

EASY ELEGANCE: SIMPLE UPDATES FOR GRACIOUS LIVING

# Southern Cottage

**Traditional  
with a Twist**  
*Fresh takes on classic styles*



**Fall Entertaining**  
*Gorgeous dining rooms  
& gathering spaces*

From the Editors of Cottages & Bungalows  
FALL 2017 | \$10.99 US | DISPLAY UNTIL 10/03/17



Engaged Media Inc.

## HOMEcomings

WHILE SUMMER MAY EASILY BE THE MOST GLAMOROUS SEASON OF THE YEAR with vacations and pool time and exotic travel, the romance of fall will never be beat. This is the time we turn our attentions back to our own nests and we look at them with new eyes.

The homes we visited for this issue taught me a lot about gracious living, each in their own way. These spaces give careful consideration to comfort, entertaining and those special kinds of details that have a habit of sparking deep and loving conversations about family. From heirlooms and antiques to clever and out-of-the-box ways to create rooms meant for fun and memory-making, the designers and homeowners we visit are true artists.

Autumn is also a great time to see the best and most exciting Southern designers at work. After all, it's hosting season. Who doesn't want to put their best furniture forward and impress guests with memorable style and flair? It's time to get out and polish the family silver, refresh the good china and prepare to welcome loved ones in good form.

Jackie Torre  
Editor







# Returning Home

New style blends beautifully with old memories when these homeowners update a childhood home.

By Autumn Krause  
Photography by Jessie Preza

One may dream about returning to a cherished childhood home to be surrounded by fond memories of growing up. For Hunter Arrighi, this isn't merely a dream but a daily reality. In 2015, after the unexpected passing of his mother, he purchased the Baton Rouge home in which he was raised. While he and his wife, Leigh Beth, knew the residence needed some changes to accommodate their own style and growing family, they endeavored to honor the memory of Hunter's mother.

**Blue Note.** In a nod to the homeowner's adoration for blue, designer Rachel Cannon used varying hues throughout the home, including the formal living room. Here, rich shades of sapphire contrast with the softer shades of white and beige.





The couple enlisted Rachel Cannon, owner and principal interior designer of Rachel Cannon Limited Interiors, to update the home while retaining its connection to the past. Surprisingly stunning changes were accomplished with fresh coats of paint, refinished wood floors and new furnishings. “We went for a modern look with throwbacks to classic design elements,” Rachel says. “It works perfectly with this youthful but traditional family.”

### ***An Elegant Living Room***

The living room is more formal than the rest of the home. Here, Hunter and Leigh Beth can entertain guests in an elegant yet comfortable environment.

**Lighten Up.** The dining room had dark paint and heavy swag draperies that Rachel says were “at odds with its soaring ceilings.” Light paint and furnishings were a must to open the space and balance the room’s scale.





**Illuminated Elements.** This airy light fixture is stylish yet unobtrusive—it's design allows the eye to move through it while lending a dash of chic to the breakfast area.



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**1 MAKE AN ENTRANCE.** A brick wall and archway were added to the home's back entry. Rachel shares, "Hunter wanted to add these elements to create a sense of importance to the space while lending warmth and texture."

**2 Vintage Vignettes.** Artful tableaus throughout the home lend a sense of beauty and tradition. Several pieces incorporated into the new designs are heirlooms from Hunter's mother.

**3 Family Memories.** Hunter grew up eating at this table everyday so it was essential to incorporate it into the new design for the breakfast area. The table originally featured a golden oak stain so Rachel had it painted to work with the new, softer color palette. The chairs were reupholstered in a Crypton fabric by Duralee. The fabric, which is resistant to stains, spills and sticky fingers, is ideal for the young family.





**Strategic Updates.** When it came to the kitchen, Rachel explains, “we had fairly good cabinetry to work with so it didn’t require a full gut.” As with the rest of the home, everything was given a fresh coat of paint and the wood floors were refinished to a lovely pecan hue. “The white changed this area—which had a sort of dungeon feel before—and made it feel spacious and fresh.”



*“We went for a modern look with throwbacks to classic design elements. It works perfectly with this youthful but traditional family.”*

Originally, the room was adorned with heavy window treatments, dark paint and oversized furniture. Rachel knew exactly what to do to give it a fresh twist. “We brightened up the walls and trim. This home really is a testament to the power of a paint of coat,” she says. “We also had the floors refinished from an orangy oak to a beautiful pecan color.”

The floors and walls were just the beginning of the room’s rebirth. Rachel replaced the existing black granite fireplace surround with a white Macabus quartzite and placed two sapphire velvet swivel chairs opposite a sofa finished in Crypton fabric and a chaise lounge upholstered in a marbled fabric. “When it comes to seating, I love using unexpected pieces,” Rachel says. The swivel chairs—a feature which the designer says comes as a surprise since they appear rigid to most people—and chaise lounge with its unique fabric and shape add personality to the sophisticated space.

### ***Sentimental Table Set***

In the dining room, Rachel faced a unique challenge: reworking the room around a traditional ball-and-claw table and chairs set formerly belonging to Hunter’s mother. “This style of table and chairs can look very stuffy and

**Edited Approach.** The countertop and backsplash are both slab white Macabus quartzite, which is a veined, natural stone. “We toyed with the idea of using a mosaic on the backsplash but the slab material was so pretty,” Rachel says. “It makes for a beautiful backdrop for the pot filler, which is another must in South Louisiana where we make gumbo for large groups during football season!”





**Collectible Feel.** For the keeping room, Rachel tore out the built-in bookcases and original mantle and replaced them with the same brick seen in the entryway. "Rather than going back with built-ins," she says, "we opted to use two curios cabinets to house a collection of blue and white porcelain and objects." Hunter wanted this part of the home to feel laid back and inviting and Leigh Beth loves blue so Rachel made sure both visions were accomplished.



"This home really is a testament to the power of *a coat of paint.*"

pretentious but that's not this couples' personality at all," she says. "I felt that if we allowed the room to be open and airy, the table might not seem so formal." Knowing the emotional value of the set and the beloved memories that had been created around it, Rachel turned it into the focal point of the space. She used tones of hushed creams, soft blues and dove grays to act as a backdrop to the chairs and table.

Other design elements like a sizable piece of artwork and a new light fixture were layered in, each one selected with an eye for the room's proportions. "The ceilings are over 20' high, so scale was really important here," Rachel says. "Knowing we had those tall ceilings and windows to contend with, a large piece of artwork was an obvious choice." The surrounding soft colors and lines keep the visual emphasis on the dining room table, allowing the sentimental set to stay center stage.

### ***A Study in Marble***

While mostly cosmetic changes were used throughout the home, the master bathroom desperately needed a drastic remodel. Dated dark peach and yellow walls, emerald green faux marble tile,





**Rest and Relaxation.** As with the rest of the home, the master bedroom was in need of some fresh paint and refinished floors. The walls, trim and ceilings were all painted one color to give it, in Rachel's words, "a hushed quality."



*"We wanted to do something that was visually stunning but would stand the test of time."*



Leigh Beth wanted soaker tub where she could relax after a long day and watch television so a freestanding tub was installed along with cabinets that conceal not only toiletries, but a flat screen TV that pulls out on an elbow-arm. The shower was enlarged and Rachel opted to continue the mosaic into the shower instead of using a threshold piece, allowing for a seamless transition. "The whole bathroom," Rachel says, "in one word, is glam."

With changes that reflect the couple's style and honors the memory of Hunter's childhood and his mother, the home is a testament to the love that lived there before and the new memories the family would make together.

*See Sources, page 128*

**Editing Process.** When it comes to placing the final touches—like lamps and decorative items—Rachel arranges the accessories, walks away to see how they combine and then comes back with fresh eyes.





**1 Tried and True.** Wanting to give the couple a master bathroom that was young and fresh yet timeless, Rachel says, “we went with a hexagon tile and marble. That’s a combination we see time and time again in historic buildings and I never seem to tire of it.”

**2 Like Heaven.** Natural light floods into the shower, giving the large-scale Carrera marble a glossy glow and reinforcing the tranquil, spa-like vibe of the master bathroom.

**3 Glimmer.** Rachel says, “we used faucets from Delta to give a sort of old fashioned feeling, especially in the antique brass finish. But then bounce around to the light fixture over the soaking tub and it’s such a great juxtaposition.”



**Soak it In.** A soaking tub was a must-have for Leigh Beth. This white freestanding tub has elegant yet simplistic lines that evoke a calm, soothing mood.