans are a great value. New ones are found in hardware stores and kitchen shops, often for less than \$50; old ones are the best yard sale and thrift shop finds for less.

Restoring old cookware

Even an old rusted skillet can be brought back to life with an easy restoration technique. First assess the pan; is it rusty or just tired and dull? For rusty, preheat the oven to 500 degrees and oil the pan. For a large pan use one tablespoon of oil swirled with dry paper towels on the bottom and inside rim. For a medium or small skillet, use two teaspoons of oil. Carefully place the pan in the oven to bake for one hour. Remove it wearing heavy oven mitts. Allow to cool and wipe clean. If it still has rust or isn’t smooth and shiny black in color, repeat the whole process again, using the same amount of oil, baking temperature and time in the oven. An old, abused pan can take up to five of these cleanings to properly restore it and be ready for use.

If your pan is dull and shows just a smidge of rust or flaking, it can be re-seasoned easily on the stove top. To reseason a cast iron pan, set your stove on medium-high heat and warm the skillet. Spread a couple of tablespoons of oil on paper towels; use tongs to rub the skillet with oil until it smokes. Once the pan smokes, turn the stove off and let the pan cool. Rub the inside and bottom again with the oily paper towels and let it sit until cold. This process may be repeated several times. This technique should be used to reseason your pan occasionally over the years. It is faster and easier than

the oven method, which is only necessary for cast iron that has rusted.

If you are shopping for a cast iron pan, many new ones come preseasoned. An old one, found in Grandma's attic or a thrift store, will need cleaning with hot water and a non-metal scrubber before this stovetop treatment. Left unused, cast iron pans can become sticky or dry. Either condition warrants a good cleaning and reseasoning.

What can you cook in cast iron?

Everything. And don't think cast iron is just for skillets. There are cast iron pizza pans, waffle irons, Dutch ovens, and

griddles that work both on the stove top and in the oven. This material is durable and gets hot, making it perfect for searing meats then slow baking in the oven. It makes a fabulous crust so pizza comes out crisp on the bottom and the toppings are well-baked. Many bread bakers use a cast iron Dutch oven to bake their loaves of bread, and we all know that Southerners cook the best cornbread in cast iron skillets. Eggs come out perfectly every time whether scrambled, fried, or an omelet.

It's time to try cast iron cooking or get back to it if it's been a while since you've used that pan. Grab a cookbook, or try this steak recipe offered here. ♦

BLAZING STEAK MEDITERRANEAN

Remove steaks from refrigerator about 20 minutes before cooking to come to room temperature. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place ½ teaspoon of olive oil or a tablespoon of butter for a rich flavor in your cast iron skillet and put it on the stovetop on medium-high heat until the oil starts to smoke.

While the pan is warming, mix 1 teaspoon ground garlic, 1 teaspoon cumin and ¾ teaspoon black pepper and rub on both sides of steaks. Place steaks in the pan and sear on each side for two minutes to form a crust. Once both sides are dark, place the skillet in the oven and bake. For rare steaks, bake 2 minutes; for medium-rare steaks, bake 4 minutes; for medium steaks, bake 6 minutes, and for well-done steaks, bake 8 minutes.

Remove from oven, place steaks on a clean plate, lightly salt both sides and allow them to rest covered for 5 minutes. The meat temperature continues to rise as it rests; check meat by using a meat thermometer. For rare: 125 degrees; medium-rare: 130 degrees; medium: 140 degrees; medium-well: 150 degrees; well-done: 160 degrees.

Serve with a green salad and crusty bread.



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Paul Economy and Randy Craver had been together for almost two decades when their settled lives took a turn—well, several turns actually—and good ones at that. For the majority of those years, Paul and Randy balanced their demanding professional lives with community and church involvement, but their creative outlet was a meticulously restored historic home in the Old Southwest neighborhood of Roanoke. According to Randy, in 2016 the couple got a “surprise out-of-the-blue offer” to purchase the house. It was an offer they couldn’t refuse, and suddenly they were plunged into house hunting.

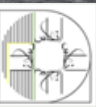
After the charm and historical nuance of a century-old home, especially one that had been fully renovated and restored, the 1965 brick ranch-style home on a hillside didn’t immediately grab their imagination when they first drove by with their Realtor. However, once they stepped inside, they realized that this house had something special. “We probably looked at 30 houses with our patient Realtor and friend, Mary Chisholm of Wainwright and Co. Realtors, and this one was one of the first ones we looked at,” says Randy. “We both walked in and said, ‘Oh my gosh...the view!’”



The view—a panoramic west-facing vista of the Roanoke Valley spread like a picnic blanket below—was truly breathtaking, but the house itself was dated. “Everywhere we looked there were things that needed to be changed,” says Randy. The house felt cramped and awkwardly laid out. The interior was dark, painted in a brown and orange color scheme popular in the late sixties. The kitchen had wood paneling, no flow and four different types of countertops. “To go out onto the back deck required climbing over a radiator, and all the bathrooms needed updating,” he says. Overwhelmed, the couple passed on the home, hopeful that they’d find a house that didn’t need so much work, but as their house hunt continued, they kept returning to the home with the view. It was because of the view that Paul and Randy eventually purchased the brick ranch and set about making it their own—a plan that meant

some major changes indoors and out: a whole new color scheme, new kitchen, bathrooms, an outdoor area with lots of room for entertaining, and a pool.

Their first call was to Rob Schroeder of RJS Builders. Schroeder helped with renovations on the couple’s first home in Old Southwest, and both Randy and Paul are big fans. “Rob is amazing,” says Randy. “We had a great working relationship. We told him what we wanted to do and then he told us what we could realistically do, and eventually we arrived at a design we loved.” The natural setting and the showstopper view meant that this home would have a very different feel from their last. Their goals were to open up the warren-like interior and showcase the view as much as possible. The couple envisioned an uncluttered, serene interior that would feel more like a retreat when they stepped in the door. Long-time admirers of Restoration Hardware, they chose variations of the “Silver Sage” palette. In fact, the home is painted entirely with RH colors both inside and out.



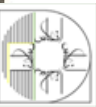


The house is deceptively large and open inside, from the foyer filled with light thanks to two glass-paned front doors, through to what they call “the fireplace room”—a cozy space between kitchen and den—that sports a soaring cathedral ceiling and a wall of windows. Originally a dark pine-paneled room with a masonry fireplace, it is now a bright and airy oasis. The room exudes a sense of tranquility. There are not a lot of things to compete with the view, and Randy explains that they intentionally didn’t fill up the space, preferring to let the view absorb all attention. The abstract painting over the fireplace is by John Wiercioch, a local artist that the couple admires and collects. “Really the only thing we did in here other than paint was add the grass cloth wall covering, some can lighting, painted the fireplace and added gas logs, and it’s now probably our favorite room,” says Randy. “It’s where I gravitate for meditation, devotions and prayer. I mean, how could you not feel inspired here?”

By knocking out the brick wall leading to the deck from the den and replacing it with a four-panel glass door, they really achieved their goal of an open feel at the back of the house. The kitchen flows seamlessly into the fireplace/meditation room, which in turn flows into the den. In the far corner stands one of Randy’s best finds: a giant piece of driftwood, its gnarled “fingers” stretching up towards the ceiling. “I found this in a little outdoor shop when I was visiting Apalachicola, Florida,” he says, noting that it was covered in dirt and laying on its side. He bought it, brought it home, cleaned it and applied tung oil, revealing the natural variegation of the wood. It now serves as a conversation piece.



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The couple grew tired of collecting the patio cushions on the porch every time rain threatened, and so in the summer of 2019, they made the decision to enclose the existing back porch. With a brand new roof and screens, the porch has now been transformed into a space that can be used three seasons of the year, and the upholstery can stay put, no matter what weather threatens. The couple collaborated with Eric Lawhorn of Construction Marketing to complete this beautiful addition.

The kitchen required a complete overhaul. Its original cramped floor plan has been opened up and reoriented to face the floor-to-ceiling windows. The couple chose heavily veined granite countertops, as a nice contrast to the simple Shaker lines and muted colors of their cabinetry. One thing both agreed on was having enough glass-fronted cabinets to display their extensive pottery collection. "We adore pottery, and we love to collect local pieces," says Randy. "These are too pretty to hide behind a cabinet door."





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Like most houses built in the 1960s, Paul and Randy's home has the ubiquitous formal living room and dining room, but in this house they feel less "formal" and more like a living travelogue of memories. It is in these rooms where Randy and Paul have placed items that have personal meaning to them, things they've collected over the years, gifts from family and friends, treasures from travels and missionary trips. Blown glass, Italian sculpture, pen and ink drawings, an ornate antique chandelier, and a Victrola lovingly hand-restored by Paul's father—everything, as Randy says, from the "quite valuable to 'just things we liked'"—enjoy pride of place on the walls and in the built-in shelves. In the corner stands a 1933 Kroeger "petite grand" piano (a slightly smaller version of the familiar baby grand) that Randy plays regularly.

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It is really the outdoors that sold Paul and Randy on this particular house, and it is the outdoors that really make this property special; it even drew crowds as a featured home during Historic Garden Week in 2019. The couple enlisted the help of Jason Vaughn at National Pools to create their dream of a glamorous 1950s-era pool. It is no small undertaking to build a heated salt water pool into a hillside, and Randy credits the team at National Pools and the landscaping company Groundscapes that brought the dream to life. "They were absolute geniuses. It was quite an undertaking," he says. The pool required concrete with rebar that curves around the base of the pool, and Groundscapes installed slate-colored pavers to blend with the color of the pool walls. "We often get up at 5:30 in the mornings to swim and we pretty much live out here in the summertime." Around the pool, large planters brim with bright flowers in sun-loving hues, and just beyond, the stunning backdrop of the whole Roanoke Valley stretches out below.

The couple describes their landscaping style as "relaxed French," a combination of structure and natural plantings that complements their hillside retreat. The couple inherited a small man-made pond and waterfall in the front yard—home to six goldfish

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and three koi—but they have added their own flair: several water hyacinth and yellow irises which appear to be thriving. They have also made the outdoor areas feel like extensions of the home. In addition to the pool, the outdoor spaces have been arranged into outdoor rooms of sorts: a small cocktail area, several groupings of elegant patio furniture, and adjacent to the pool and sheltered by the recently completed covered porch above, a generous al fresco dining area anchored by a cedar table with seating for 12. “I saw this table at Restoration Hardware in New York for thousands of dollars, and I thought, ‘I can make that!’,” says Randy. “So I took a zillion pictures and came home and did it.”

Retirement has clearly not meant rest to Randy Craver. He has arranged his garage to allow for easy transformation into his workshop as needed. There, channeling skills he learned from his carpenter father, Randy did, in fact, make the table himself, even sourced just the right stain to give the wood the warm honey color he so admired at Restoration Hardware, and then enlisted help to move the finished product to its current location. “Oh it’s extremely heavy,” laughs Randy. “Two people alone cannot lift this table.”

Life has a way of serving up twists and turns: a surprise offer on a home, a new project, a long-awaited retirement, even a marriage. “Paul and I waited until I was retired to get married,” says Randy with a smile. “But we are probably two of the luckiest people in the world.” ♦

THE COUPLE DESCRIBES THEIR LANDSCAPING STYLE AS “RELAXED FRENCH,” A COMBINATION OF STRUCTURE AND NATURAL PLANTINGS THAT COMPLEMENTS THEIR HILLSIDE RETREAT.

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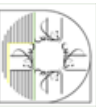
Road trip, anyone?

EXPLORE SOME OF VIRGINIA'S SHOWCASE GARDENS

BY MITZI BIBLE

As the weather gets warmer, we all get that itch to go out and explore, to see what treasures nature has been storing away from us since last year. Virginia boasts some of the most beautiful and historic gardens in the country. There are many public gardens within a three-hour drive of Roanoke. If you're up for a change of scenery—and by that, we mean some of the loveliest scenery around—grab your camera, fill up your car with gas, pick up some friends, and leave town for a day so you can visit a living museum of nature.

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Capital beauty

Our state capital is a prime destination for garden lovers. About three hours from Roanoke, you'll find several sprawling gardens that draw tourists of all ages. As one of America's oldest major cities, Richmond prides itself on being home to award-winning gardens.

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden: Voted the "4th Best Botanical Garden in the Nation" by USA Today, this site offers 50 acres of gardens, dining and shopping. Throughout the historic property (once a Powhatan Indian hunting ground formerly owned by Virginia patriot Patrick Henry), you'll find 12 themed gardens, including a rose garden, children's garden, and a cherry tree walk. The garden's domed conservatory is the only one of its kind in the U.S. With nearly 10,000 individual plants, and over half considered unusual types, you'll have plenty to delight in by following the winding pathways to large, open spaces as well as private, secret retreats. Before you go, be sure to check out

the calendar for special events for all ages, including seminars, plant shows and tours. A "Butterflies LIVE!" event flutters into the conservatory on April 17. 1800 Lakeside Avenue, Richmond; Lewisginter.org

Maymont: This Victorian estate, built in the Gilded Age, is a public park. The luxurious gardens include an Italian garden, Japanese garden, herb garden and fragrance garden, as well as an arboretum, waterfall and other specialty gardens. While native species abound, Maymont is also known for its more than 200 exotic tree and plant varieties, imported by the owners in the early 20th century. Maymont is a great place to take the kids, as there is a nature center and children's farm. 2201 Shields Lake Dr., Richmond; Maymont.org

Agecroft Hall and Gardens: Elizabethan gardens surround this English manor house, which was actually built in England in the 16th century, dismantled, and rebuilt in Richmond, overlooking the James River. You can stroll through the gardens,



NOTE: Some venues include an entrance fee; check the websites for hours and admission.

THERE'S NO DOUBT YOU'LL RETURN HOME FROM THE ROAD TRIP WITH YOUR MIND FLOODED WITH IDEAS TO SPRUCE UP YOUR OWN GARDENS. SO, BRING A JOURNAL ALONG TO JOT DOWN THOSE IDEAS AS YOU STROLL. AND MAKE SURE YOU PLAN ENOUGH TIME TO TOUR THE GARDENS AT A LEISURELY PACE.

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Edith J. Carrier Arboretum

which the website describes as “a living exhibit of medicinal, flavoring and aromatic plants.” There is an intricate knot garden, aromatic rose gardens, a crape myrtle walk, and boxwood display. 4305 Sulgrave Rd, Richmond; AgecroftHall.org

Collegiate efforts

Many of our state colleges have designed, built and maintained beautiful gardens that not only serve as outdoor labs and research centers, but are open for the public’s enjoyment. A large plus is that sites listed here offer free admission.

State Arboretum of Virginia: This research field station for University of Virginia has the largest variety of boxwood cultivars in North America. The arboretum contains over 5,000 woody trees and shrubs from around the world. 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Boyce; blandy.virginia.edu/arboretum

Edith J. Carrier Arboretum: This woodland sanctuary maintained by James Madison University offers a serene stroll through a forest lush with native trees and wildflowers. Staff members lead group tours on everything from the riparian plantings around the stream and pond to bird walks. 780 University Blvd, Harrisonburg; jmu.edu/arboretum

Hahn Horticultural Garden: Operated by Virginia Tech, this garden is a combination of many smaller gardens and boasts rainbows of color, with spectacular entrance beds, a broad conifer display, and a meadow garden planted in the “New American Garden” style. There is also a water garden and shade gardens with benches perfect for resting or a place to eat lunch. 200 Garden Lane, Blacksburg; hort.vt.edu/hhg

Presidential trip

Many U.S. presidents have called Virginia home, and their gorgeously designed estate gardens have a fascinating story to tell about our nation’s past.

James Madison’s Montpelier: The Annie duPont Formal Garden will be a featured property for Historic Garden Week on April 20. The two-acre garden is filled with flower beds sporting perennials that would have been in the original garden, including multiple varieties of bearded and Japanese iris, day lilies and peonies. Special events on the estate’s ornamental landscape are planned for May 9 and June 6. 11350 Constitution Highway, Montpelier Station (just north of Charlottesville); Montpelier.org

Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello: The 20 oval-shaped flowerbeds and popular Winding Flower Walk are a highlight of this presidential estate. Flowering bulbs were the original stars

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of the gardens and still play a big role today. Don't leave without visiting the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants, where you can view display gardens and take home some unique, native plant varieties. 931 Thomas Jefferson Parkway, Charlottesville; Monticello.org

Closer to home

If you haven't checked out these local gardens in a while, take advantage of a sunny day and customize your own public garden tour. If you plan it right, you may be able to visit several in one day. Each site offers a glimpse into our area's rich gardening history.

Happy Hollow Gardens: When the azaleas make their grand entrance this spring, you'll want to head to these local mountaintop gardens, where over 800 azaleas will blaze the landscape. The park has 2 miles of trails, all surrounded by a woodland canopy with shrubs and wildflowers in its understory. 6697 Mount Chestnut Rd., Roanoke; roanokecountyparks.com

Boxerwood Nature Center and Woodland Garden: If trees and wildlife pique your interest, this 15-acre public education center is a must-see destination. This former estate of a local physician who had a passion for nature and environmental responsibility boasts more than 400 species of trees and shrubs, including rare conifers, dogwoods, magnolias, sycamores, and many other varieties. The owner is said to have planted 7,000 trees and up to 250 were labeled as cultivars. The center also has one of the largest collections of Japanese maple varieties in the country, with over 120 cultivars. A children's trail and wetland

walk make this a popular spot for families. 963 Ross Rd., Lexington; boxerwood.org

Old City Cemetery: The 27-acre garden has the largest public collection of antique roses in the state. Visitors can view heirloom plants that are part of a replanting effort to grow only plants that were a part of the cemetery's landscape 100 years ago. 401 Taylor St., Lynchburg; gravegarden.org

National D-Day Memorial: This site carries much symbolism to honor the brave men who fought in one of our nation's most important battles, including in the details of the meticulously designed plazas and gardens. Down to the colors of the plants and the angles of the landscape, there is much to learn as you stroll or take a guided tour of the memorial grounds. 3 Overlord Circle, Bedford; dday.org

Anne Spencer House & Garden Museum: The poet and civil rights activist was a gardener herself, and at this downtown gem, you can walk through her own garden, taking in the smells of her original roses and gazing at the same plants and shrubs that she nurtured and drew inspiration from. 1313 Pierce St., Lynchburg; AnneSpencermuseum.com

There's no doubt you'll return home from the road trip with your mind flooded with ideas to spruce up your own gardens. So, bring a journal along to jot down those ideas as you stroll. And make sure you plan enough time to tour the gardens at a leisurely pace. Road trips are meant to be a relaxing jaunt away from the normal, busy routine. Take time and smell the roses—and so much more. ♦



Thomas Jefferson's Monticello: Winding Flower Walk

©THOMAS JEFFERSON FOUNDATION AT MONTICELLO

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PRETTY PASSEMENTERIE

trim is like jewelry for your interiors

BY KATE ERICSSON



PHOTO: ELAINE STEPHENSON INTERIORS



PHOTO: SECOND YARD

**MODERN
RENDITIONS OF
PASSEMENTERIE ARE
FRINGES, TASSELS,
TAPE, GIMP, POMPONS
AND CORD. MOST
DESIGNERS NOW
REFER TO THESE
EMBELLISHMENTS
SIMPLY AS TRIM.**

It was surely the fringe on the surrey that helped Curley win Laurey in Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical *Oklahoma!*. Fortunately, you don't have to live on a midwestern plain with whipping wind to make fringe work its magic in your home. Such trim is the icing on the cake when it comes to interior design, and fringe is just one example that can change the look of your furnishings.

Trim reigned supreme in 16th-century France; textile embellishments fit with the opulent tastes of the day, and decorative interior trimmings, collectively known as *passementerie*, were de rigueur among the wealthy. The first Guild of *Passementiers* was established at this time and was responsible for training young designers in embellishments such as tassels, fringes, ornamental cords, pompons and rosettes. It took seven years of apprenticeship with the guild to become a master in the art of *passementerie*.

Passementerie is either sewn or looped onto furnishings such as curtains, rugs, cushions and upholstery. Modern renditions are fringes, tassels, tape, gimp, pompons and cord. Most designers now refer to these embellishments simply as trim rather than *passementerie*.





PHOTO: ELAINE STEPHENSON INTERIORS



PHOTO: ELAINE STEPHENSON INTERIORS



PHOTO: SECOND YARD



PHOTO: SECOND YARD

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While trim was once associated with traditional interiors, designers are increasingly using them in contemporary decor. The trim found in Old World interiors and Victorian parlors is now used with more restraint. Trim is available in clean-lined options, though intricate styles with beads and glass are still in demand.

Such adornments are most commonly attached by sewing or glue. Here is a breakdown of different types of trim and how they can be used to embellish your home.

FRINGE: Fringe originated as a way of preventing a cut piece of fabric from unraveling when a hem was not used. Now it graces lampshades, pillows, ottomans and sofas. It can add a playful touch to decor or make a bolder statement when it is used in high-contrast colors with cleanly designed pieces. Bullion fringe is less feathery than brushed fringe, and is made from twisted yarn which often contains threads of silver or gold. It works well on heavier pieces of furniture such as chairs and sofas. Too much fringe can be too much of a good thing, so use it wisely.



TASSELS: Tassels have popped up everywhere, from jewelry, shoes and purses to decorative trim for the home. Tassels can range from the simple to the ornate. Tassels might grace a lampshade or add interest to an otherwise ordinary pillow. They can elevate a table runner or band the bottom of a chair. Key tassels are small tassels attached to a thin looped cord traditionally used to add a touch of elegance to case goods. Tassels don't hold up well on scatter rugs or carpets.



TAPE: Tape adds a modern touch to fabrics and blinds. With its flat, smooth weave, tape can be used to create borders on pillows, slipcovers, draperies and upholstery. Patterns on tape can be geometric or embellished with beads; tapes featuring a Greek key pattern are currently popular for many applications. Decorative tape is a perfect choice for lining dust ruffles

and bed skirts and can add interest to a Roman shade.

GIMP: Gimp is a flat, narrow braided trim, usually less than a half-inch wide, that is made from cotton, silk or worsted wool. It is commonly used to cover upholstery tacks or hide the raw edges of fabric, and can also embellish draperies, pillows and upholstered seat cushions. Gimp is often scalloped in shape. A galloon is a wider type of gimp trim that is elaborately woven and can be used to edge cornices and valances.

POMPONS: Pompoms immediately add a dash of whimsy. They can liven up pillows and tablecloths with pops of contrasting color. Pompoms are fun in nurseries on items that

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aren't choking hazards (such as out-of-reach window treatments) and perfect for children's rooms to border pillows, throws, window treatments and even mirrors.

CORDS AND PIPING:

Simple cords can add subtle accents to a minimalist interior. Cords are used in curtain tie-backs, chair skirt tie-backs, and as trim along the edge of upholstered furniture. It is also commonly used to trim upholstered headboards for visual interest. Piping is simply cord that's covered with fabric; it is used to decorate pillows, slip covers and curtain tie-backs. Contrasting piping can make a bold statement.

An interior designer or decorator can help you choose the right trim for your home and often has access to manufacturers not available at retail. Trim can also be purchased locally at budget-friendly prices at fabric and craft stores. ♦



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spring refresh CHOOSING PAINT FOR YOUR HOME'S EXTERIOR

BY CHRISTINA MOORE

With the arrival of spring comes the itch to refresh and renew our home's interior and exterior spaces. While many begin spring cleaning tasks and making plans for the garden, an area to consider reviving is your home's exterior with a fresh coat of paint. Paint is one of the least expensive ways to extend the life of your exterior, increase the value of your home, express your personality, and remain current with home design trends.





Selecting paint colors

If you are painting the entire exterior of your home, it's likely you won't repeat this task any time soon, so it's important to take time to carefully select your colors. Alicia Smith, interior designer with F&S Building Innovations in Roanoke makes these suggestions. "First of all, remember to take into account your architectural style as well as any existing elements like stone or brick foundations and roof color, which you do not plan on changing," she says. "Overall aesthetics are important, and a fresh coat of paint can drastically change the impression of the home or exterior living area." For color selection inspiration, Smith recommends driving around your area, searching for appealing home exterior colors and combinations.

When considering current color trends, Mary Lou Stufano and Kara Oliver, interior designers with James T. Davis Design Center, offer this design advice to homeowners making exterior paint color selections. Stufano says, "Neutrals, including grays, taupes and beiges are always popular and work with a wide variety of architectural styles; however, we are seeing a growing

trend of dark navy or charcoal mixed with a lighter neutral trim color for a very striking current look." She says that this bold combo still works well in historic and established neighborhoods.

Smith indicates that mossy greens are a popular color trend this year, particularly with Craftsman-style homes, and that gray, a longtime favorite color choice, will continue to be popular. She suggests using bold colors as accents if you're feeling adventurous with your paint selections. Whether choosing neutrals or bold colors, it is worth the investment to buy paint samples to apply to your home's exterior to evaluate how it looks on your specific surface, help you decide on sheen, and consider how the color looks in sun and shade. Most paint and home improvement stores offer these samples at a relatively low cost.

Choosing trim color

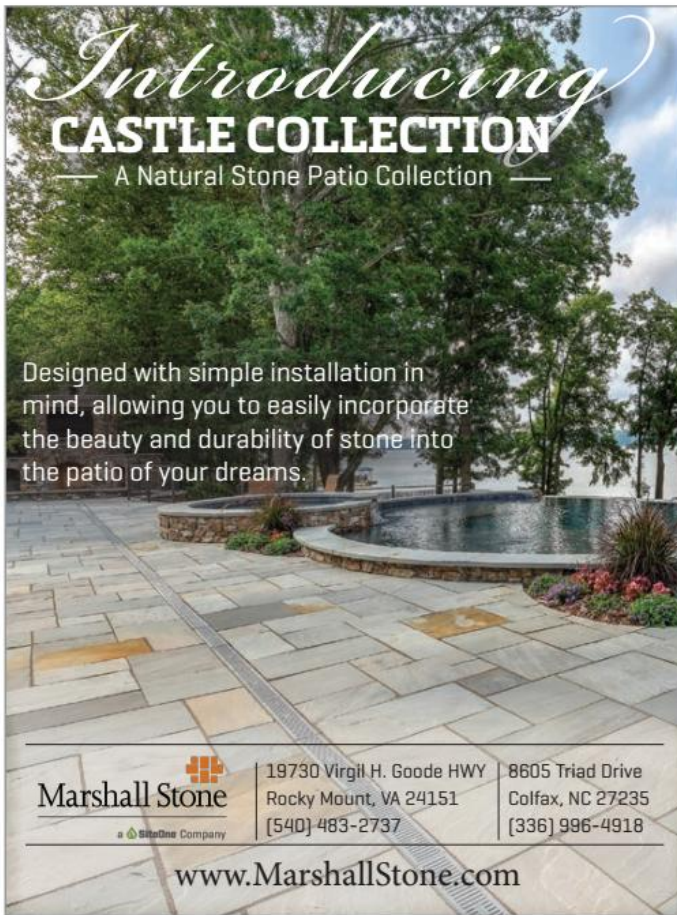
After choosing a main color for the exterior walls of your home, a color for the trim must be chosen. A traditional choice for trim color is often white, but how to choose which shade of white among so many? Oliver says, "Whites and neutrals can




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sometimes be the most difficult to choose, as the differences in color can be very subtle on the paint swatches.”

Smith says, “Trim should be a nice complement to your overall color scheme and can also be an opportunity for a design that stands out. When using bold paint colors, a clean, white trim really makes the exterior look fresh and new.” She agrees that choosing white hues can sometimes be difficult. According to Smith, if you have a modern design preference, then cooler whites are the most complementary, while warmer whites typically evoke a more traditional tone.

Along with trim painting comes color selection for the front door. Because the front door is easily accessible, likely gets the most use and attention, and can easily be repainted, a fun or trendy color choice is often an easy one to make. Stufano says, “Painting your front door a new color can be an easy weekend project and it can totally update your exterior look. Don’t be afraid to try something new like a deep teal or eggplant, especially if your existing color palette is neutral. You can really have fun with this!”

Choosing type of exterior paint

Once you’ve selected a color, how do you know which sheen to choose? Oliver says, “The more sheen you have, the better the finish will repel dirt. It is usually recommended to use a satin or semi-gloss on exteriors.” She says that you should look for a paint with a mold or mildew inhibitor, which is incorporated into the paint during the manufacturing process and works continuously to keep painted surfaces cleaner and looking beautiful longer.

As with any painting project, proper preparation and priming are key to a lasting finish. Begin by evaluating the condition of your home’s exterior. Is the paint chipped, cracked or peeling? Is there excessive dirt or debris on the surface? If so, the investment in creating a clean and smooth surface will pay off by putting in the work for proper preparation. While existing paint does not have to be completely removed from the surface before repainting, it is important to remove any peeling areas or loose chips with a scraper and sand the surface smooth before proceeding with primer and paint. Pressure washing may also be a necessary step in cleaning the surface before the final sanding.

If your home was built before 1979, precautions should be taken to determine whether there is lead-based paint present



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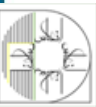
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before disturbing painted surfaces. You can have a professional lead inspection and risk assessment done, or use a DIY testing kit available at local home improvement stores. If lead-based paint is present, this does not have to paralyze your improvement process; however, there are some extra precautions recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency on how to proceed with surface preparation. These precautions include purchasing and using supplies easily acquired at local home improvement or paint stores.

If you are willing to make the time and financial investment, updating your home's exterior with paint not only helps protect the home from harsh weathering, it also helps maintain or increase property values, allows for personal expression of style, and can reflect a sense of pride in home ownership. Whether you plan to hire a professional or do it yourself, this project, with its relative quick turn-around, can also offer a great sense of accomplishment. ♦



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Left: Classic Craft Canvas, Low-E Glass with SDLs, Door - CCV960
Sidelites - CCV9020SL, Transom - 19220T, Finish - Chestnut
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TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL YARD SALE

BY JANE RENNYSON

The arrival of spring naturally brings feelings of newness and rebirth; flowers are blooming and we are ready for springtime projects. Perhaps a yard sale is on your list of things to do this year. If you are selling your home and moving, a yard sale is a perfect opportunity to unload items you won't use in your new place. It also gives you the excuse to declutter, which creates an environment more appealing to potential buyers.





You may need to declutter even if you aren't moving. A neat and tidy home can make you feel lighter and will be easier to keep clean over time. Of course, one of the most important perks of having a yard sale is the extra cash you can earn. Earmark your profits for part of your summer vacation, or put them aside and save for something you've wanted to purchase. If you have kids, this can be a valuable learning experience for them.

As with many successful ventures, organization and preparation are paramount in having a yard sale. The more forethought you put into it, the more traffic you'll generate and the more money you can make.

Clean, collect and categorize

Getting ready for a yard sale can take a fair amount of time, so start a month or so in advance. Enlist help from family to find items around the house to sell. Look in the garage, basement, attic, under the beds, and in all the closets and drawers. If you haven't used or worn something in the past six months or so, you probably don't need it. Ask members of your extended family if they would like to donate items to your yard sale. Often parents or grandparents won't want to go through the trouble

of having their own yard sale, and won't mind you making a few dollars off of their discards.

A good yard sale has a wide variety of items; if you still find that you don't have enough goods to attract a lot of buyers, ask some friends to join you. You can split the profits evenly or keep track of sales at checkout. Once you are done collecting, it's time to get organized. Group similar items like housewares, appliances, toys, clothes, shoes and home decor. Set up multiple tables with different themes so your guests will be able to easily identify what is for sale.

Make sure everything is clean, including your display tables. Dust and dirt are a deterrent for yard sale shoppers. Putting in the extra effort to wipe down dishes, toys, appliances and furniture will result in faster sales for more money. This is especially true for clothing. Wash your clothes, and fold them neatly on tables according to size. Keep suits or outfits together and iron dress shirts if you have the time; wrinkled clothes may not sell as well. If possible, hang clothes from racks; they will look nicer and are easier to look through. A clean and organized yard sale lets your guests know you took care of your things and makes them feel good about their purchases.

A GOOD YARD SALE HAS A WIDE VARIETY OF ITEMS; IF YOU FIND THAT YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH GOODS TO ATTRACT A LOT OF BUYERS, ASK SOME FRIENDS TO JOIN YOU.



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The price is right

A little research goes a long way when pricing items for a yard sale. Check eBay or Craigslist to compare prices of larger items, like appliances and furniture. You want to make money, but you also need to be aware of fair market value, so price to sell. Generally, toys and games will sell for \$1-3; household items will bring \$3-5, and children's clothing will go for \$2-5, all depending on the condition. If you don't have any idea what basic items are worth, there are many yard sale websites that can point you in the right direction. Even though yard sales are notorious for the opportunity to bargain, put a clear price on every item. Use brightly colored stickers and mark items legibly. People may be turned off by a sign that says "make me an offer," but will feel comfortable with one that says "we negotiate". Price each item individually unless you can make special offers, like books for \$1 or all jewelry 50 cents. Group these items together and mark them clearly with a sign.

A freebie box is always a good idea at your yard sale. People love getting something for free, and most likely will also make a purchase. Ideas for a freebie box include slightly damaged items, fast food toys, old posters or kitchen magnets. Have a designated area for checking out, and let your guests know that you accept cash only. Make sure to have small bills and coins on hand to make change. A lemonade stand or bake sale at checkout is a



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perfect opportunity for your kids to make some extra money and to keep your guests happy as they move on to the next sale.

Getting the word out

With your things clean, organized and priced to sell, you need to attract people to the sale. Advertise everywhere, including your newspaper, neighborhood website, church bulletins and community message boards. Don't overlook the local coffee shop or the YMCA. There is a huge online community for yard sales; garage sale apps use online data to map out yard sales in your area, so be sure to use Facebook and Craigslist when you advertise.

On the day of the sale, hang neon signs with thick, black lettering to direct people to your home. Make sure the signs are big and easy to read. Start at the busiest intersection near you and then put some signs along the way; you can even put one in the yard to draw people in. Place big-ticket items in the street, like nice furniture, sporting equipment and larger toys, to attract people who are driving by.

Be a gracious host to your guests. Ask them if they need help finding specific items and assist them in their quest for the perfect bargain. At the end of the day, your preparation and participation will pay off with extra money in your pocket, and happy and satisfied customers. ♦



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JURASSIC GARDEN

HARNESS THE ANCIENT BEAUTY OF FERNS

BY SLOANE LUCAS

Long before humans, mammals, reptiles or even birds roamed the earth, ferns dominated the landscape, gracing forest floors, creating a lush blanket of various hues of green and providing pretty snacks for dinosaurs. Ferns fossils have been found all over the planet and date back more than 350 million years. No one even knows how many species there are, with estimates ranging from 12,000-15,000 and more still being discovered.

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Ferns feature divided, lacy fronds of various sizes, and they reproduce asexually, through spores, and as such don't have seeds or flowers. However, unlike other spore plants like moss, ferns have leaves, roots and stems.

In addition to lending an otherworldly look to your garden, ferns also evoke cool, lush landscapes, helpful for visually combatting summer heat. Ferns make beautiful additions to your outdoor garden, whether planted in the ground or in containers. They can also flourish indoors, bringing prehistoric beauty into your home.

Choices, choices

Different varieties are available in countless shades of green, various sizes, and in differing degrees of shade tolerance. Many fern varieties are hardy enough for winter but can also handle summer heat. Some are evergreen and some are deciduous. Some grow to cover the ground like a blanket while some stay in their zone, playing well with companion plants. Some, like bracken ferns, are invasive and will take over your garden.

Take time to do your research before buying. To get you started, some popular varieties suited for Virginia's hardiness zones include Lady in Red fern and Japanese holly fern.



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What a fern needs

Regardless of variety, it's always critical to ensure ferns have a consistent water source. In your garden, the top half-foot of soil should be kept moist at all times, so plan to water frequently during dry spells. In containers, soil must stay moist, but not soggy, to ensure roots thrive.

As for soil composition, ferns love soil that is moist and rich in organic matter—something that might mimic a damp forest floor with layers of decaying leaves. When planting in the ground, try to choose locations that emulate the same forests in which they evolved. For optimal growth, gardeners should plan to add layers of organic matter to replenish the soil, although it's worth noting that ferns can also survive in relatively poor dirt. Depending on the variety, they can also thrive in both acidic and alkaline soil.

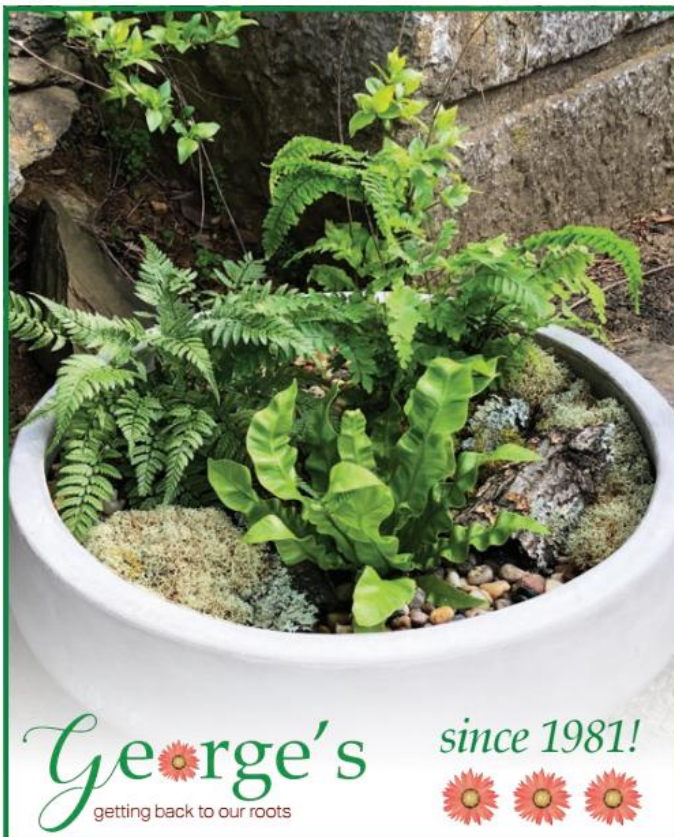
Ferns prefer dappled light, so don't plant in full sun. Because they generally thrive in indirect light, they are an ideal choice for shady areas of your garden which otherwise might be barren.

Planting time

Spring is the ideal time to move plants from one area of your garden to another, or to purchase and plant new plants. As with most plants or transplants, you should wait for a moderate, overcast day to introduce them into their new home so they aren't shocked by any extreme heat or cold.

When transplanting from containers, dig a hole twice as wide as the container, at the same depth as the root ball. Gently place in the hole, and fill with rich soil. Water in and protect the moisture in the soil with at least two inches of mulch, preferably comprised of pine needles or composted leaves.

If you already have ferns on your property—or a friend's—you can dig some plants up, divide them and propagate them, sharing the wealth throughout your garden. Prep them a day ahead by giving them a deep watering. The next day, carefully dig the plant out and gently pull, or even cut, the plant into two or three separate clumps. Just make sure that each individual clump sports a growing tip, the structure from which new fronds



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grow. Place the clumps where you want to establish the plants, and be sure to water the soil until the newly divided plants start to grow.

If your soil is rich enough in organic matter, you may not need to fertilize. If you find you need to augment, go easy. Ferns are very sensitive to fertilizer and don't need much to thrive. Check your specific variety for how much is needed. Apply a slow-release fertilizer when plants grow the most, usually April through September, starting as soon as you spot new growth. Stop fertilizing when plants are resting, during fall and winter.

Gardeners will need to have patience when establishing ferns, as they are very slow-growing. It could take years for them to become fully established and to display their full size.

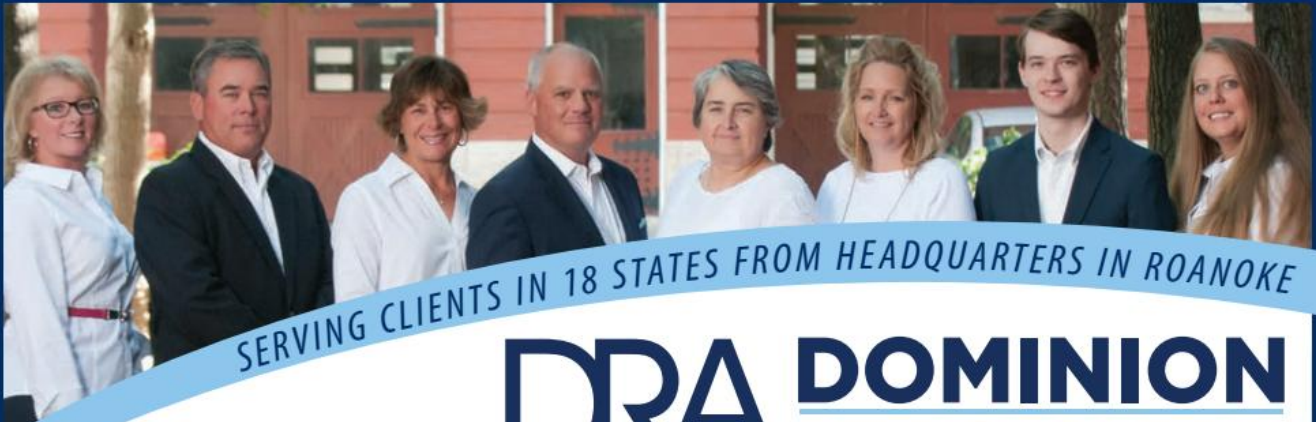
When planning your garden, group ferns with other shade-loving plants like caladiums, violas, bleeding hearts, Virginia bluebells and, of course, ever-trusty hostas. They'll create a beautiful woodland tableau.

Once established, ferns are relatively easy to care for. Ferns are resistant to deer, so feel free to plant them at the boundaries of your garden or property. They are also resistant to pests and diseases. The only major issue might be slugs or snails, which you can combat by dusting the ground under the fronds with diatomaceous earth.

To keep ferns healthy during the colder seasons, be sure to trim fronds all the way back following a heavy frost, and cover plants with a heavy layer of mulch until spring. This will help protect them from frost heave—when the plant is pushed from the ground as a result of soil's expansion and contraction that comes with temperature fluctuations.

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LANDSCAPE LIKE A MOSS

When planning a fern display in your outdoor garden, why not consider a companion that might help address some of the same problems ferns help solve? While ferns can provide vibrant color in dark corners of your garden where other plants can't grow, moss can help create a lush carpet where there isn't enough sun for grass to thrive. Like ferns, moss propagates with spores. But unlike ferns, moss doesn't have a root system, allowing it to grow in somewhat unusual circumstances—including soggy, sunless soil that might be overly acidic or alkaline. You can even grow moss with no soil at all.

To prep a garden area, take out whatever straggler plants are barely hanging on. Yank out weeds, rake out grass, and pull out roots. Water the soil until it's nice and muddy. Introduce moss by transplanting chunks to cover the area, or by starting a small patch of moss and letting it spread. Push the moss into the soil, almost like spreading grass sod, securing it and holding it down with sticks or branches. After a few weeks the moss will get settled and start to grow.

You can also make a slurry of moss to fill in gaps in your transplanted garden, or to encourage moss growth on rocks or terracotta planters. Get some moss, toss it in a blender (yes, really) with a cup of water and a cup of buttermilk. The odd mush allows the spores to spread, so smear it wherever you want moss to grow.

In both cases—transplant or slurry—keep the area moist while the moss is growing.



Contain your enthusiasm

Ferns do very well in containers, both indoors and outdoors. Choose a peat-based, soilless mix, although you can augment an outdoor container with composted leaves taken straight from your garden. The mix should also hold water well, so consider adding components like Miracle-Gro Water Storing Crystals or coir, which can absorb seven times its dry weight in water.

On the flip side, ferns can't thrive in soggy soil, so make sure the container has holes for drainage. Containers can be relatively shallow, as little as six inches, as long as there are a few inches of extra space in width for growth. You can plant in larger containers, but you will need to be more vigilant with watering, so shallower ones might be easier to care for.

The same shade tolerance that makes ferns ideal for trouble-spots in your garden makes them a nice fit for indoor decor. They'll do well in east- or north-facing windows, freeing up your southern or western exposure for sun-loving plants. Button, maidenhair, kangaroo paw, Boston and silver brake are all popular indoor varieties.

Keep an eye on the humidity levels in your home. You can purchase a small humidity gauge to place near your plants, aiming for about 30 to 50 percent humidity levels. AC and heat can create a dry environment, so you will need to water your indoor ferns regularly. You can even treat them to a mist spray to mimic misty forest conditions. If space allows, set fern pots on a tray of water and decorative stones. If dryness persists, you may want to consider a humidifier in the fern's room, or even shift your plants to a bathroom or laundry room, if those provide a more humid atmosphere. To keep ferns lush and healthy, apply fertilizer at half the normal amount, and keep plants trimmed of dead or dying leaves.

To get started on your Jurassic showcase, visit your local gardening center and talk over what fern varieties are available to suit your outdoor garden, container display or indoor garden. With some research, care and patience, your display will boast some eye-catching greenery evoking prehistoric drama and color year after year. 🌿



SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA Sweethearts for St Jude

The St. Jude Dream Home in Lynchburg benefits the lifesaving work of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, one of the world's premier pediatric cancer research centers addressing the ways the world understands, treats and defeats childhood cancer and other life-threatening diseases. It is the only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center devoted solely to children. Families never receive a bill from St. Jude for treatment, travel, housing or food. In addition to the Dream Home, communities rally around the organization and its patients in other ways. Here, learn how one family continues the cycle of giving.

Cade's family and supporters in places like Chilhowie and Damascus raised more than \$108,000 for St. Jude last year. How does this area of the Appalachians do so much?

Approaching Damascus, Virginia, you can be forgiven for wanting to get a little lost.

You notice tumble-down barns next to streams ribboning through the foothills, and then all of a sudden you've taken a hairpin turn and are climbing, climbing. If you didn't have to concentrate so hard on driving, you'd have time to process the waterfalls, the galloping horses, the farms that look like snapshots of rural life 100 years ago.

A scenic stop on the Appalachian Trail, Damascus is home to a tourist economy of sorts, with Baptist churches next to shops for cycling and hiking gear; overlooks where RVs can plug in; and places to stay named after wildlife-with-personality, such as the Dancing Bear Inn.

Yet, more so than the rest of Virginia, this community hurts from the loss of mining jobs.

"It's been tough. It's tough here," said Jim, a truck driver.

Which is why it's all the more impressive its residents—and those of neighboring towns—come together in such a major way to support St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

A heart for St. Jude

To know the heart of Damascus, you'd do well to spend two hours on the Saturday before Valentine's Day at the St. Jude Sweetheart Banquet. Held at the Damascus Volunteer Rescue Squad, the annual event treats guests to dinner and live music.

The fundraiser is one of several Team Cade puts on throughout the year to support St. Jude.

Ten years ago, Jim and his wife, Jolene, prayed they wouldn't lose their son, Cade, to brain cancer. They obtained a referral to St. Jude, where Cade underwent surgery, radiation therapy and chemotherapy.

The no-bill policy at St. Jude kept them from losing the log cabin they called home. "We would have given up anything for our son, but it was such a relief to know we didn't have to," said Jolene.

Since 2011, the year Cade went into remission, Jim says it's been their God-given mission to give back.

Love stories

Jim surveys the banquet hall and points out who's here: his church group, coworkers and the C Chapter of the Tennessee Gold Wing Road Riders Association.

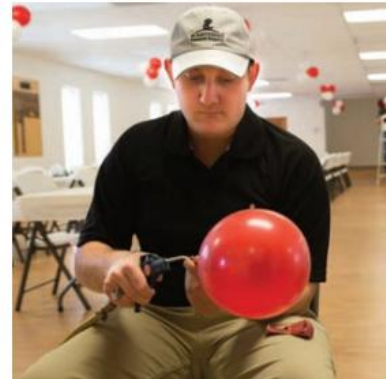
He points out Ronnie Wilson, the man in the St. Jude ball cap, who convinced Jim "We can do it" when Cade set a \$100,000 fundraising goal two years ago.

With him is Larry Combs, the man who quietly wrote a check for \$3,000 when he knew it would help put them over the goal. And there is Trish Jenkins, a volunteer who holds her own garage sales in support of St. Jude.

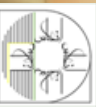
These are the good people of Bristol and Kingsport, of Jonesboro and Boone, of Glade Springs and Chilhowie, of Damascus and Abingdon. They come from the small towns, and they give what they can.

Jim reminds them of the impact they've had: "Cade is here today because of you."

For details about the St. Jude Dream Home see ad on page 40 or visit dreamhome.org ♦



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HISTORIC GARDEN WEEK
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UPDATE

As of press time, the Garden Club of Virginia has cancelled Historic Garden Week 2020 due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. HOME magazine is dedicated to providing awareness of this worthy annual cause, and appreciates the work that garden club staff, volunteers, members, homeowners and other supporters have poured into this wonderful event.

Each spring visitors are welcomed to over 250 of Virginia's most beautiful homes, gardens and historic landmarks during Historic Garden Week, "America's Largest Open House." Hosted by the Mill Mountain Garden Club and the Roanoke Valley Garden club, Roanoke's tour, "Fabulous Fun in Fincastle," will take place Saturday, April 25 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In celebration of the Centennial of the Garden Club of Virginia, this driving tour features five private homes and gardens in the charming and historically significant community of Fincastle. Designated as a Lewis and Clark community with ties to both Andrew Lewis and William Clark, it became the county seat in 1772 when Botetourt County stretched all the way to the Mississippi River. Fincastle boasts multiple buildings dating to the 18th and 19th centuries including the historic courthouse which houses records that attract genealogical researchers from around the world. It is also the location of Fincastle Presbyterian Church, a restoration project of the Garden Club of Virginia using proceeds from past Historic Garden Week tours.

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420 S. Church Street

Built high on a hill just south of Fincastle in 1818 by John Gray, Prospect Hill was originally called Gray's Folly. Each window of the home frames views of the town and the mountains. Constructed in the traditional board-sided Federal style, it was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979 as one of only two houses in Virginia built with those specific architectural characteristics. On both levels of the home, the front and rear windows and doors are perfectly aligned. This design is a nod to the classical lines of Federal architecture, and also an important engineering feature. This practical plan allowed breezes to circulate through the entire house. In 1930, the McDowell family added a back porch and west wing, and replastered much of the house. They were able to repair and retain the original white pine floors in the dining room. In 2001, the late Ron Lucas and his wife purchased the home. Valerie Lucas continues to renovate and modernize it. Note the restored hand-carved interior woodwork, as well as a mantel with a horizontal sunburst design and vertically carved sunburst panels.

Valerie Lucas, owner.

1914 Grove Hill Road

Originally built c.1749 in Bedford County on a 1,000-acre conveyance of land by grantor King George of England, this historic home has been relocated, renovated and restored to its former grandeur. Occupants and owners of the house in the 18th and 19th centuries included veterans of the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and the Civil War. In 1989, the King family purchased the house "as is" and began the lengthy process of moving it brick by brick and board by board to its current location on Grove Hill in Fincastle. The exterior is completely original. The current owners purchased it in 2008. A large breezeway and covered patio facilitate pastoral views of the Blue Ridge mountains with cattle grazing in the valley. Deer, wild turkey, bear and many varieties of birds occupy the land nearby. The interior is completely original, and features wide-board oak floors and six working fireplaces. Kathryn Kerkerling has an extensive collection of needlepoint on display. The art includes paintings by prominent local artists.

Kathryn and Thomas Kerkerling, owners



OPEN STUDIOS TOUR ROANOKE CELEBRATING 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Open Studios Tour Roanoke will offer a virtual pop-up catalog offering art work from 27 artists for purchase the weekend of April 25 and 26. Follow our website for specific details on the weekend event: openstudiosourroanoke.com

The physical Open Studios Tour of 9 homes and studios will not take place the weekend of April 25-26 as we follow the necessary protocols that we all hope will slow down the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. Discussions are underway to reschedule the 2020 Open Studio Tour to a later date.





99 HOUSMAN STREET



108 MAIN STREET





185 Wild Rose Way

A Frank Lloyd Wright-style prairie home, Wind Flower Farm rests atop a 25-acre mountain plateau in Botetourt County. Built in 2003, the home's design brings the outdoors in with vistas from every room. An open-concept floor plan, tall ceilings and glass windows provide a 280-degree view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Frank Lloyd Wright features include stained glass fixtures and overhang roofing. Furnishings of interest include a 1700s antique breakfront, a Shenandoah Valley pie safe, two New Hampshire cedar captain's chests, a Bucket Ben from Pennsylvania, and an apple-picking ladder, which now displays a quilt collection. The master bedroom contains numerous antiques including a carved mahogany tester bed, walnut highboy, cherry blanket chest and Sheraton bureau. Other bedrooms display additional period pieces including a cannonball rope bed, a tiger maple canopy bed, and a Victorian curly maple desk. A Currier and Ives needlepoint over the great room mantel, needlepoint art displayed throughout the home, soapstone carvings, and Alaskan artworks are special features, as are prints in the hallways by a local artist. Outside, there is a potting shed and a pergola, as well as vegetable and flower cutting gardens.

Lissy and Dan Runyon Merenda, owners. ♦

185 WILD ROSE WAY

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take a load off

THE LOWDOWN ON CHOOSING KITCHEN BAR AND COUNTER STOOLS

BY KENDALL ATKINS LIVICK

anyone perched atop a stool in the early days of the Roman Empire would have been dubbed "low class." Back in those days, chair style represented social order. Thrones were reserved for royalty, while simple stools were left for lowly peasants. Thank goodness times have changed. Anyone and everyone can enjoy a comfy stool cozied up to a kitchen bar or counter. That's not to say, though, that stools are just a place to rest your rump. When stool shopping, it will serve you well to consider comfort, practicality and style.





PHOTO: BETTER WOOD FURNITURE



PHOTO: BETTER WOOD FURNITURE

Obviously, a comfortable experience is a must. Manager Jen Rorer of Better Wood Furniture shares a few insights on comfort considerations. "We typically ask customers how often they're going to be using their stools," she says. If the stools are replacing traditional dining-style seating and will also serve other uses like working or lounging, she recommends stools with a solid back. While some are curved, others are equipped with straight lines. Choices range from barely-there low-rise, to quite a bit of upright back coverage. On the other hand, in an open concept kitchen, a low back or backless option can be more convenient, as it allows for simple tucking under an island.

And what about cushioned options? "Obviously, a cushion seat is more comfortable," Rorer says. "There are a number of vinyl options that families often select as it's easier to clean up any spills. For customers who prefer the fabric option, we recommend Scotchgarding. Not all stools are available with a wood seat, but the ones that are and are chosen by a customer often complement the floors or cabinets nicely."

When shopping for your ideal bar and counter stools, a few expert measuring tips will go a long way. Save time and effort by doing your homework and preparing before purchasing.

Corporate Display Coordinator/Buyer for Grand Home Furnishings Jill Truitt has observed that many people don't know what size they need (i.e., counter, 24 inches, or bar, 30 inches, which refers to seat height from the floor). Additionally, customers need to consider how many stools they need. "Odd numbers look better, but the whole family does not have to sit at the counter or bar. Kids may need to wait until they get bigger," Truitt advises.

Another important consideration is the amount of room available based on the size and shape of the island. Rorer recommends allowing at least 21 inches between each stool, and says you can mix up the styles too. "For example, if a customer has a 4-foot island and an opening on either side with just two people living in the home, they could purchase two stools with backs and have a simple saddle stool on each end for when company comes over. We've had several customers do this," she says.

Pragmatic matters aside, those in the market for bar stools should consider

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emotional appeals. Close your eyes and imagine a living space in which every object makes you feel a sense of joy or peace. In your dream house, what do your stools look like? What colors, materials and styles make you feel giddy?

Clarify how these stools will affect the line of sight. Truitt advises choosing a backless stool or one that is low-rise with a decent amount of space in the back to keep an open feel when an island seating area is located right in the middle of a kitchen.

Truitt also offers up some questions to ask yourself when choosing aesthetics. "What style are you looking for: farmhouse, modern, traditional, rustic? Then, do you want wood, metal, a mix of the two, chrome, acrylic, and solid or fabric [covered] seat?"

For fun fabrics, Rorer highlights the many possibilities. "There is a multitude of bright colors and fun patterns. Customers also get to choose their metal finish and sometimes will use a white, for example, to brighten things up. Our wooden stools can come unfinished or (in) a variety of paints or stains."

One final thought from Truitt is to have fun. She says bar stools can be "a less expensive way to add your pop of color and personality to your kitchen."

When it comes to your bar and counter stools, why not sit like a peasant while you feel like a queen? 🍷

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PHOTO: BETTER WOOD FURNITURE



PHOTO: BETTER WOOD FURNITURE



PHOTO: BETTER WOOD FURNITURE

HOW MUCH SWIVEL WILL MAKE YOUR STOOLS SIZZLE?

The **standard swivel** of a bar stool spins 360 degrees and stays put when a sitter stands. This is often preferred in an open concept kitchen when a sitter might be turning to see a television or other action taking place.

The **memory swivel** spins 180 degrees from side to side and returns to the center when a sitter stands. This type makes for clean lines but may be potentially jarring to children and the elderly.



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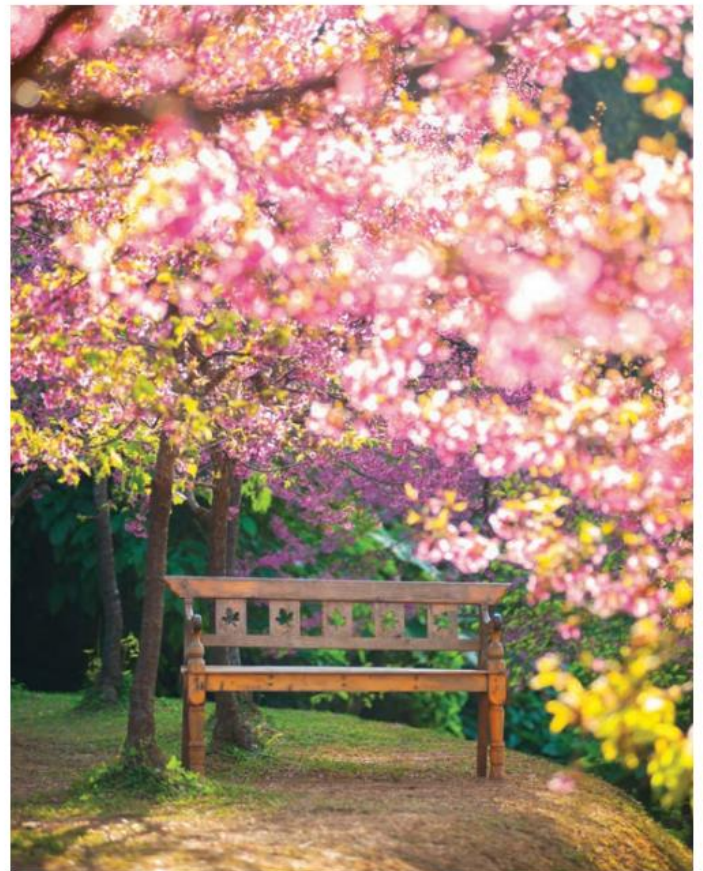
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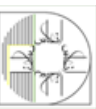
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