HOMES & ANTIQUES

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—Erin Flett
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ON OUR COVER
A striking toleware platter is the pièce de résistance of this well-appointed tableau; read more on page 47.
Photography Cynthia Shaffer. Styling Lidy Baars.
Dear Friends

I first became aware of antique furnishings when I found a book in the college library that featured chairs, sofas, and wooden case goods that were surprisingly similar to the furniture in my grandparents’ home. I had never given a second thought to the bed, dresser, and chest of drawers in the room where I slept at Grandmother Norton’s home. But there they were, pictured in a respected volume, so they must have worth. Of course, I now know that the real value of these antiques was in their meaning to my relatives.

When I began to furnish my first home, I acquired the typical things that were affordable to young people. However, I did splurge on an old, long, narrow table referred to by the salesman as a library table, also called a sofa table. I loved it at first glance. Made of smooth, polished mahogany, with bulbous pedestals on each end and a low shelf for bracing, the treasure sparked my interest in period pieces. I also discovered a fondness for collectibles such as flow-blue china, ironstone ware, and old-fashioned silver services. Over the years since that first purchase, I have made visiting antiques shops a priority, both at home and when I have traveled.

One of the privileges of producing Victoria magazine is that of being invited into private homes where families live amid thoughtfully chosen and truly cherished furnishings. The dwellings featured in this special issue are sure to inspire you, whether you have long been a collector or have recently recognized the beauty of furniture and accessories that come with a storied past.

Come along as we tour several homes, as well as some of our favorite sources for antiques, and show you wonderful collections ranging from lace to silver and toleware. I hope you will enjoy these lovely stories.
Collectibles are an extension of the personality and the finishing layer that brings surroundings to life. The following pages illuminate the fascinating history behind architectural remnants, antique boxes, cameos, and more.
The legendary markets and fairs of France are veritable meccas for antiques hunters, who patiently sift through the seemingly endless mélange of wares in search of hidden treasure. Some of the most coveted items are salvaged architectural fragments—tangible emblems of the country’s long and fascinating narrative.

There are many ways to incorporate these ageless gems into home décor. Hand-carved wooden panels can be found in a range of sizes, making them perfect accents to hang over a mantel, fill a blank wall, serve as a headboard, or to create a decorative apron for the front of a desk. Smaller remnants add aesthetic elements to frames and mingle with other curios in bookcases.

Left: A vintage architectural book yields numerous sketches and blueprints that can be framed and hung in groupings. Opposite: Antique treasures run the gamut from pedestals and panels to large tapestries.
Pedestals are also favored relics utilized in interior design. These can be fashioned into lamps or used to display art or floral arrangements. Luxurious tapestries evoke a sense of history and often inspire the color scheme for a room. Architectural sketches, matted and framed, are ideal in a study or a library, as are antique books. Volumes made with vellum and bound in animal-skin covers are precious finds, especially if the text is in Latin.

Ancient churches are a common source for many of these timeworn bits and pieces: Crumbling altars offer exquisitely carved cherubs, pillars, and more. Gold leaf, usually applied over a gesso base, was often chosen for embellishment; the inevitable age-related chipping and peeling does nothing to diminish the desirability of the fragments but, in fact, increases their appeal.

Left: These ornate blue shelves with gold leaf accents were once part of a church altar. Above: Candlesticks can be converted into lamps, while large wooden panels make beautiful headboards.

“If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday.” — Pearl S. Buck
Antique silver cases offer a dainty substitute for a classic wallet and are the perfect size to hold pocketbook necessities—credit cards, driver’s license, and a bit of cash. These meticulously decorated cases are traditionally cherished as collectibles, but they are too lovely to be relegated to a storage box. Why not turn one into a stylish yet practical accessory?

In the 1920s, there were few things so fashionable and glamorous as a sterling cigarette case. Next to elbow-length gloves or an incredibly long strand of pearls, a beautiful silver case was a sure sign of an alluring woman.

Cases differed slightly from one piece to the next—some were flat and square, while others were oblong and rounded to fit the gentle curve of a lady’s hand. Several were made of papier-mâché or wood, but the most treasured were those crafted of sterling silver.

“The ornate sterling cases were expertly decorated,” says Karyn Shaudis, proprietor of Nightingale Antiques in Bakersfield, California. They were as highly regarded as fine jewelry, and surfaces were often embellished with engraved monograms, hand-chased patterns, inset semiprecious stones, and mother-of-pearl accents. “They were often quite elaborate,” says Karyn.

Some cases date to the mid-1800s and were originally used to hold calling cards, a hallmark of Victorian social culture. By the era of the flapper and the Charleston, women had repurposed some of these antique cases to hold mirrors, cigarettes, cake blush, and spare coins.

In the same vein as using a treasured heirloom piece for a more modern purpose, many women now use the slender cigarette cases as an alternative to a wallet to carry business cards and other pocketbook essentials. The quiet glamour of these lovely pieces adds a romantic, vintage element to the everyday.
When buying an antique case, Karyn Shaudis advises, ensure that the clasp and hinges are in good shape. And, she says, don’t shy away from silver items with a soft patina. “I love using items that I know had a working life before I owned them.”
Enduring IRONSTONE

Born in England nearly two centuries ago, this earthenware immigrant continues to delight collectors the world over with its gleaming finish, clean lines, and charming designs.
English white ironstone has been tickling the fancy of Americans with its decidedly plain appeal since it was first imported and fervently acquired in the nineteenth century. Now a chic antique, the gleaming all-white earthenware has a goes-with-anything simplicity and a fits-in-anywhere charm that elicits as much pleasure among modern-day collectors as when it graced the tables of colonists, pioneers, and Victorians centuries ago.

Introduced by Staffordshire potters as a durable, affordable substitute for porcelain, the earliest incarnations of the dense, heavy stoneware were colorfully decorated. But when unadorned white ironstone garnered instant favor in America for everyday use, its popularity inspired a heyday of mass production from 1840 to 1870.

Ever since the era in which English white ironstone made its way across the ocean, the sturdy stuff has remained an accessible, sought-after prize. To this day, its many collectors continue to scour antiques markets, tag sales, and online auctions in search of the perfect teapot, gravy boat, or tureen to treasure.
SPOTTING THE REAL THING

➤ The ability to identify English ironstone comes with experience and knowledge, as well as a practiced eye. Some pieces bear a distinguishing mark, although others do not. Color also provides clues about age and origin: Newer American-made ironstone appears creamy white when compared with earlier, authentic English pieces that possess a snowy white or barely blue-gray hue. When American potters took up producing all-white wares in the late nineteenth century, English pottery sold less extensively.

BEGINNING A COLLECTION

➤ Hardy and hospitable dinnerware, tea services, chamber sets, and other utilitarian white ironstone fulfilled nineteenth-century Americans’ dreams of pristine table settings and home embellishments. Today, particular patterns or pieces evoke the passions of many collectors seeking something specific to match great-grandmother’s relish dish. Others acquire less-than-perfect examples that simply appeal for their potential. Researching ironstone in books and online can be useful for determining which kinds are most intriguing.
Cameos, one of the world’s oldest art forms, date back as far as Greece in the sixth century BC. A resurgence of popularity in the early Renaissance extended into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. With a mix of modern touches and traditional motifs, these embellishments translate well to the present day.
Cameos: 
An Ancient Tradition Comes of Age in the Twenty-First Century

An eponymously named shop holds an exquisite array of brooches, pendants, and other pieces carved from the offerings of the sea. Amedeo has taken a beloved classic and made it new once again.

In a world of mass-produced jewelry, a lovingly handcrafted cameo is a true luxury. The shelves of Amedeo Scognamiglio’s intimate Manhattan boutique are lined with elegant cameos, from timeless pearl-embellished pieces carved with flowers to fashionably appointed belts.

These lovely creations reflect the remarkable tradition inherited by Amedeo, an energetic, bright-eyed young Italian man. He is a member of the sixth generation working in the family business, founded in 1857 in Torre del Greco, a small town on the Bay of Naples that is still the heart of the industry.

A close-knit group of artisans painstakingly craft the Scognamiglio family cameos from seashells imported from Africa and the Caribbean. A client seeking a deeply personal memento submits photographs of a family member or pet, which Amedeo uses as a model to carve a delicate likeness of the loved one’s features. A custom cameo is “unique and exclusive,” he says. In past centuries the tiny carved portraits served as snapshots worn by royalty, including Queen Victoria.

“I am proud to attract a new audience to cameos,” says Amedeo. His cozy shop features a lively blend of uptown and downtown styles, along with contemporary pieces. A sardonyx cameo belt buckle with Sardinian coral and freshwater pearls nestles between classically inspired brooches and objects, such as a beautiful shell paperweight dipped in sterling silver.

Amedeo says he wants to respect his artistic lineage while highlighting the art form in a way that will make people say, “This is not my grandmother’s cameo.” Jewelry updated with exotic materials, perhaps a chic ring featuring a classic portrait on a cornelian shell cameo with a black band on ebony wood, indeed offers a stylish blend of tradition and modernity.
An intriguing blend of artistry and practicality, these versatile remnants of times past have been sought for centuries as trusted repositories for everything from tea to trinkets. Whether simply clad in unadorned wood or embellished with inlaid mother-of-pearl designs, they pique our curiosity about what lies within.

The Allure of

ANTIQUE BOXES
Like a lovingly wrapped gift, antique boxes beckon with entrancing exteriors featuring brass scrollwork, hand-painted floral motifs, and elaborate marquetry. Occasionally filled with timeworn accessories that hint of their past, the interiors can be every bit as delightful.

“Today, boxes are collected as decorative pieces, but when they first became commonly used in the eighteenth century, they had a more practical purpose,” says Barbara Ashford, co-proprietor of the Birmingham, Alabama-based shop Ashford Hill for Henhouse Antiques—a treasure trove of fine antique European boxes and other furnishings. “They were used to store various objects like important papers, tea, sewing supplies, and toiletries. Each was handcrafted and unique.”

So prized were their contents that many of these vessels were fitted with locks. When tea was introduced in England in the late seventeenth century, it was an expensive commodity. Those who were wealthy enough to afford it stored the leaves in lockable wooden boxes, which became known as tea caddies. The lady of the house often

Above left: Long revered in China as pinnacles of decorative art, exquisite lacquer boxes also enthralled the Victorians, who incorporated them into their décor. After lacquering, the boxes were painted with gold overlay designs. This chinoiserie example showcases ornately carved gilded feet.
kept the caddy key on a chatelaine around her waist so that overly curious servants would not be tempted to pilfer the bounty within the container.

Similar to tea caddies, writing boxes—also known as lap desks—typically came equipped with locks and keys for keeping their contents safe. These portable offices, which typically revealed a foldout writing slope for penning correspondence, were carried on sea voyages and military campaigns. Many also offered handy compartments for writing essentials such as glass inkwells and sealing wax.

“I think of antique boxes as beautiful works of art,” says Barbara, who handpicks the ones for her shop with her business partner, Judy Hill, on their buying trips to England each year. “Some even harbor a delightful surprise with secret drawers and compartments.”

Cherished for their decorative charms, antique boxes continue to enchant, whether tucked amid beloved books on a shelf or carefully placed in a tableau of mementos on a tabletop. “When I think about accessorizing an outfit, what really makes it wonderful is that little piece of jewelry, and that’s what antique boxes do,” Barbara says. “They add that finishing touch that makes a room special.”
Adorned with delicate floral and India-inspired motifs, the collection of nineteenth-century, hand-painted papier-mâché and wood boxes pictured on this page once held trinkets and calling cards. The green example is known as a Kashmir box—so named for the Victorians’ love of India’s exotic allure.
ith a pen dipped into an owl-shaped inkwell in 1875, Louisa May Alcott crafted words into art to create some of the most enduring works of American literature.

Inkwells such as the one Alcott treasured were essential tools in the nineteenth century, when carefully written letters were often the only link to loved ones, and business deals were scripted and sealed with wax. The first inkwells were developed by the ancient Romans and used through the ages by other civilizations. But by the early 1900s, when the more practical fountain pen was developed, inkwells had largely been abandoned.

Admirers have resurrected these vintage desktop vessels, and the wells have become coveted collectibles. Inkwells come in hundreds of shapes and styles—from the “very plain and functional to the ornate and whimsical,” says Barbara Bureker, a collector and merchant in Battle Ground, Washington. She especially favors those that show ink stains and other subtle signs of wear, as these make it easier for her to imagine the many decades of history the objects have witnessed.

Inkwells made from ornate, moulded glass or exquisitely painted porcelain are treasures and models of enduring elegance. Others, such as a white milk-glass inkwell in the shape of a cottage or a wooden turtle concealing ink beneath its shell, are more fanciful. Collectors also seek umbrella-shaped glass inkwells, with a narrow, circular spout on top and a flared base. Teakettle- and dome-shaped inkwells with offset necks are also prized pieces.

Although some collectors specialize, hunting for inkwells made of a certain material or by a particular manufacturer, most are simply charmed by the unique shape and design of each specimen. Some are dazzling and others intriguing, but every inkwell captures the imagination.
Beveled crystal and pressed glass inkwells, some featuring brass cuffs or silver bands around the neck, were among the more practical styles used widely in the 1800s. The intricate designs of painted porcelain inkwells were treasured throughout Europe and America during this period. Although delicate, porcelain is impervious to ink stains and served as an ideal vessel.
Special assemblages lend a sense of cultivation and history to environs. But their true mark of distinction, regardless of monetary value, is their worth to the collector. In the ensuing pages, we offer a selection that is beautiful to behold.
The breakfast nook in Lynn Goldfinger’s San Francisco home is beautifully appointed with pieces of hotel silver, tea and coffee sets, serving accoutrements, a framed banquet photo, and vintage menus. Neoclassical-style chairs from the Crown Room in San Francisco’s Fairmont Hotel add a whimsical touch.
One-of-a-kind collectibles from some of the world’s most famous hotels glimmer with the luster and grandeur of history and romance.

On a summery evening in 1905, as awed guests of the Savoy looked on, the courtyard of London’s premier hotel was transformed into a bejeweled, makeshift scene from Venice. A silk-lined gondola, flanked by snowy swans and strewn with twelve thousand carnations, made its way down a man-made canal toward guests while the great Caruso serenaded them—the whole of the moonlit scene gleaming in the subtle glow of hundreds of Venetian paper lanterns.

The host of the famed gondola dinner was Champagne millionaire George Kessler, who managed to top the lavish event just four years later at the Savoy with a $300-a-plate Yuletide feast in the Winter Garden, fashioned to resemble the North Pole.

More than one hundred years later, many of the Savoy’s wonderful wares were placed on the auction block when new owners made the decision to undergo a $100 million renovation. Crystal chandeliers, mahogany chairs, saltecellars, silver salvers, teapots, and duvets were among the items
offered to sentimentalists longing to own a souvenir from the hotel where Strauss conducted, Pavlova danced, and Monet painted.

While weighing the strength of the dollar versus the pound sterling, San Francisco vintages expert and antiques dealer Lynn Goldfinger savored the possibilities and set her sights high.

“My dream item would be the white grand piano used by Frank Sinatra on numerous occasions,” Lynn says. “I’m a big fan of Sinatra’s and saw him perform live a couple of times. What a thrill to own that piece!”

Also on Lynn’s wishful Savoy bid list: silver platters, china, and octagonal wine tables, some for her own collection and other pieces to pass along to clients. Through her San Francisco and web-based business, Paris Hotel Boutique, Lynn shares her passion for the glitz and glamour of world-class hotels from eras past.

Lynn’s sought-after collectibles include vintage pieces that are tied to a particular hotel with a stamp or an engraved marking, as well as others that are unique in purpose, period, and style. Through Lynn, one might find a 1930s Café de Paris oyster server, a circa 1912 eggcup from the Hotel McAlpin in New York, or a monogrammed creamer from the Savoy. And the San Francisco native’s curiosity and interest are not limited to silver. With a seasoned and discerning eye, she has accrued numerous sets and individual pieces of hotel china as well.
A peek at Lynn’s hotel china collection is akin to a globe-trotting trip to the world’s most prestigious hotels. Among other things, she lays claim to teapots from the Waldorf Astoria in New York, a sugar bowl from the Hotel Bel Air, and pieces from the Hôtel Plaza Athénée in Paris, such as a gravy boat, and cup and saucer sets.
From such hotels as the Ritz in Paris, the St. Francis, the Fairmont, the Hôtel Plaza Athénée, and the Waldorf Astoria, Lynn procures silver and china, furniture, and even key fobs and door keys. Some items are reserved for her 1939 home—where the abundant collections are set against a Dorothy Draperesque backdrop, displayed with equal parts suave sophistication and neoclassical kitsch. In one room alone, Lynn has lovingly arranged more than two hundred pieces of silver from hotels around the world. Other prizes include chairs from the magical Fairmont San Francisco’s Crown Room, where Lynn recalls brunching with her family on special occasions throughout her childhood.

Most of Lynn’s precious hotel finds, however, are shared with collectors of like minds—people who hunger for the ephemeral elegance of a time that has passed and a pantheon to which few were invited.

The great hotels of our time bear mute witness to some of history’s most noteworthy moments—be it Tallulah Bankhead sipping Champagne from her slipper or the future Queen Elizabeth II spying her prince-to-be across a crowded dance floor. To own a keepsake from one of these majestic hotels—perhaps a marmalade server, a pair of sugar tongs, or even a vintage menu—is to tap into that legacy and perhaps even become part of the story as it continues to unfold.

“I think that is what is so great about vintage versus new things. There are so many beautiful things out there that are new, but they don’t have the patina, they don’t have the provenance. And, most importantly,” says Lynn, “they don’t have the soul.”
Collecting HOTEL SILVER

Lynn suggests these tips when plundering flea markets, jumble sales, and antiques stores for vintage hotel silver.

- Mix and match hollowware, serving ware, and other pieces with markings from different hotels, and display in groups throughout the home.

- Look for pieces that have a unique shape, raised crests, monograms, or other markings. These design details authenticate and individualize the pieces and add to their visual appeal.

- Don’t limit collections to a specific time period or the geographic location of the hotel. Age is of lesser importance than quality when judging fine silver, such as pieces made by Reed & Barton or Gorham.

- If the piece is intended for serving and the interior is corroded from age, have a silversmith replate it.
From collars and handkerchiefs to curtains and pillow slips, lace—that most delicate of adornments—weaves the threads of history to decorate our everyday lives, one ephemeral stitch at a time.

ANTIQUE LACE: A Lovely Legacy
Through the centuries, lace has signified sheer luxury. The fancy and frilled designs of its ornamental openwork offer intricate patterns, but its romance lies in what cannot be seen.

“Whenever I touch lace, I connect with it,” says Beverly Ruff, whose eponymous shop in Birmingham, Alabama, specializes in linens and lace from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. “I wonder who made it, where it was made, when it was made, and for whom it was made. It’s the mystery that intrigues.”

What blushing bride folded the dainty handkerchief around her bouquet of white roses? What holiday repast was laid out upon the lace tablecloth? And whose little head fit so snugly inside the precious baby cap ringed with snowy white eyelets?

“I want to know their stories, which have been lost in time,” Beverly says. “And I want to add new chapters.”

Such sentimentality lies at the heart of these keepsakes, whose creation was initially considered women’s work. Lace making, which has been traced to the sixteenth century, was a cottage industry, and the first pieces were designed to adorn the costly vestments of Europe’s nobility. Each country produced its own handmade designs until the nineteenth century, when machine-made lace was manufactured for the middle-class market. Today, lace from the nineteenth and early twentieth
centuries, although perhaps not the most collectible, is the most widely available.

Choices include Battenberg, a highly textured variety with fanciful flowers; Normandy, a patchwork of different types of French lace; needle lace, whose diaphanous design is formed from hundreds, even thousands, of small stitches; crochet lace; Alençon, the so-called Queen of Lace, which sometimes resembles snowflakes; and net, the whisper-fine lace that serves as a background for all manner of embroidered decoration.

“The real beauty of lace is that it’s pretty and can be used in a variety of ways,” Beverly says. “It doesn’t have to be perfect, and it shows its age well. All you have to do is use your imagination.”

Through her creativity, lace-topped vanity trays have become beverage-serving salvers and wall hangings; lace panels have been converted into pillows; collars have been draped artistically over cabinet shelves; mantel scarves have been fashioned into shawls; and hand-embroidered rounds have doubled as “bouquets” in bridal baskets.

Of course, one can’t have lace without linens. “They go together like love and marriage,” Beverly says. “I always tell people to buy lace because they love it. It’s already beautiful, so all you have to do is give it new life.”
Dozens of multihued crystal prisms hang from Rose Ann Kendrick’s dining-room chandelier, sending showers of color across the elegantly set table. Lacy place mats hold a pyramid of gleaming gold-rimmed plates, and silverware polished to perfection rests upon pristine white napkins. Every imaginable accessory, from silver chalices and goblets encrusted with gold overlay to saltcellars and place-card holders, rounds out the display. At the center of it all stands a Minton bowl-turned-vase spilling over with a profusion of mophead hydrangeas.

Rose Ann’s home is filled with an eclectic assemblage of pieces that have an obvious common thread: quintessential beauty. She began accumulating these heirlooms at a very young age, starting with small china animals and the hand-painted eggs she found in her Easter basket every year. She comes by her affinity for time-worn objects honestly; one might even say it is in her genes. Her mother, an antiques collector, had a penchant for china and linens. She introduced her daughter to the

*In Pursuit of BYGONE Beauties*

Learning the ropes of antiques collecting at her mother’s knee led one woman to pursue a lifelong passion for things that beckon with the rich patina of age.
wonders of overcrowded aisles teeming with treasures and of auctions where coveted prizes were won with the wave of a paddle. The pint-size protégé caught on quickly.

“I collected whatever I took a fancy to,” says Rose Ann. And more often than not, the items she fancied had sweet stories attached to them. Much of her cache was inherited, such as mint green-and-gold plates from Marshall Field’s and the candelabra adorning the dining room table. But most of it was discovered on the countless trips she and her mother made across the South, combing through markets from Round Top, Texas, to Palm Beach, Florida. She would find something that caught her eye—a cut-glass wine decanter or Victorian knife rests—and then soon uncover another and another until she had assembled a new bevy of beauties.

Though she recently downsized to smaller living quarters and a portion of her acquisitions now resides in storage, Rose Ann is surrounded by the exquisite things she has lovingly curated to enjoy for years to come.

Opposite, clockwise from above: Wine and whiskey decanters catch the light. A fabric-lined cabinet holds Rose Ann’s large collection of Towle Louis XIV goblets and a mélange of silver serving pieces. Silver labels rest in a pedestal bowl. This page, above right: Cut-glass saltcellars are tucked beneath a rainbow of goblets in a mix of patterns. Below right: Carved ivory handles adorn a fish service set.
Enchanted by TOLEWARE

The collection of Lidy Baars, antiques dealer and proprietress of French Garden House, delights both decorators and collectors.

Alluring, hand-painted metal trays, urns, and baskets cast a spell of history and the romance of bygone days. Painted with great skill, these prized collectibles are both decorative and functional, and typically feature floral or Eastern motifs.

Toleware refers to objects, dating from 1600 to 1900, made of tinned metal lacquered and adorned with designs. John Hanbury, who began his metalware business in the Welsh town of Pontypool in the 1600s, is credited with inventing the method of japanning. This process is used to alleviate rust on metal by coating the painted surface with a mixture of asphalt and shellac resembling the glossy lacquer finish on Japanese trays. Distinguished by lacy, openwork rims, Pontypool trays continue to be some of the most sought-after tole pieces. The French developed their own interpretations that boast brightly colored backgrounds and a variety of decorations.

By the early to mid-1700s, painted tin was being manufactured in England and shipped to the American colonies. As with many imported items, local tradesmen and artists soon began to produce their own versions. In the 1950s and 1960s, American companies such as Plymouth, Nashco, Pilgrim, and Fine Arts Studio brought about a resurgence in the demand for these fine collectibles.

Some collectors seek only chinoiserie designs, mother-of-pearl inlays, rose motifs, or specimens of
a certain hue or from a particular country of origin. Tray prices can range from less than one hundred to thousands of dollars, depending upon age, condition, subject matter, and quality of painting.

Many stunning examples of toleware are available, although items without damage are becoming increasingly difficult to find. A toleware collection is a wonderful way to add elegance and warmth to home décor, perhaps with an array of trays hung on a wall, an oversize selection placed above a mantel, or a lovely tableau arranged on a coffee table with flowers and a candle.

Above: This exceptional heirloom-quality papier-mâché tray is especially striking displayed on a mantel. Exotic birds and flowers, applied gilt, and a mother-of-pearl border make this item the pièce de résistance of any collection.
Our personal treasures—those thoughtfully acquired pieces that create a mood or call to mind a special memory—suffuse interiors with heart and soul. Humble or history-steeped, these are the objects that make a home.
HOME
of my Heart

A collector of heirlooms, antiques, and memories says her home is a haven and harbor for mind, body, and spirit. Styled as a traditional English manor, the beautifully arranged interiors ensure that everything has its place.
Does a home have a spirit of its own? Perhaps. Do we not all occasionally sense the stirrings of unseen somethings or someones gently tugging at us as we move from room to room? Brownie Evans does; she even stops to listen. But it is no ghost, she insists—it is the very walls that enclose her.

“My soul lives here, not just my body,” says Brownie. “I listen to my home, and I let it tell me what is comfortable and what isn’t. I let it be what it wants to be.”

More accurately described as agelessly elegant rather than comfortable, the English-style manor Brownie shares with her family is a work in progress, an ever-evolving abode filled with bits and pieces of her past that reflect the quietly gracious woman who designs and coddles each room.

Bathed in a palette of calming hues and filled with priceless family heirlooms and acquired antiques, Brownie’s home is intentionally and cleverly designed for sharing and for keeping. From a suite of rooms intended as a gathering place to a secret apartment that affords no small measure of privacy, there is a space for every purpose and whim.

“Some people say a home is just a place to get in out of the rain. To me, it’s an extension of who you are.”
One can observe the furnishings of a home and discern much about the person who lives there, Brownie Evans believes. Her design scheme includes layer upon layer of subtly contrasting textures and colors. Polished dark wood, coolly painted walls dressed with timeless art, and intricately sculptured stone sketch the framework, while touches of fabric fill in with notes of softness and color. All create a sense of flow and harmony. “I’m at home and at peace here,” Brownie says. “When I leave, I’m always happy to come back.” The Evans home mirrors not only its mistress but also its master. “My husband loves his books, and nothing is anywhere by accident,” Brownie says. “He spends a lot of time arranging them, and I have been given strict instructions not to touch them.”

“THE LITTLE ROAD SAYS GO, THE LITTLE HOUSE SAYS STAY: AND O, IT’S BONNY HERE AT HOME.”

—Josephine Preston Peabody
“THERE’S JUST A CONNECTION YOU HAVE WITH YOUR HOME. FOR ME, IT’S A SOUL CONNECTION.” —Brownie Evans
Mirrors, says Brownie, wake up a space, while the overscaling of objects and patterns lends a larger feel to a small area. Family heirlooms ground rooms in tradition and memories of loved ones. A quartet of framed, pirouetting Venetian dancers hung above the bed, opposite, above left, reminds Brownie of a trip to Italy with her parents in 1960. Other relics from her past fill the private rooms of her home, including the gift of a marble-topped dressing table from her father, above right. This page: A tapestry-dressed bench and an exquisitely patterned Oriental rug are mementos from her mother.
Summer settles into the amiable village of Essex, Connecticut, where whispers of gentle breezes and the cheerful lilt of birdsong serve as background music to this much-anticipated season. Amid the floral fanfare, one residence stands out for its enviable beauty, both indoors and out.

Above: White porcelain Hutschenreuther figurines seem to dance upon the living room coffee table. Adorned with family photographs, the bachelor’s chest is made of yew wood and features a brushing slide—a pullout shelf where clothes are laid and brushed prior to wearing.
Clockwise from left: Granite countertops and a porcelain farm sink anchor the kitchen, where antique English, Asian, and Dutch blue-and-white china form a pretty vignette. Opposite, above: The table was used in several BBC period productions.
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British-born antiques dealer Shirley Kaplan had always dreamed of living in a stone house among the meandering hills of her homeland’s Cotswolds region, so when she and husband Burt came across the gambrel colonial in Essex, it was love at first sight. The dwelling was constructed for a local shipbuilder in 1790 on an elevated site with views to the Connecticut River so he could watch his ships’ arrivals and departures.

Ensconced in a verdant, acre-plus setting, the home is a vision of pure New England charm, with traditional clapboard siding painted a soft buttermilk hue and burgundy awnings perched over first-floor windows. Many of the original features, including five fireplaces, remain intact, and hardwood gleams on every floor, framing a splendid array of handmade rugs.

Furnishing such an extraordinary property might have been a bit daunting, but the Kaplans knew just where to start. “A house speaks to you and tells you what it wants,” says Shirley. “You just need to listen.” The centuries-old walls appealed to the couple’s affection and admiration for things steeped in history, and a thoughtful assemblage of antiques throughout the rooms reflects this love—an interest so keen that it became their business.

For a number of years, the Kaplans have been associated with Avery & Dash, a gallery in nearby Stamford that offers period furniture similar to the pieces that imbue their...
own home with timeworn elegance. For ten years, the couple also owned a storefront enterprise named English Accents, but they closed it to focus on the gallery operation and to allow more time for travel.

“The pieces we favor are those with quiet charm and great patina and color,” explains Shirley. “They make you want to reach out and lightly run your fingertips over their well-loved surfaces.” A perfect example is the grand, circa 1800 Welsh dresser that she and Burt found on one of their many buying trips to England. The dresser holds her priceless collection of majolica.

Equally as beautiful as the interiors, the grounds are a collaborative effort between husband and wife. Shirley designed the layout of the plot, but both have pitched in to create a quintessential English cottage garden that would be quite at home across the pond.

“I’ve always loved roses and have them throughout the property,” says Shirley. “Also, I feel a cutting garden is a necessity, and I intersperse mine with herbs and vegetables.” Wisteria, honeysuckle, and rambling roses soften the landscape while also imparting a sweetly mingled fragrance.

With the arrival of summer, Shirley and Burt welcome friends to gather amid the blooms, enjoying meals on the patio or taking a dip in the pool. And as the sunset paints the sky in brilliant hues, they will watch the ships return to port, just as the first seafaring owner did long ago.
Opposite, above: Vintage crewelwork pillows adorn the bed in the master suite. This page: Lining the living room’s original mantel is a grouping of dainty Royal Worcester figurines.
A monthlong European cruise at age sixteen sparked a lifelong love affair for designer Lee Stough. The beauty of these foreign lands compels her to return, again and again, in search of inspiration.
Tucked into the verdant hills of Louisville, Kentucky, Lee Stough’s classic Tudor home evokes thoughts of cozy European country houses with proper pedigrees. Inside each room, streams of light land on carefully culled collections from her various trips abroad.

Having grown up in Charlottesville, Virginia, where everyday life is influenced by the legacy of Thomas Jefferson, the noted statesman and a great European traveler in his own right, Lee’s childhood included exposure to the four corners of the globe. Touring with her grandparents throughout Iceland, Scandinavia, Russia, and England opened her eyes to the wondrous beauty possessed by these nations. College treks across France and Italy fully cemented this adoration and beckoned her back as often as possible—even for just a week’s vacation—to the lands she loved.

A fourth-grade paper written on Jacqueline Kennedy’s renovation of the White House first piqued Lee’s interest in interior design. Impressed by all she had seen in the cities, homes, and museums she had explored around the world,

**Opposite:** A beloved wedding gift of monogrammed sterling silver mint julep cups sits beneath a framed antique Italian watercolor. The eighteenth-century French candlestick is a memento from Lee Stough’s first trip to France.
Clockwise from right: French chairs flank a 1775 Hepplewhite mahogany table. A predesign for a tapestry, the Italian cartone was created in Florence in the 1920s. A pair of cozy wicker chairs borders the pine fireplace mantel in the master bedroom. Opposite, clockwise from above left: An antique French ledger rests atop a vintage tole tray painted by Lee's grandmother. The French marble-top, drop-front desk is filled with English porcelain and family portraits. A souvenir from the Sunday market in L’Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, an eighteenth-century painted French chest sits between two carved Italian side chairs found in New Orleans.
studying art history in college was a natural progression. Later, having moved to New York City to live near the center of the design industry, and benefiting from the opportunity to wander through the endless art galleries there, Lee furthered her education by obtaining a degree from the New York School of Interior Design.

After working in the field for fifteen years, Lee established her own design business centered on her personal philosophy that a home should be both a sanctuary and a haven. She assists her clients in creating environments of comfort and contentment that reflect their own interests and experiences. Working out of a studio she shares with two other designers, Lee reserves her home as a space for creativity and dreaming.

Her design concepts originate from her vast collection of memories and past journeys, as well as from those she continues to make. According to Lee, “Experiencing another way of life and learning from it is one of the most invaluable ways I seek inspiration.”

“YOUR HOME SHOULD TELL THE STORY OF WHO YOU ARE, AND BE A COLLECTION OF WHAT YOU LOVE.”

—Nate Berkus
Recollections of vibrant market days in the beauty of Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, the air filled with the scent of lavender and rosemary; wandering Magazine Street in New Orleans, the shops brimming with treasures brought over from France, England, and Italy—all have influenced the choices Lee makes for her clients’ residences. Borrowing from the palettes of the sun-bleached villages of Provence and the gently worn frescoes of an ancient Italian church, she uses these time-tested colors and textures to add an intangible richness to the bank of ideas from which she draws.

In Lee’s words, “Whether it is an upholstered wall, a painted finish, or a piece of porcelain, there are always visual souvenirs that serve to energize me. I love my home—I love being at home—and my goal is for my clients to experience that same sort of bliss.”

Above right: Lee’s eighteenth-century French desk faces a view framed by curtains made of vintage monogrammed bed linens. Opposite: This Virginia-made bed was given to Lee by her grandparents and is covered with a collection of crisp antique linens.
When a New Orleans couple fell in love with a grand historic home, they sought the assistance of one of the city’s premier design firms to turn it into a gracious reflection of sophisticated style.

Opposite: An antique Italian festival chandelier sparkles in the double parlor, where custom-made damask draperies frame floor-to-ceiling windows. A sampling of the Fishers’ art collection is reflected in the gilded mirror. This page, above right: A vintage pedestal table with a green marble top—the first piece purchased for the home—was sourced in Italy.
Finding an interior designer who understands the importance of respecting the architectural integrity of an older home isn’t always an easy task. That was the dilemma facing Danah and Paul Fisher when they purchased an elegant two-story house on St. Charles Avenue in New Orleans’ Milan neighborhood. Although a dozen families had lived there since its construction in the mid-1800s by affluent steamboat agent Cornelius Bicknell Payne, the building’s footprint remained essentially unchanged.

The couple enlisted the team of Karin Nelson and Troy Wilson, principals of the Crescent City firm Nelson Wilson Interiors, to help them realize their dream for a home that was an extension of their personalities, as well as the perfect canvas to showcase their estimable art collection.
Mantels in the dining room and the double parlor were carved in Mexico from honed Danby marble quarried in Colorado. The French nineteenth-century Louis XVI chandelier was sourced from a New Orleans antiques shop.
Business partners since 2001, Karin and Troy have blended their myriad talents on numerous residential and commercial projects, not only in southern Louisiana, but also in cities from Toronto to Miami. “Troy’s eye for scale and proportion, color and balance are so finely honed,” explains Karin, “it’s like the difference between learning to play the piano and being a virtuoso.” Combined with her love of creating color schemes—and her uncanny ability to remember a project’s exact palette years after completion—customers are assured of getting well-rounded expertise, whatever their needs or tastes.

“I think the guiding principle that sums up our design philosophy is to work closely with our clients to interpret their vision,” says Karin. “We take our skill sets and create the best possible solution for our customers, resulting in an end product that is a beautiful, functional space where the owner can feel at home.”

For the Fisher home, the designers searched for just the right period pieces to imbue the residence with timeless refinement. Local shops were an invaluable source—the carved camellias of the ornately hand-crafted plaster ceiling medallion were created by Lachin Ornamental—and custom-made elements bring bespoke artistry to the spaces. Set against a serene background of muted hues, the furnishings evoke the genteel elegance often inherent in dwellings of this erstwhile era.

“OUR STYLE OF DESIGN IS REALLY ABOUT UNDERSTANDING OUR CLIENTS WELL ENOUGH TO BRING THEIR VISIONS TO LIFE.” —Karin Nelson

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When seeking antiques and vintages, rarely does attraction have anything to do with price or provenance; the hunt can be as thrilling as the acquisition. In the following pages, seasoned experts offer their advice for the pursuit.
For antiques dealer Kim Faison, the bliss of crossing oceans in search of treasure is matched only by placing acquisitions in the hands of customers who will cherish them.
As Scandinavian merchants unload their trucks at Sweden’s Stockholm Furniture & Light Fair, Kim Faison is there, perusing the wares. The only American (she hails from Richmond, Virginia) invited to preview these troves of Gustavian heirlooms, Kim will have come and gone long before the show opens to the public. This scene is repeated throughout Europe as colleagues recognize in her a kindred spirit. Often, Kim already has a specific client in mind when she spies a pièce de résistance. “It is an incredible joy to be so far away, find something exquisite, and know that a friend has the ideal spot for it,” she says. Through Kim Faison Antiques, the entrepreneur has been connecting homeowners with seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century furnishings for almost thirty years.

The appreciation for classic silhouettes, quality construction, and rich patina is a heritage passed down from her mother, Caroline Faison, an importer of fine Continental antiques. Kim apprenticed with her mom in Greensboro, North Carolina, for a decade before launching a career in Virginia.

Opposite: At Kim Faison Antiques, colorful Delftware highlights an intricately carved, circa 1740 Danish hutch. Right: An early nineteenth-century Dutch-decorated creamware plate commands attention.
Kim’s shop carries a variety of early English, Continental, and Scandinavian furnishings and décor. The proprietress points out that selections culled from the same era harmonize, regardless of their country of origin. Every room, she says, needs something old and beautiful.

When Kim’s younger son started kindergarten, she opened her eponymous shop in a nine hundred-square-foot bungalow set within walking distance of her boys’ school. Later, the business moved across the street to a circa 1926 house nearly three times the size of the original cottage—a gracious locale for showcasing a wide array of furniture, pottery, and accessories.

Despite the splendor Kim observes during buying trips abroad, she says that nothing compares with coming back and beholding her own inventory with fresh eyes. When she revisits clients, she can’t help whispering a greeting as she runs her hands over previous finds—recalling instantly the day she found each piece, precisely where it was displayed, and how much she paid for it. “Antiques are like my children,” she says. “They might be living in a new home, but they will always be mine.”

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Cultivating a Love for ANTIQUES

One of the nation’s premier dealers of fine French furniture and a source for rare and unusual pieces, most notably those from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, Mary Helen McCoy shares her insights on shopping antiques fairs and shows.
Whether adding to a treasured collection or simply seeking decorating inspiration, attendees agree that summer days traveling to the country’s best-loved antiques shows are days well spent.

The prospect of navigating the large fairs might seem overwhelming to a novice, so we turned to renowned antiques dealer Mary Helen McCoy—whose gallery in Memphis, Tennessee, specializes in seventeenth- to nineteenth-century French furniture and décor—to demystify the process. She offers advice for collecting sought-after pieces, working with trustworthy vendors, and negotiating a fair price.

Mary Helen believes that collecting takes time and is a process based on personal taste. She suggests starting with a collection of small items, such as picture frames, boxes, or teacups. “Collect pieces that really

ROUND TOP ANTIQUES FAIR

Celebrating its golden anniversary in 2018, this show draws collectors to rural Texas three times per year. The extensive variety includes early American primitives, fine European textiles, ancient prints, architectural salvage, and porcelain. The Big Red Barn houses thirty thousand square feet of Americana and Continental pieces, and Marburger Farm features more than 350 dealers with high-end antiques and bibelots.
appeal to you, regardless of what other people like,” she advises. “And, no matter what your budget is, you should search for the best you can possibly afford and take your time to gather the best pieces.”

Because identifying the age and authenticity of antiques can be complicated, Mary Helen emphasizes the importance of working with reputable dealers who stand behind their merchandise. She recommends first becoming familiar with collectible items by attending museum exhibits and studying reference books, but ultimately trusting a good dealer for guidance. “The best place to educate your eye is at a show,” she says, “where you can actually touch and feel the pieces and learn the difference between what is merely decorative and what is a true antique.”

Before picking up a centuries-old ceramic bowl or sitting down on a valuable antique chair, first ask the dealer for permission. “Really respect the furniture and accessories,” Mary Helen says. “Dealers are happy for you to touch, but let them show you how, so that you don’t throw off a drawer or force open a lock.” She points out that an excellent dealer will always demonstrate a willingness to teach and engage in conversation. “If you’re not greeted kindly or treated well in a booth, then you should move along to the next one,” Mary Helen adds.
BRIMFIELD ANTIQUE SHOW

➡ Every May, July, and September, thousands of treasure hunters converge on the tiny community of Brimfield, Massachusetts, to seek out everything from fine and rare antique furniture to kitschy vintage collectibles. Arguably the most famous antiques exhibition in the United States, the show began in 1959 and has since become a mecca for savvy dealers, serious shoppers, and casual collectors alike.
Likewise, dealers may not be interested in working with someone who asks them, before any other question, “What is your best price?” Keep in mind that dealers have already spent considerable time, money, and effort to accumulate and vet what is in their booths, and the price on a ticket reflects a very real value. Although they do expect some bartering, leading with a question about money indicates that a person is shopping by price only and is not interested in the historical significance of what they are purchasing.

“The best questions to ask a dealer are: ‘What is this?’ ‘Where did it come from?’ ‘How old is it?’ ‘Has there been any restoration?’” Mary Helen says. “And then you can make an offer. Although there is some room for negotiation, making an offer that is considerably lower than the ticketed price can be perceived by the dealer as insulting.”

Her final advice for antiques shopping? “Just relax, and don’t be intimidated by what you see at a show—we were all novices once.” Even with nearly thirty years of experience as a dealer of fine antiques, Mary Helen still enjoys simply perusing the beautiful, historical pieces each show has to offer.

**SCOTT ANTIQUE MARKETS**

Held monthly in Atlanta, Georgia, and at various times throughout the year in Columbus, Ohio, and Washington Court House, Ohio, this family-owned and -operated business has grown over thirty years to become what is now the world’s largest monthly indoor antiques show. Attendees can peruse a wide selection of silver, pottery, fine crystal, period furniture, memorabilia, and much more.
As a senior vice president for a national commercial real estate developer, Kathy Delgado graced magazine covers and was listed among the most powerful women in her profession. But even though the Los Angeles–based executive had attained wealth and numerous accolades, her daydreams carried her far from her competitive business environment.

On weekend escapes to Europe, Kathy indulged her passion for romantic French ambience—exploring Parisian flea markets and pausing to savor buttered...
Arranged like a Paris flea market, the lifestyle boutique Vintageweave Interiors brims with an enchanting array of antique furniture, linens, and home décor gathered during shop owner Kathy Delgado’s frequent pilgrimages to France.
croissants. One day, she got lost and entered a small antiques store to ask for directions. Without success, she tried to communicate with the French-speaking owners, pointing to the address in her notes. To Kathy’s surprise, the older couple took her hands and gently led her from the shop, pausing to turn the sign on the door to Closed before walking her to the destination. This generosity of spirit only deepened her longing for a different career path.

Back in California, entertainment-industry clients noticed the French treasures that lined Kathy’s office shelves and began inquiring about pieces for their productions. Dinner-party guests encouraged her to pursue interior decorating, and she helped design her company’s new headquarters. Gradually, a clear vision emerged. “I was yearning for my creative self to come to the forefront,” she says.

Kathy admits that the idea of leaving the security of a job she enjoyed was daunting. She credits the advice "There is something inherently magical about using a fork, a plate, or a chair that you know was loved by a family now long gone," Kathy says of the treasures that fill her Los Angeles shop.
of a Hollywood director with giving her the push she needed. “Don’t confuse money with your life’s calling,” he urged. “You’ve made your fortune. Now let that be the vehicle that helps you launch your dream.”

In 2005, Kathy founded Vintageweave Interiors, a Los Angeles haven of authentic French-farmhouse antiques and home décor. Although she operates mainly by private appointment, she opens the shop to the public during select hours and sells worldwide through the company’s website. With her showroom steps away from a network studio, Kathy also consults on set design and cooking-show prop styling. Her wares were featured in Tim Burton’s cinematic adaptation of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*.

The entrepreneur is grateful to have found both a career and a calling in Vintageweave. “I can’t properly put into words how enthusiastic I am about getting up every day,” Kathy says.

*With their warm patina and period charm, French textiles, such as the kitchen torchons pictured above right, find new purpose here.*
WHERE TO SHOP & BUY

Below is a listing of companies featured in this issue. Items not listed are privately owned and are not for sale.

**Pages 11–14:** Maison de France Antiques, 1304 8th Street, Leeds, AL, 205-699-6330.
**Pages 15–16:** Nightingale Antiques, 661-301-1223, rubylane.com/shop/nightingaleantiques.
**Pages 17–20:** The Brown House: Antiques, Art, Comforts of Life, thebrownhouse.bigcartel.com.
**Pages 21–22:** Amedeo, 946 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY, 212-737-4100, cameos.com.
**Pages 23–26:** Ashford Hill for Henhouse Antiques, 1900 Cahaba Road, Birmingham, AL, 205-918-0505, henhouseantiques.com.
**Pages 27–28:** Artful Toys and Antiques, 360-666-1567, artfultoysandantiques.com.
**Pages 37–42:** Beverly Ruff Antiques, 2417 Canterbury Road, Mountain Brook, AL, 205-871-7872, beverlyruff.com.
**Pages 43–46:** Rose Ann Kendrick’s booth (Dealer #77) can be found at Hanna Antiques Mall, 2424 7th Avenue S, Birmingham, AL, 205-323-6036, hannaantiques.com.
**Pages 47–50:** French Garden House, 8941 Atlanta Avenue, Suite 284, Huntington Beach, CA, 714-454-3231, frenchgardenhouse.com.
**Pages 65–70:** Lee R. Stough Interiors, 1556 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, KY, 502-583-6169.
**Pages 71–76:** Nelson Wilson Interiors, LLC, 419 Central Avenue, Jefferson, LA, 504-891-0554, nelsonwilsoninteriors.com.
**Pages 79–82:** Kim Faison Antiques, 5605 Grove Avenue, Richmond, VA, 804-282-3736.
**Pages 89–94:** Vintageweave Interiors, Inc., 7928 West 3rd Street, Los Angeles, CA, 805-364-2403, vintageweave.com.
The simple elegance of farmhouse charm is the combination of comfort and timeless character. Each home is filled with styles ranging from vintage to industrial farmhouse, featuring rustic siding, calming paint tones, and plenty of natural light. Whether a new pastoral build that honors the past or a weathered weekend getaway, homes that hold a reverence for reimagined historic finds fill this collection.

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