

FOR THE LOVE OF SPRING

# COTTAGES & BUNGALOWS

## Refreshing STYLE

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with vibrant color

Visit five homes with  
beautiful palettes

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your Easter table, learn  
about sculleries and  
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**GOING GREEN.** Rachel pulled together a fabric color scheme that included different shades of blue and green. You can see the green at work in these beautiful green wingback chairs. Repeating the color on the sofa is how Rachel ties the room together. "It keeps your eye moving around, and reminds you that 'oh yes, there's that lovely green again; it looks so pretty with the sofa's shade of blue, which is not exactly the same blue as the pillows in the swivel chairs,'" Rachel says.

# Create a *Curated* Color Palette

A home in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is given a complete overhaul to transform into a vibrant traditional-style home.

BY AUTUMN KRAUSE  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JESSIE PREZA





**CURATED COLLECTIONS.** Luckily, Rachel didn't have to look far for interesting items to use in this home. "The lamps and the table are the only new items here, and our clients owned this beautiful collection of things," she says. "When a client has such interesting things, I like to create tension between old and new items." The console table is very slick, but the trunk beneath it hails from the Civil War. The lamps are smooth and have a lovely luster, but the framed map and portrait feel worn with patina.

*Custom sensibilities and historic charm meet* in this traditional home. Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is full of bespoke homes built in the 1950s, '60s and '70s. Since they're not tract homes and the lots are large, many homeowners end up renovating and implementing extensive upgrades to modernize the house while maintaining the charm of the neighborhood. "For this renovation, my clients wanted a total overhaul," says Rachel Cannon of Rachel Cannon Limited Interiors. "Their goal was to create a home where their blended family could feel surrounded by love." Rachel raised the ceilings throughout the home, changed the floor plan, relocated the stairs and updated all the bathrooms. She even added an upstairs wing to the house. "The family was a dream client that trusted my decisions and really let our team take the reins on the redesign. When designing, we kept in mind that their favorite color is blue," Rachel adds. The result is a vibrant, traditional-style home that's as warm and inviting as the family itself.



**CLIMBING THE WALLS.** Since Rachel used the blue color on the walls down the center of the home, she liked the idea of going more neutral in the formal dining room—but also didn't want it to be a throw-away space or end up looking boring. "The wallpaper is a printed grasscloth, so not only do we get the design of the print, we get texture and a little shimmer," she says.





**MAKING A SPLASH.** The backsplash is a hexagon glass mosaic that Rachel took to the ceiling around the window. "That detail alone creates such a cozy feeling in the kitchen," she says. "When we expanded the kitchen, it created an opportunity to introduce this beautiful element into the space. Its texture, sheen, and color all at once."



**ABOVE | SIT TIGHT.** Upholstered seating is seen throughout the home, including at the breakfast room table and here at the island. "To me, upholstered seating invites you to come sit and stay awhile, even around the table, even at the kitchen island," Rachel says. "I love a sculptural, metal chair as much as the next designer, but at the end of the day, if your spouse constantly shifts in their seat because they can't get comfortable, eventually, it's going to end up as the main character in an argument."

**RIGHT | LONG DISTANCE RUNNER.** A runner in the kitchen aesthetically helps warm up the concrete pavers in this space, in addition to adding some texture and color to this area. "Initially, we wanted wood floors in here, but the pavers were more practical, so I wanted to make sure to offer a softer place to stand and work," Rachel says. "Even if you do have floors that are ergonomically better for a space like this, adding a runner does a lot to keep the space visually intriguing."

#### ONCE UPON A DESIGNER

Rachel was an ideal fit for the project. She found interior-design inspiration at age 14, after witnessing an interior designer help update her family's home to put it on the market. Once the home sold, the designer helped the family redesign the one they moved into. "It was such a fascinating combination of creativity and order, which were two things I previously thought were mutually exclusive," Rachel explains. "In school, you're taught that you're a reading and English kid or a math and science kid. As it turns out, I'm both, and interior design is the combination of all those things." Thirteen years after starting her design firm she's in love with the possibilities that every new project brings. "What will we create together? How will we nail their unique personalities? What will we do that they go crazy over? I love asking these questions and learning the answers over the course of the project," she shares.





**ARTISTIC PURSUITS.** The clients made the art selections in this room and Rachel advised them on where to hang them. They moved into the house with the two large paintings flanking the fireplace, and then during the remodel, they purchased the grouping over the mantle from a gallery in New Orleans. "I'm very into this mix of styles here. On the left, we have a watercolor technique and, on the right, more of an oil painting—both landscapes—and then smack in the middle, we have this abstract expressionist grouping as the focal point," Rachel says. "To my eye, even though the large painting to the right can feel dominate, the subdued color palette helps it to feel softer and quieter."



## Color Theory

Color is a wonderful presence in the home, and Rachel uses it to its ultimate potential. If you want a similar look for your home, here are her favorite tips for curating color in a home.

- **STARTING POINT.** Start with a textile that features a color palette you love ("We call this an anchor textile," Rachel says). You can work off that pattern to isolate color into various parts of the house so that not every room has to have lots of color.
- **CRAZY FOR COLOR.** But Rachel also says adding lots of color is not a no-no. "I'd much rather see people using more color than chickening out and only using 'pops of color,' she says. "I want to walk into your home and feel like I get your personality immediately, and a pair of throw pillows in an otherwise neutral room isn't giving me much."
- **ONE-HUE WONDER.** If you're interested in using color but you don't know where to start, go monochromatic—all one color—and fully commit to it. It has the same effect that going all neutral has because it creates less contrast for your eyes to take in.
- **STUDENT OF THE WORLD.** If you want to be creative with color, start paying attention to the world around you. "My phone's camera is full of pictures of unexpected color combos (I find the pastry and desert case at most grocery stores to be full of gorgeous pairings), from sunsets with unusual color pairings to animals with crazy coloring—specifically ducks with bright turquoise feet and anything I find to be beautiful. Shallots are the most gorgeous shades of white, pink, lavender and magenta," Rachel says. Just start paying attention to what is beautiful around you!
- **CHART A NEW COLOR COURSE.** Go back to the color wheel and learn about different color palettes. We're all familiar with primary and secondary colors, but then there's an entire world beyond that: tertiary, complementary, split complementary, analogous, triad, tetradic. Spend some time looking at color palettes like that and you'll start seeing them everywhere. "And get the book *The Secret Lives of Color*, by Kassia St. Clair, which details how and why certain colors are made within historical context," Rachel says.





**OVERHEAD LIGHTING.** Since the breakfast room is somewhat vast, Rachel selected a larger table than in the formal dining room. She loved a chandelier from Julie Neill in New Orleans, but it didn't come in the right scale for the space. "Julie's team created a custom one just for us that works perfectly here. It's a step up from casual, but not formal enough to indicate that this isn't a very user-friendly room," she says.



**ABOVE | GO FOR GOLD.** A guest bedroom was converted into a media room. The wallcovering is a grasscloth with beautiful gold rivets as its pattern. The painting in the back corner inspired the color palette—creams, taupes, golds—plus, Rachel wanted to make sure the room felt dark, like a movie theater.

**BELOW, LEFT | OFFICE HOURS.** This is the wife's office. "If you can't tell, she's pretty fabulous and up for just about whatever," Rachel says. "The painting behind her desk is of a very special place

in Canada (where the husband is from), the Victoria Fairmont, and it's by Fraser Brinsmead. Every color we used throughout the home can be found in this painting, and I loved pulling out that very bright chartreuse on her desk chair to punch up this space a bit."

**BELOW, RIGHT | DESIGN PRO.** Rachel Cannon of Rachel Cannon Ltd. is based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but she works with clients from coast to coast. Find her on Instagram @rclinteriors and rachelcannonlimited.com.







**| OPPOSITE | BE OUR GUEST.** This is the guest bedroom, and like most of the rooms in the home, Rachel wanted it to feel fresh and new, but comfy. "My best tip for anyone decorating a guest room is to splurge on some gorgeous pillows. Those pillows are doing all the work in this room!" Rachel says. She had them piped in a deep purple for interest, then repeated the orangey red on the fretwork design on the bedding.

**| BELOW | VANITY FAIR.** Sitting at a beautiful vanity to do your makeup is often considered a great indulgence, but it should just be a given, Rachel says. "I wanted to take advantage of the natural light coming in from that window, so giving the wife a built-in vanity to sit at and do her makeup made all the sense in the world to me."

## Be Part of the *Design* Team

Working with an interior designer is exciting and a wonderful way to have your interiors shaped by a professional. To maximize your experience, Rachel shares her suggestions for a successful and productive relationship with your interior designer.

- **RIGHT FIT.** Make sure you're hiring a designer whose style is something you love and who can clearly articulate how their process works. You might love someone's look, but their communication style and process might be something that infuriates you. "Ideally, you'd be prepped ahead of time to know what to expect, so you shouldn't ever feel like you've been forgotten," Rachel says.
- **HANDS-OFF APPROACH.** Working with a designer requires trust and conviction in his or her capabilities, so resist the urge to micro-manage or do their job alongside them. "While design ideas are much more accessible now than when I first started, your design team is putting each possibility through a sieve and determining which ones will work best for your specific project based on your needs, wants and budget," Rachel says.
- **KEEP AN OPEN MIND.** Come from a place of curiosity. Be excited to see what your designer is creating for you and hear them out on all selections before deciding you don't like something. "In my firm, we don't present ideas isolated from the rest of a project because it's too difficult for clients to make a call without the context of every other element in the space," Rachel explains. "Think big picture, and then voice concerns once you've sat with that image."
- **WORK OF ART.** Having an interior design firm work with you on your space is like commissioning a one-of-a-kind work of art. There won't be another room exactly like yours anywhere else in the world, and that requires a level of patience from both sides. "Creating something really amazing takes thoughtful and deliberate planning, which shouldn't be rushed," Rachel says.
- **OPEN COMMUNICATION.** Respect any boundaries your designer sets with you. "We don't use our cell phones to communicate with our clients and we have a strict 'no texting' policy, which is shocking to a lot of my colleagues," Rachel says. "However, our motto is, 'Calm and collected designers are creative designers,' and I know that we do our best work for every client when we're able to focus in an environment that is both creative and professional."

As an art history minor, Sir John Sloane was and is still one of her primary influences. "He was doing maximalism before that phrase was ever coined," she says. "I'm very influenced by color, and I usually turn to nature to find interesting color combos." Inspiration, though, can really come from anywhere. "Last night, I received an order for some products at home, and I was very inspired by the packaging: one orange box, one hot-pink box and one burgundy box," she says. "That combination was stunning, so naturally, I need to use it in a project."

### FRESH TAKE

As a designer, Rachel tries to avoid the trends on social media as much as possible. "I don't like the homogenization of style that's happening right now, so you'll find me running as far in the opposite direction as I can from that," she says.







**JUST PEACHY.** The clients have a pair of beautiful lithographs by artist Rachel Burgess, that include this peach color, as well as teal and sage green. “The peach on the walls was so inspiring so I had the idea of running with it and letting everything else play second fiddle to it,” Rachel says. To do this, she went minimal with color except for the custom pillows on the bed and the beautiful ottomans at the foot of the bed.

You can clearly see this home has its own voice. Since the entire residence was completely redone, Rachel can't say there was any one area that was more difficult than the others, but she says, “I do think it was important for us to make sure all of the changes were fully reconciled.” For example, she suggested beefing up the cased openings between the foyer and the living room and the living room and the breakfast area by making them much thicker and adding molding. Regular sheetrock-cased openings would have felt cheap and underscaled in a space this large.

Rachel also enjoyed working on the kitchen. “I think the kitchen is the best renovation in this home,” she says. Previously, it was very small and tucked away, meaning it was also very dark. The new space is flooded with light and is incredibly functional. Another aspect that makes the home stand out are the personal items woven throughout the designs. “To customize the spaces, I turned to the clients’ collection of art and antiques,” Rachel says. “While the renovation definitely feels modern, returning to their cherished things helped add a sense of character.



**POWDER ROOM.** “In the powder room, I knew we would do wallpaper,” Rachel says. The green came about because it’s just off the living room, so it reinforces that emerald green.

You’ll find paintings with sentimental value, a leather chest used by a Civil War physician and antique leather books on topics of interest to them.”

The home is timelessly elegant and the perfect place for a blended family to grow as one as they create new memories and special experiences. [CB](#)

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**| BELOW, LEFT | TUB LIFE.** This is the primary bathroom. In a past life, this room housed a garden tub big enough to bathe a small horse. “When the plans got re-worked, we didn’t want to sacrifice the usefulness of a tub, but we knew it had to be a more streamlined look,” Rachel says. The rug echoes the peachy tones in the primary bedroom, but other than that, Rachel worked with a mostly taupe palette on finishes and paint to keep it calm and relaxing. Fun fact: there is an army of Barbie dolls in the bottom of this tub in this photo.

**| BELOW, RIGHT | OLD MODERN.** If a client has great older items, or even items that just hold sentimental value for them, Rachel wants to use them. Not everything should be brand new, unless it’s falling apart and the cost to repair is prohibitive. Accessories and artwork are great things to keep around as you grow through life. “And when you do mix something old (the little boy and girl bookends here are my favorite) with something new, you automatically offer up an idea of who you are and what’s important to you,” Rachel says.

