

# Country Home

SEPTEMBER 2008

## easy everyday style

*7 fresh  
country looks  
to try*

**before &  
after ideas**

- \* Painted furniture
- \* Family-friendly kitchen
- \* Traditional sitting room

**20**  
**super-quick tomato recipes**





78



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15



62



103



43

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Pack a healthful lunch with chicken-salad sandwiches fit for Olympic athletes and side dishes the whole family will love.

## in every issue

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The wildlife prints in the living room are 1950s reprints of paintings by 17th-century Swedish artist Olof Rudbeck the Younger. Mary-Jane had the bird images identically framed to make them the most important visual element in the room.



WRITTEN BY CAROL SHEEHAN  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY LAURA MOSS  
STYLED BY JENNIFER KOPF

*and rediscover a special heritage along the way.*

French doors and a light-finish hardwood floor transform a tacked-on porch into an all-seasons sunroom. The Swedish bench and demilune tables exemplify the elegant restraint of Gustavian style.

Each of these handmade pieces has a beauty you can see and feel.



### test your metal

A row of 2-inch-long hand-forged nails turns a 1x4 board into a country curtain rod (left and above). To transform a pair of tablecloths into curtains, hand-stitch metal rings to the top edges. For the rings, separate a light-fixture chain into rings. Slip a ring or two over each nail, depending on how you want the curtain to hang. Nearby, a single hook and a loop of twine serve as an inventive way to display a framed botanical.

### handle with style

Adopt this dramatic and functional way to corral kitchen towels: Hang them from a pair of spade door handles (below). Also use the handles to gather and display other gear, such as bath towels and scarves.

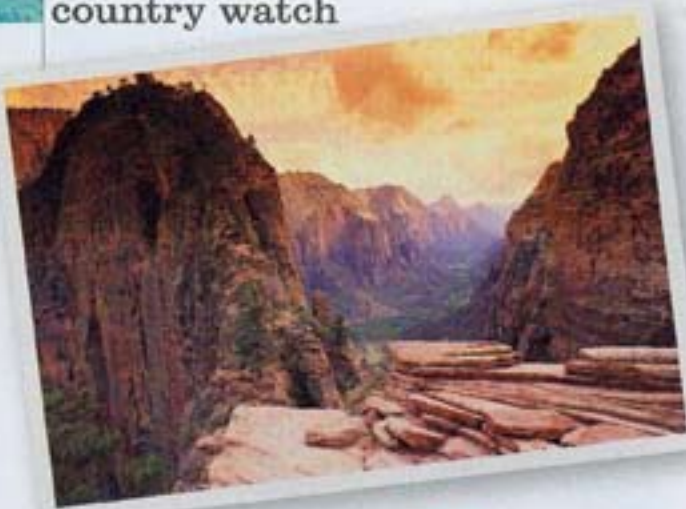


FOR MORE INFORMATION, TURN TO SOURCES BEGINNING ON PAGE 130.



*swedish*  
**KEEPSAKES**

*A mother and daughter refresh a country cottage*



## romantic ranch

Western style gets a light touch with pieces inspired by the colors of a painted desert sky, saltillo tile, and fresh cowboy motifs.



5



6



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10



9



8



2

1



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4

- The faded stripes in this Dash & Albert throw (\$58) reflect the palette of the desert.
- Bring the colors of the sunset home with a Pendleton sham (\$88).
- The tone-on-tone pattern of this cream sateen and velvet quilt (\$300/queen) from Lauren Home offers a fresh take on Native American trade blankets.
- Celebrate the West, wherever you roam, with a buffalo key chain (\$6).
- The playful damask pattern of this wallpaper (\$142/roll) by Paul Loebach is inspired by old ranches and oil wells.
- The geometric pattern on this Woolrich towel (\$10) is classically Southwestern.
- Add a romantic glow to any room with a handcrafted iron candelabra and tapers from Sundance Catalog (\$98).
- The petite size of this leather side chair (\$1,580) from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams is an alternative to oversized leather furniture. The yummy caramel color gives it a soft appeal.
- Strapping on a feed bag (\$50) has never been so stylish. The vintage material is tough enough for everyday use.
- The slender styling of this Henredon side table (\$1,245) adds a touch of feminine refinement.
- A natural horn vase (\$38/three) from Potluck Studios evokes the horns of the mighty Plains buffalo.

FOR SOURCES, TURN TO PAGE 130. VISIT COUNTRYHOME.COM TO SEE MORE RANCH-INSPIRED PRODUCTS.

**1. a better sticky note**

The broad face of this highboy is a ready canvas for a saying by Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu. Golden latex paint is a luminous backdrop for the peel-and-stick words and scrolls, ordered custom from online decal company [wonderfulgraffiti.com](http://wonderfulgraffiti.com).



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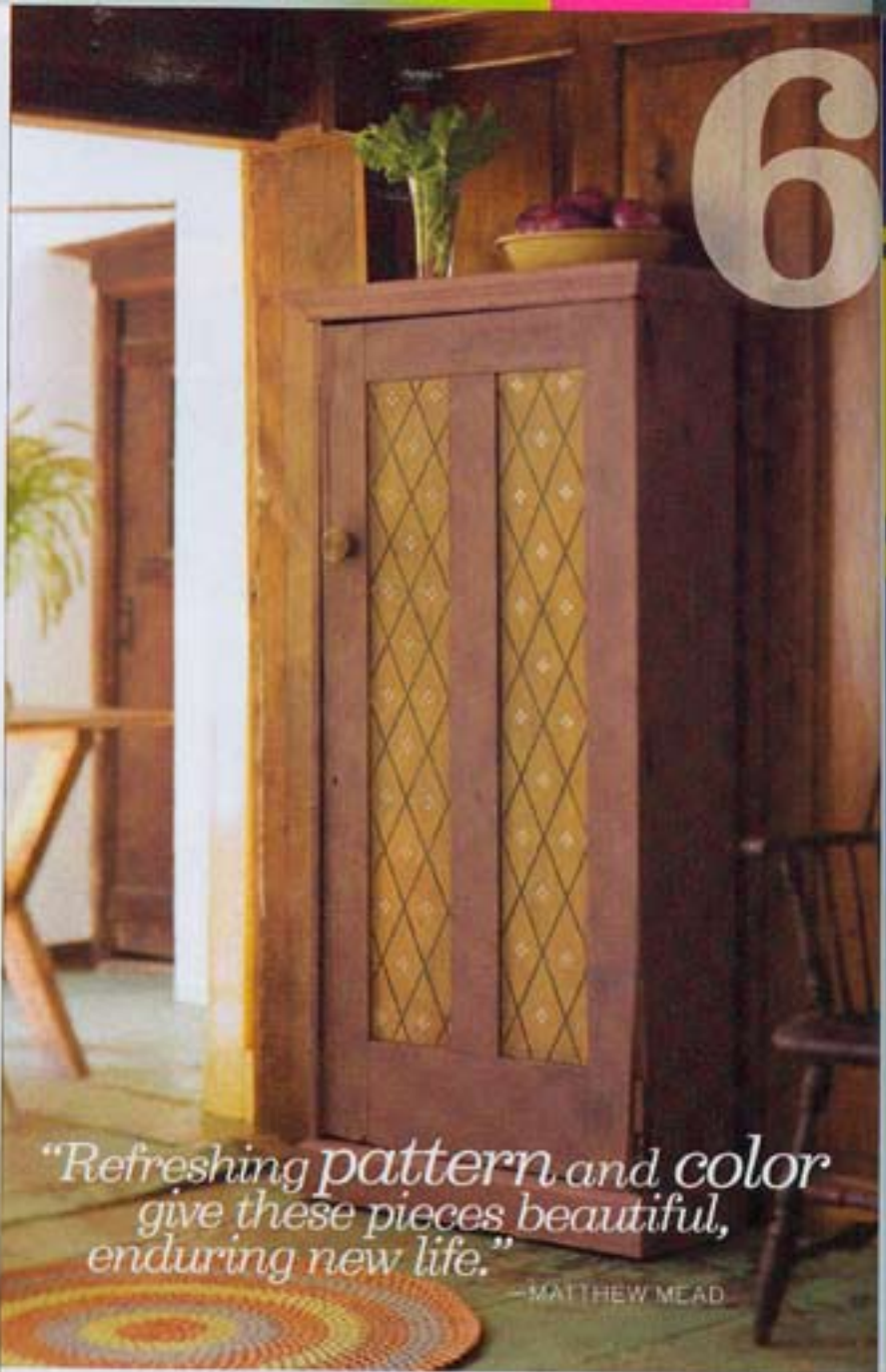
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*"Refreshing pattern and color give these pieces beautiful, enduring new life."*

—MATTHEW MEAD



**6. sponge bath** The original hues of this Early American cupboard inspired its renewal. First, add crown and base moldings and a new knob to give the piece structural substance. Then perk up its dull finish with washes of water-diluted red and yellow paint applied to the panels with a wet sponge. To define the lines for the lattice pattern, use painter's tape. Lastly, stencil a dainty flower into the center of each diamond. @

## how swede it is

### A CLOSER LOOK AT GUSTAVIAN STYLE

**HEYDAY:** The reign of King Gustav III, from 1771–1792, was noted for its attention to culture, as the monarch dispatched emissaries to scout and document the glorious high style of the palaces of Europe.

**INFLUENCE:** The Swedish king was so inspired by the neoclassical architecture and decorative art of the Court of Versailles that he championed a lighter, sparer interpretation of the style for his own country.

**THE LOOK:** The desire for a simple aesthetic—and one that would brighten homes subject to long, dark winters—produced a style characterized by light-filled, uncluttered spaces; pickled wood floors; painted furniture; and touches of gilt. Abundant forests made wood pieces a mainstay; carved details added elegance. Light-reflecting white and cream tones were paired with blue to evoke images of a clear sky even on the grayest day.

**THE BIBLES:** *The Swedish Room* by Lars Sjöberg (1994), *Swedish Style* by Katrin Cargill (1996), and *Swedish Interiors* by Rhonda Elish and Edie van Breems (2007).



**OPPOSITE** A mural in the entry frames a view of the living room, with its cozy reading corner.

**LEFT** The chinoiserie-inspired mural reflects Mary-Jane's interest in the natural world. Local artist Susan Leal created the design based on pictures Mary-Jane brought back from her visit to Gripsholm Castle in Sweden.

**ABOVE** Mary-Jane's most prized possession, an antique bed passed down from her mother, is framed by a bed curtain improvised using a panel of fabric. The early-20th-century floral painting is by Lydia Field Emmet, a relative and one of several Emmet women who are cataloged artists.

**Bring Home the Look** Ready to give your home a Swedish accent? Try these easy design approaches.

**1. Celebrate sunlight.** Pair a signature crystal chandelier with a gilded rococo mirror to reflect natural light. *Tiered Crystal Sconce*, \$244, *Bellacor*.  
**2. Simplify.** Swedish furniture is distinguished by simplicity of line and restrained form. *Manor Chair*, \$305, *Layla Grayson*.  
**3. Adapt to your personal style.** An enduring feature of Swedish style is adaptability—its hallmark pale woods, as seen in this tray, easily mix with other periods and styles, such as reproduction English transferware. *Sleigh Tray*, \$68, *Potluck Studios*; *Beach Cottage mugs and pitcher*, *ben* \$40, *Rosanna*.  
**4. Dote on details.** Even your tabletop can express a palette of creams, off-whites, blues, and grays. *Chophouse Charger Plate*, \$18, *The Cowan Shop*; *Indian Blue Napkin*, \$10, *Pierre Deux French Country*.  
**5. Seek serenity.** Don't overaccessorize—instead, choose a few simple yet shapely pieces like this lamp for an uncluttered mood. *Balustrade Table Lamp*, \$483, *Circo Lighting*.  
**6. Add pops of pattern.** Blue stripes are a hallmark of Swedish style. Pair them with fresh patterns to keep the look current. *Chambrey*, \$28/yd., *Duraloc*; *Ananas Ciel*, \$178/yd., *Grizzel & Mann*; *Fusilli Stripe*, \$31/yd., *The Silk Trading Co.*; *Everard Damask*, \$38/yd., *Waverly*.  
**7. Be natural.** Nature infuses Gustavian style. Embrace it with wood elements, botanical prints, and fun details, such as this leather bowl. *Jump Bowl*, \$90, *St. Barths Home*.  
**8. Finish with paint.** White-painted furniture—with a timeworn feel—completes the Swedish look. *Villa Three-Drawer chest*, \$949, *Ethan Allen*. ©



FOR MORE INFORMATION, TURN TO SOURCES ON PAGE 120.





## Back-road auctions and antiques shops across Massachusetts and upstate New York were Annie Selke's classroom.

The tag-along child watched as her mother, schoolteacher Mary-Jane Emmet, squeezed in a passion for antiques on weekends and summer vacations. "I learned so much from Mum," Annie says. "She always had a great eye, collecting patchwork quilts and Shaker boxes long before they were wildly coveted."

Those early lessons resurface today in Annie's furniture and textile designs. She's an in-demand entrepreneur at the helm of home-decor companies Pine Cone Hill, Dash & Albert Rug Company, and Potluck Studios—but still manages to appear at Mum's side in a minute when it's time to "rearrange the furniture."

Mary-Jane was set on transforming her 1950s Massachusetts Cape Cod into a cottage informed by 18th-century Gustavian style. "I love the restrained elegance of the country houses as they were decorated in that era," she says. "So much was done with nuanced colors, mirrors, and soft light. It really maximized the feeling of light and spaciousness in all seasons."

For years, Mary-Jane had been pulling ideas for a re-do from her favorite book, *The Swedish Room*. But true inspiration, mother and daughter decided, would come from a trip to their ancestral homeland. The two spent days prowling Swedish antiques shops and snapping pictures of emblematic rooms to draw on when they returned to Mary-Jane's house in the hills of Massachusetts.

The nuts and bolts of re-imagining the Cape Cod began with some welcome paring down. "I got rid of a lot of furniture," Mary-Jane says. "But I kept my essentials—antique Chinese rugs, Chinese porcelain lamps, and blue-and-white Canton ware." These cherished pieces mingle easily with newfound Scandinavian pieces. "Swedish style is very accessible that way, very adaptable," Annie says. "It lets you mix old and new, high and low."

It also soothes the senses with a palette of blue-grays, creams, and off-whites. "One of the things I love most is the peace and tranquility," Mary-Jane says, savoring the ambience of her newly refinished rooms. And Annie? She loves seeing her mother, her teacher, smiling at the culmination of an intriguing assignment. "My goal," she concludes, "was just to create something that was really going to make Mum happy."

**OPPOSITE** A pair of wing chairs with modern profiles and a traditional sofa covered in buckskin-like leather update the home's cottage feel. A free-hand painted outline on the fireplace wall gives the appearance of paneling.

**TOP LEFT** Homeowner Mary-Jane Emmet with her designer daughter, Annie Selke. **TOP RIGHT** Chairs upholstered in a punched-up print keep the Scandinavian look current while an 18th-century hutch anchors the sitting room in authenticity. **ABOVE** Carved accents and gentle curves, hallmarks of Swedish style, are evident in the dining room's antique table and chairs.





**Let me start by saying: this is not a big house.**

At just over 2,000 square feet, our Des Moines home—a two-story brick Colonial with a one-room brick addition tacked onto the back—had served us pretty well. Despite the place's dreadfully outdated appearance, we were committed to living in a small house we could afford, one that would force us to live a simple life with less stuff.

But then came the kids, and they came with *lots* of stuff. Suddenly, our not-so-big house was brimming with people and possessions. My husband, Chris, and I needed a design intervention.

We concocted a plan to tear off and rebuild the rear addition, and to move the kitchen to the new space. We zeroed in on our must-haves: energy-efficient windows and a wood door to deliver old-house charm; storage solutions galore; and, most important, products that would improve indoor air quality for our asthmatic son by minimizing allergens and chemical offgassing, such as Icynene spray foam insulation and zero-VOC paints. The final layer was all about style: sparkly lighting, pro-style appliances, a sleek faucet, and linear cabinet hardware.

It's just the remedy we needed.



**TOP LEFT** Here's me, Country Home Senior Home Design Editor Kathy Barnes, with my husband, Chris, baby Owen, Lela, 5, and Donovan. **LEFT** To make the two rooms feel larger, we designed them as if they were one, choosing a happy palette of warm yellows, grays, and browns to unify the space and mask dirt. In both rooms, we used the same cabinets, Cambria counters, and hardware. **ABOVE** We built storage around the dining room window to stash games, crafts, and puzzles.