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This Fall edition of Our Country Home is all about belonging. Belonging to a family, a community, a house. Belonging to a lifestyle and a tradition. We all “belong” to these times, complex and fraught as they are, and often the calamitous atmosphere of our world can be overwhelming. However, it is always possible to take a deep breath and take stock. To look around oneself and find connection and renewal in simple things.

Within these pages we introduce you to a pair of extraordinary authors whose full-color glossy books will help you envision and achieve the home of your dreams. We take you inside the home of one modern couple with taste to spare and a lot of innovative ideas. We present ideas for homemade gifts, and how to connect with yourself and your country community during the upcoming holiday season. We reconnect you to the idea of comfort foods to nourish body and soul. We invite you to create a new “thrift store” look for your dining room table, and give tips on how to create a guest bath and bedroom for your friends and loved ones. We ask the expert how to make the most of antique shopping and country design. And finally, we offer tips on how to get a peaceful and restful night’s sleep.

As the light wanes and temperatures drop, we all need a warm cave to go to and some companionship around the fire. Nurturing your sense of connection to other people and experiences often helps you belong to the most important person of all—yourself.

Mary Greene

Mary Greene
Section Editor

OUR COUNTRY HOME

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THE RLW CABIN

Text: Barbara Winfield



Photograph, Barbara Winfield

Larry Cohn, left, and RJ Millard

Tucked into the rich forested area of Barryville, NY sits a modern rectangular structure: The RLW Cabin. This newly constructed, eco-sensitive 2,300-square-foot cabin is the brainchild of owners Larry Cohn and RJ Millard.

A little over six years ago, Cohn, an architect, and Millard decided they needed to offset their hectic urban life with a country home. On a plane a few months later, Cohn picked up a paper napkin and drew a simple rectangular house on a sloped piece of property. The sketch, inspired by a loft-style lodge where they had stayed recently in Shohola, PA, was the first step in the RLW Cabin design process.

With the sketch in mind, Cohn and Millard began the search for a building site. After some looking, they found the ideal lot for sale on Mapes Road in Barryville, NY.

DREAM TEAM

After completing the design, Cohn and Millard began putting together a “dream team” to help bring their vision to life. Hector Muñoz-Baras of V.Baras Architects in Glen Spey, NY, which specializes in modern solar home design, became the architect of record and began to work with them on construction drawings. Muñoz-Baras urged the couple to have the new structure follow the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified model of energy efficiency. Other team members included Jim Akt of Jim Akt Excavating in Barryville, NY and builder John Lust of Lust Woodworks in Glen Spey, NY, who is well educated in LEED standards. Sara Emerick and Maureen Mahle of Steven Winter & Associates of New York City also provided LEED consulting.

AIR QUALITY

In addition to meeting the complex LEEDS criteria, Cohn considered the difference between an air-tight house that would keep in the heat and air conditioning, or one with natural ventilation. Air tightening causes humidity that may lead to mold-growth and dust mite infestation, a leading cause in respiratory problems. “Although energy conservation was a major factor, I was also very concerned with creating a healthy atmosphere,” says Cohn. To ensure this, an Energy Recovery Ventilator (ERV) was installed to provide fresh air while minimizing heat loss in the winter months.

‘PLATFORM AND CAVE’

“We didn’t want the design of the house to compete with the natural beauty of the surrounding trees and landscape, so the structure is a simple bold form that sits within that setting rather than blending in,” says Cohn. “That being said, the deep brown—almost black—color of the pine tree bark in

the rain was actually the inspiration to stain the exterior wood siding a dark shade. The bright red door was a simple way-finding device, and introduces the idea of punches of color within a monochrome pallet.

“While I am a committed Modernist architect, I do not believe in living in a glass box,” says Cohn. “The house design is taken from a combination of the primitive ideas of ‘platform and cave.’ The home is a viewing platform set among the trees to look out into the wilderness through the large glass openings on the south facade, but at the same time, the more solid walls on the opposite side give the feeling of enclosure and security, as though one were in a cave.”

HANDSOME AND SMART

The large deck makes the small house footprint seem much larger. Its area is loosely divided into two sections by the large concrete form that continues from the inside of the house. On the living room side, in season, are deck chairs and, on occasion, the dining room table (which rolls) for dining al fresco. On the other side, the outdoor shower sits partially obscured from the public, but with an open view of the trees. Neither bathroom uses tile; the upstairs shower is covered in back-painted glass and the shower downstairs in zinc sheets. Both shower basins are slop sinks in pre-cast concrete.

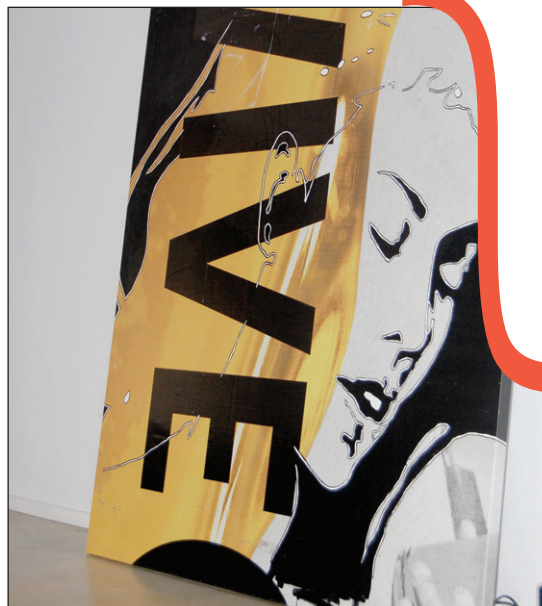
The house is not only handsome; it has brains, too. In winter, the sun is at a low angle in the sky and shines deep into the house interior. The exposed concrete absorbs heat to help keep the house warm at night. In summer, with the sun higher in the sky, the roof overhang protects the interior space from overheating, which allows the house to function without air conditioning. The house is sited so the longer wall sits on an east-west axis

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BLENDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY WITH MINIMALIST STYLE

“The house design is taken from a combination of the primitive ideas of ‘platform and cave.’”

—Larry Cohn, Homeowner



Photographs, Danielle Gaebel

with windows facing nearly due south, which allows for the use of passive solar energy. In addition, the cabin uses a radiant hot water system in the floor.

REUSE AND RECLAIM

Throughout the building process, the couple used as many reclaimed materials as they could. “We also used left over materials that would normally be thrown out,” says Cohn. Some of the recycled items used were:

- Old fire doors salvaged from a New York City building reused as bedroom doors.
- Reclaimed barn lumber used to clad the fireplace wall, and to construct the bed in the master bedroom.
- Antique table legs for the dining room table.
- The family room bar, an original ‘70s Scandinavian design, found on the street in New York.

ARTISTIC TOUCHES

“Living in a small apartment in New York City, we did not have any furniture or art pieces to move to the house,” says Cohn. “We had to start from scratch, and on a budget.” They started with the lighting. The round glass ball pendant over the dining table was discovered at a furniture and lighting fair in New York City. And the couple began collecting rugs. “The big black shag in the living room is from a carpet vendor in Marrakech,” says Cohn. “The cow hide in the master bedroom is from a trip to South Africa to visit Larry’s grandmother.” These and other rugs help with sound absorption given the large concrete areas in the home. Oversized comforters were added for warmth, and green plants in colorful pots “bring some green inside.”

As the house neared completion, Millard searched for art pieces. Their first piece, an oversized painting on billboard canvas by surfer artist Pat Conlon, set the tone for the house. The piece, “Vive,” leans casually against the wall in the living room to create a laid-back feel. Most of the other pieces were found at art fairs and include a tiny Japanese graphite image that hangs next to the fireplace, and a monochrome photomontage placed over a Modernist-style chrome and velvet rocking chair to serve as a focal point. Finally, the inside mural was hand-painted by Brian Gilmarin who, with Mark Chamberlain, painted the interiors in the house.

CHEERFUL MODERNISM

Designed with an open floor plan that visually connects the living room with the kitchen and dining area, the interior has the elegance of streamlined—yet intimate—space. Cohn and Millard carved out a chic, cohesive sitting area by limiting the major elements to a palette of pale gray mixed with black and charcoal gray. This same color palette is carried throughout the house with each room featuring one area of primary color. Each bright spot injects a sense of fun into the neutral palette; the result is a feeling of cheerful modernism.

Clean lines and contemporary furnishings make this small home seem expansive. The RLW Cabin demonstrates that eco-friendly design doesn’t have to compromise on style; it’s a perfect example of how saving energy can be a beautiful thing.

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• TRY THIS



BEDROOM AS SANCTUARY

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Getting adequate sleep is a challenge in our modern culture, where productivity is valued above all. Many of us feel guilty taking down time when our to-do list is not completed, or we are simply driven by the need to stay on schedule. The anxiety and hyper performance of this kind of lifestyle can make it difficult at day's end to turn off the switch, quiet the mind and relax the body into a state conducive to a good night's sleep.

The effects of chronic sleep deprivation are well known. We become tired and edgy, impatient, unable to focus, less productive and less creative. Muscles and organs become vulnerable to injury and disease. Driving can become dangerous and memory impaired. We are eating more, exercising less, feeling sluggish and depressed. We notice the symptoms; we want more sleep. What to do about it?

Tub Time

There is nothing simpler, or more luxurious, than slipping into a hot bath fragrant with natural bubbles and restorative salts at the end of your day. Be sure you have nothing planned after your bath; the idea is to soak for as long as you wish and then fall into bed in a relaxed state. Some people like to read in the bath; others like to dim the lights and listen to soft radio, or relish in the silence. Television is not a good idea for people who have a hard time falling asleep. The moving images and noise is disruptive and can provide too much stimulation. The idea of bath time and quiet is to reduce stimulation to the point where sleep becomes a welcome and logical next step. A glass of lemon water or cup of chamomile tea is a good accompaniment to your bath, to aid relaxation and stay hydrated.

Nesting

Try to use your bed mainly as a place to relax and rest. Hauling your laptop on your bed to work is tempting for many of us, but creates associations with the bed as a place to work. Think of your bed—and your sleep time—as a place for rest and renewal.

If you feel lukewarm about your bedroom, take some time to re-vision how it could be improved. Is your bed comfortable? Is it time to invest in a new, better mattress? Do you have everything you need at night within easy reach, without a cluttered mess at your bedside? (A bedside table with a drawer and lower shelf can help with that.) Is your lighting soft, or adjustable? Is there fresh air and a pleasing view through a window or skylight? Your bed should be positioned in a spot that feels just right to you. Make sure that your pillows are of adequate quality to support your neck while you sleep. A pillow under the knees or between the thighs can help the body into alignment. A cooler bedroom gives the excuse to pile up the cozy blankets and comforters. Paint your walls in soothing, restful colors. Add throw rugs for a warm atmosphere.

Natural remedies

If you continue to have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, consulting a naturopath for sleep remedies is another approach. There are many effective and safe herbal and homeopathic remedies available in your local health food store. Consider creating a mantra to use in the nighttime when you are awake and restless. Create one that is personal to you, healing to the world, and soothing all around.

Sweet dreams.

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WELCOMING GUESTS

The Guestroom



“I have also been to homes where there were designated guestrooms, fancy soaps and flowers on my bedside table. I noticed and remembered those stays, appreciating the effort that went into making them comfortable and pleasurable.”

—Lori Malone

Text: Lori Malone | Photography: TRR Archives

Guests are coming!

That phrase can be either delightful or dreadful, depending on the guests and your ability to accommodate them. Those of us with homes in the country often get phone calls from city friends hinting at a visit. Holidays also encourage overnight and weekend stays.

I’ve visited friends with limited space and have been relegated to narrow sofas and blowup mattresses tucked in play rooms, basements and back porches. I’ve slept on enough lumpy mattresses to know that makeshift accommodations do not make for a pleasant stay or good night’s sleep. I have also been to homes where there were designated guestrooms, fancy soaps and flowers on my bedside table. I noticed and remembered those stays, appreciating the effort that went in to making them comfortable and pleasurable.

If you are fortunate enough to have an extra bedroom for guests, take the time to make it a sanctuary.

Decorating a guestroom can be rather fun, unlike rooms that you use everyday where you may have elected to go neutral or conservative with the décor. A guest room can be that place where you experiment a bit more. It may also be a challenge to decorate if its current furnishings are a mixed-matched array of inherited items and castoffs from other rooms.

A friend of mine had a dated ‘70s-style bedroom set she received from relatives. The dark and unfashionable pieces gave her guest room a somber tone. In spite of painting the walls a sunny yellow and outfitting the bed with bright and cheery linens, the room seemed dull. During a stay, I suggested she pare down the furnishings, remove one of the nightstands and replace it with a small round table. I suggested she keep the dresser, but replace the mirrors that attached to the back with a cottage-style mirror that evoked the style she wanted for the room. Then I really scared her,

continued on page 14



STOCK THE BEDSIDE TABLE:

- Reading Lamp
- Tissues
- Water carafe and glass
- Clock
- Magazines and books
- Phone



telling her to paint everything white and swap out the burnished brass hardware for brushed stainless knobs. She followed my advice and was surprised at how modern and clean everything looked for a minimal amount of time and money.

Mattresses are also a neglected part of a guest bedroom. Rarely are they new; mostly we just put our old mattress into the guest room when we buy a new one for our room. To give old mattresses new life and make them feel more luxurious, buy a bed topper made of memory foam. Encase both the topper and mattress with a mattress cover,

and finish the bed off with high thread-count sheet set a with good thread-count sheet set. A selection of pillows with different densities to accommodate varying preferences will also ensure your guest have a restful sleep. Always use pillow covers under pillowcases to protect pillows from staining.

A good reading lamp, extra blankets, fresh flowers and a comfy bed make for a pleasant stay. The effort you expend will ensure your guests feel welcomed and cared for.

(For more ways to create a bedroom sanctuary read "Try This" on page 11.)



DRESSER and CLOSET:

One designated drawer for guest belongings should be sufficient, with another for extra towels, blankets and linens. Space in the closet and extra hangers will allow your guests to hang finer clothes. A hook and towel bar behind the door will alleviate too many wet towels in the bathroom.

Things to CHECK and HAVE ON HAND:

Cell phone and laptop reception if needed. Maps, local newspapers and activity guidebooks will allow guests to plan activities and venture off without you. Socks, sweatshirts, t-shirts, pajamas, toothbrushes, hair brushes, disposable razors and deodorant are things people tend to forget. A few extras on hand will be appreciated.

The Bathroom



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The Kitchen



IN THE KITCHEN:

Ask your guests about dietary restrictions and food preferences and try to have those items on hand. Let your guests know where everything is and invite them to help themselves, or designate meal times and provide menus.

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• TRY THAT



This table, set by community members for the October 2010 "Farm to Plate" fundraising dinner held outside at a private residence in Sullivan County, NY shows the elegant country look of mis-matched china. The tableware was provided by dinner hosts and by Lisa's Not Just Antiques! in Honesdale, PA.

SETTING YOUR TABLE WITH THRIFT STORE GOODS

Text: Mary Greene | Photography: Danielle Gaebel

Part of country living is cultivating a knack for living economically without compromising on style and elegance. Another country notion is that old is as good—sometimes better—than new. Put these two together and you have a recipe for a whole new look in your dining room.

If you are just starting out and want a set of dishes for special occasions or for every day, it can be a creative adventure to find a mis-matched set at your local antique stores. This may also appeal to retired homeowners who are simplifying, or folks who are just plain tired of the dishware they've been relying on for years.

The first rule in acquiring such a set of dishes is patience. It's not like ordering on line or cruising the aisles at Crate & Barrel. You need to connect with your taste preferences as well. Do you like white china? Are you into colors and patterns? Do you like delicate plates or are you a more earthy type? Once you have a

vision of what you are after, it's time to begin the search. A little research into various design styles will help you get oriented as well.

Start at your favorite antique store that you know carries housewares. Begin with a few plates, glasses and bowls that match your vision. Thereafter you can collect anytime you are out and about, always searching for that special platter, vase or tea pot that will bring it all together. Don't hesitate to speak to store owners about what you are looking for. They are knowledgeable and happy to advise you.

Old table linens are the perfect offset for your new/old china. Special candlesticks, salt and pepper holders, gravy bowls and the like can complete the look of your table-escape. Again, put some thought into unifying your table through color, design and style. But don't overthink it—the best way to do this sort of shopping is to follow your intuition. And have fun!

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Blessings and Good Cheer

A country holiday

Text: Mary Greene

While the city puts on its grandest show this time of year, a holiday spent in the country has its own special charm. While the Empire State Building adorns itself in red and green, and the famous Fifth Avenue shops unveil their fabulous displays, and the tree at Rockefeller Center comes ablaze with its million lights, we watch the last of the autumn leaves swirl to the ground and dance among the first swirling flakes of snow. Many of us love to be in the city this time of year and partake in the hustle and bustle, the excitement and the crowds. Then we are just as happy to turn tail over the GWB and head for the hills—back to the majestic wintering quiet of the Upper Delaware River valley.

Our little towns and hamlets are not shabby, either, when it comes to holiday magic. Attending local festivals and tree lightings, art openings and open houses are a part of what makes the holidays in the country so satisfying. We have an opportunity to avoid the commercialism of the season by shopping local; that one special gift, purchased with a particular person in mind from a store owner whom you may know, or are getting to know, will mean more than scattershot shopping at a large discount box store.

At this time of year, too, those of us more fortunate can take time to count our blessings and enact our gratitude by donating goods and services to the less fortunate. Whether it's food for

your local food pantry, toys for your local toy drive and clothing for the coat drive, taking this extra effort to share the bounty is its own reward. A gift membership to a local non-profit, such as an arts center, animal shelter or conservation group, is another solution to meaningful gift giving.

It's time to strengthen your own family traditions up here in the country as well. Your kids will remember hiking into a field and choosing a Christmas tree from your local tree farm, or driving at dusk on Christmas Eve to see the luminaria. And don't neglect your apron: this is the perfect time to try out that new cookie recipe, or make a pumpkin pie from scratch. Perfection is not the goal; the goal is, again, to connect to the experience and allow it to bring you closer to your loved ones and your community. You may decide to prepare a vegan dish at Thanksgiving; to cook everything organic; or to prepare a feast using only local ingredients. You may encourage your family to "go green" by making gifts (food items make great presents) or wrapping them in inventive and non-commercial ways. Another idea is to create a homemade centerpiece using ingredients available in your yard and local supermarket or farm market as shown here.

Creating these types of focus for the holidays will allow you to connect to your community, and perhaps to yourself, in new and rewarding ways. Enjoy.

Natural Holiday Centerpieces

Creating a beautiful centerpiece out of objects mostly found in your backyard creates a connection to your table and the season that can't be found in a store. It is an activity you can share with your children, and it saves money. The meditative gathering of materials can provide welcome respite from the hectic pace of shopping and planning, and get your creative juices flowing. An hour is all you need to produce a memorable centerpiece for your holiday table.



Fall Centerpiece

Select a base for your arrangement. A shallow bowl, small tray, elevated cake plate or even a regular plate will work.

- Begin your design with a focal point, which could be apples, pomegranates or small pumpkins. You can also use nuts, cinnamon sticks, gourds and the like.
- Next, gather items from your yard such as leaves, acorns, pinecones and branches. Create piles of like objects, cutting to size as needed. (A variety of smaller items will create a more delicate effect than fewer larger items.)
- Arrange larger leaves around the edge of your container to form a border. Work your way in, adding smaller leaves, nuts, pinecones etc. Place your focal points in the center.
- Fill in spaces with whatever you have left until the arrangement is as full as you would like it. If you desire, set two small candle holders into the arrangement for a pair of orange or red candles. You can also add in a small number of craft items, such as ribbon or ornamental fall objects, for a bit of glitter and glow.

Winter Centerpiece

- A winter centerpiece is made in much the same way using different materials. Focal points could be white candles, large and handsome pine cones, cinnamon sticks and a spray of holly or other berried branch. Other materials could include white pine and fir branches, boxwood, garden sage (for its lovely muted color) and any other objects that catch your fancy. Work in the same way, from the edge of your container inward. A bit of sparkle from Christmas ornaments, balls, ribbon or other objects can add pizzazz.

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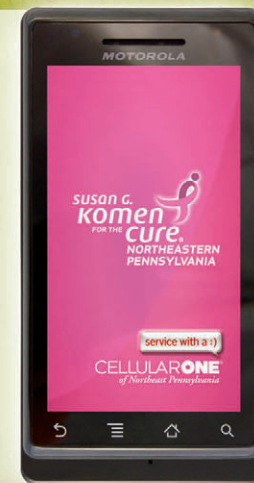
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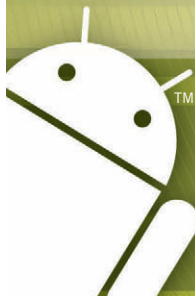
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GIFT WRAPPING ideas

DIY

Text: Lori Malone | Photography: Jennifer Bitetto

Wrapping a gift does not have to be arduous or expensive. Incorporating found objects and cast-off materials from other projects is a great way to save money and make your gift-wrap memorable.

Wallpaper, for instance, makes attractive gift-wrapping. Fabric lends a degree of flexibility when wrapping oddly shaped objects, and aluminum foil easily molds itself around smooth surfaces.

You can also buy rolls of regular gift-wrap and save the creative touches for ornamentation, which you can use to personalize a gift. Attach a photo of the recipient to the gift as an alternative to a traditional gift tag. If you have a computer, you can create strips of photos to use as ribbon, making one length long enough to wrap around the package and others to loop to make a matching bow.

- Make three loops, ten inch, eight inch and six, pinch the center of the loop down and secure with tape or a staple.

- Stack the three loops and secure with a staple. Place a band around the center to cover staple. Use hot-glue or double-sided tape to secure to gift.

Natural objects are a lovely alternative to a bow. Try pine sprigs and pinecones clustered on top of craft-paper wrapping and tied off with jute twine. (Give gifts with fresh-cut sprigs or other fresh elements to the recipient the same day to prevent wilting.)

Silk or dried flowers will last longer. Secure them with hot glue. If giving several boxes to one recipient, stack them up, one atop the other, and secure in place with hot glue. Use tulle, ribbon or twine on all sides and tie into a knot on top. Cover the knot using the blooms of five silk flowers, hot glue in place, then hot glue petals cascading down the sides.

Whimsical elements like faux fur, buttons or fringe are fun to use. Try a pink feather boa tied around a black satin covered box for a provocative touch, or an assortment of white buttons, randomly placed on pastel pink paper, for something sweet.

Sometimes the gift accent can be part of the gift. Second-hand scarves and neckties secured with a vintage brooch create a fashionable presentation and are usable by the recipient.

Theme wrapping incorporates usable accents too. Use butcher paper or a brown paper bag to wrap a cookbook. Tie with jute twine and secure a wire whisk or wooden spoon for accent.



Boxes, bins and baskets can hold an assortment of food and toiletry products. Stuff the bottom of vessel with crumpled newspaper and place objects, with the tallest in the back or center, and work your way out in size order. Stuff shredded paper or packaged filler between objects. Cover with cellophane, tulle or ribbon to secure contents.

Don't forget to get the kids involved. Give them a roll of craft paper or white matte paper and some markers or crayons and let them draw over every inch. You will have one-of-a-kind wrap that will be both heart-warming and unique.

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CHIC ANTIQUE: A Conversation with Austin Martin

Text and Photography: Erin Vanderberg

Our Country Home had the opportunity to speak with Austin Martin (bleauxboy724@aol.com), a consulting designer specializing in residential and commercial interior design and special events, and formerly the Creative Visual Presentation Director for Polo Ralph

Lauren. Martin got interested in antiques as a young man living and traveling through Europe, the Caribbean, Mexico and South America. After moving upstate, he started holding occasional barn sales to sell leftover pieces from projects in Manhattan.

OCH: Where did your appreciation for antiques begin?

Martin: My father and my mother are both highly creative: for my father it is the garden and for my mother it is painting, knitting, sewing and cooking. At an early age, my brothers and I were taught to identify and respect the arts and fine craftsmanship. I have been surrounded by antiques my entire life; everything around me was beyond old. As a very young boy, I can recall going to church with my great aunts America and Gloria and being entranced and fascinated by the beauty of the cathedrals which we would attend for mass.

OCH: You've traveled extensively; how has that affected your design aesthetic?

Martin: When you live in countries with hundreds of years of history, it awakens something in you. For me, it made me want to know everything about these things: What was the artist or craftsman thinking at the time he or she made the piece? How did they live? Did they have some of these pieces in their home? If one really takes time and quiets themselves, one can see the love and passion the artist had for each piece they created.

OCH: In terms of objects, what era of history commands your attention, and why?

Martin: I love the mid-century modern period. It was good design based on form and function. Architects and designers were using rare woods, glass and metals in very wonderful ways. The homes and the lines of the furniture of that era still hold up as clean and fresh today as they were then.

OCH: What objects are you most drawn to? Is there any object in particular you collect?

Martin: Whenever I enter a shop, I am drawn to organic objects first. If it is made out of rare or exotic wood such as ebony, rosewood or teak, I am looking it over. Then I move on to clay, stoneware, por-

celain, ceramic, silver, cotton and wool. I collect so many things: antique and vintage bed linens, quilts, rugs, primitive furniture, mid-century furniture and dishes.

OCH: Where do you shop for wares in the Upper Delaware area?

Martin: In Sullivan County, I love to shop at The Delaware Furniture & Home Co. (39 Lower Main St., Callicoon) and BridgeWater Mercantile (4917 Main St., Jeffersonville). In Pennsylvania, I like to shop at Miss Elly's Antiques & Such (518 Church St., Hawley). These shop owners always greet me with a sincere and warm smile and display a generous interest in my projects.

OCH: Where is your favorite place to shop in the world?

Martin: My favorite places to shop are in this order: Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Monte Video, Mexico, Morocco, Palm Beach, Miami, New York, San Francisco and Venice.

OCH: What are your tips for finding authentic antiques?

Martin: Do your homework. Go to the library, watch TV programs, read magazines and get online to research the piece you are interested in. Hit the pavement and visit museums and as many shops as you can. Once you have done your research, remember to have fun and enjoy yourself. Look at everything, keep your focus wide and then narrow it. Always be nice and do not be a snob—you would be amazed at all the good pieces you can find for a few dollars in out-of-the-way shops. I purchased an original Cherner chair, in mint condition, for \$20. Be aware that if you love a piece and must have it, if that piece has been refinished or repaired, it will not command top dollar or hold its market price, so do not be afraid to fairly negotiate the price. Ask the dealer for a history on the piece. See if the dealer can provide you with

solid documentation of prior ownership. Knowledge is power, and that should be your motto when buying antiques.

OCH: What does any country home need to be complete?

Martin: A country home is not complete until it has a few of the following: an amazing side board, pie safe, farm table, antique or vintage dishes, textiles such as rugs, quilts and blankets—and at least some pieces of antique or vintage bed linens to mix with the new linens.

OCH: Is it okay to mix antiques with contemporary furniture?

Martin: Absolutely. Just keep in mind that you might want your antiques to have the major focus. Look for contemporary pieces made of solid natural materials and furniture with simple design lines and subtle finishes. Less is more.

OCH: Tell us about your barn sales.

Martin: So many of my New York clients just wanted to get rid of things after a design shoot. They simply said to me, "Dump it, get it out of here!" I persuaded them to let me bring these pieces up to a barn on my property where I would try and sell them for these clients. Luckily, I had a friend with a large truck who helped me move up my very first shipment.

OCH: You have become known for your mannequins. Where did they come from?

Martin: I had nine fantastic Roostein mannequins, top of the line in mannequins—which, I might add, I rescued from a dumpsite. I would dress them up and create a lifestyle setting, placing them on my front lawn and featuring them in a vignette of country living. It was just so much fun to do this. My enjoyment was to see how the local traffic would smile, laugh, stop by to take pictures with the mannequins—and shop. It was a simple and fun way to advertise.

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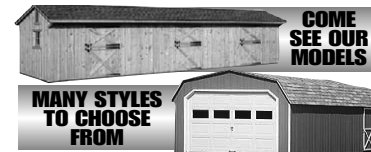
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TREASURING YOUR COUNTRY HOME

TWO AUTHORS SHARE INSIDER EXPERIENCE AND ADVICE

Text: Cass Collins | Photography Contributed

Gale C. Steves and Barbara Winfield first met as colleagues at Hachette Filipacci, a publishing company in New York City. Steves, author of “Right-Sizing Your Home: How to Make Your House Fit Your Lifestyle” (Northwest Arm Press, Inc., 2010), was editor-in-chief of **Home** magazine while Winfield, author of “Dream Log Homes & Plans” (Creative Homeowner, 2008), edited “Woman’s Day Home Remodeling.” Both women are full of insights about the subject of home improvements. Luckily for us, they have put their experience on paper in the form of these two colorful and accessible books.

Continued on page 28



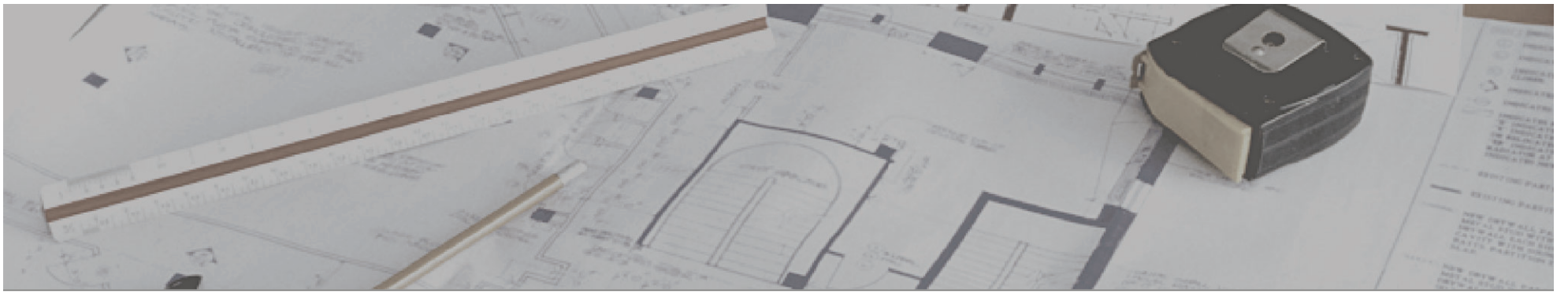
“It’s re-inventing your home to fit how you live”

—Author, Gale Steves



“It reminds people of camping,” she says. “It’s a connection to the land you can’t get at Home Depot.”

—Author, Barbara Winfield



Treasuring Your Country Home continued from page 27

Country connection

The two discovered a shared fondness for Sullivan County, NY after years of working near each other in a steel and glass skyscraper. Steves and her husband, an avid fly fisherman, have been second-home owners in Roscoe for 27 years. They have seen the evolution of the area over that time to a place where now “you meet city people here you didn’t know in the city,” says Steves. The “magical terrain of upland forest,” she says, is enhanced by a social scene they never expected to find outside Manhattan.

Winfield, who shares a Queen Anne Victorian home in Jeffersonville with her partner, an artist, bought the farmhouse with land and a barn 10 years ago “for less than the cost of a city apartment.” The two have since moved to Jeffersonville full time. They’ve found “great resources here” alongside a creative community and a congregation of locals who are open to living with city folk. “There is so much to do here,” says Winfield. “Every weekend there is a private party or a book-signing or a festival.”

Right-sized

Although Steves and her husband keep a pied-a-terre in Manhattan, these days they are hard-pressed to find a reason to leave their home in Roscoe. “It’s an old/new house,” says Steves. They used a local architect who incorporated parts of a 100-year-old barn in the new house and made it energy efficient with R-40 insulated walls.

“Right-sizing” her home was uppermost in Steves’ mind before she wrote the book about it. Some people think of downsizing in later years, but right-sizing is the right thing to do anytime, she says. It involves making the best use of your space for the time you are using it. “It’s re-inventing your home to fit how you live,” she says. Most people can’t afford to have formal rooms that are rarely used anymore. Kitchens and family rooms are often overused while formal living rooms go untouched

for months at a time. “In this economy,” says Steve, “many people work from home; adult children return; elderly parents move in.” Or some, like the authors in this story, transition a second home into a full-time home.

Using space differently

Winfield and her partner decided to swap the living room for the dining room in their Jeffersonville home. “We didn’t have that option in the city,” says Winfield, but the new configuration accommodates her large Italian family who like to sit at the dinner table for hours of feasting and talking.

Steves’ favorite trick in an open kitchen/dining area is to make an island 42 inches high to obscure the disarray caused by preparing a large meal. She encourages people to rethink the way they use all their rooms. “Consider how you use a guest room—could it double as a library or TV room?” The big question to ask yourself, says Steves, is how do you want to live now and in the future? Most people think they need more space, but they really just need to use their space differently.

“Sometimes, I admit, we eat in front of the TV,” she says. So she put casters on her dining room table to move it around as needed. In the city, Steves’ china cabinet has curtains to disguise its use as a file cabinet—she likes the big open space that her dining room table provides for her writing projects.

“Right-Sizing Your Home” has plenty of great glossy photo illustrations and solid information homeowners need to know to place common household items, from sofas to dishware to dining room chairs. She even addresses the special needs of very tall and “vertically challenged” homeowners. Her style audit helps you think about the kind of living that you do and how to accommodate it in your home. The book is good for a generations worth of living, from child-rearing to retirement, with design ideas and home solutions for every stage of life.

Planning ahead

Winfield suggests consulting a professional interior designer when planning changes in your home. She herself is an interior design coach and has taught at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. “Dream Log Homes & Plans” places an emphasis on the need to plan ahead. The book—full of gorgeous glossy photos of various log home interiors and exteriors that make you want to move right in—gives solid, practical advice on everything from lighting to financing to decorating. The book features seven log homes that are being lived in, as well as 36 additional plans for a wide array of log home styles. Full blueprint home plans can be ordered from a form in the book. It is the perfect companion for those who own—or are dreaming of owning—a log home.

Mystical appeal

Although Winfield’s Queen Anne is a far cry from the log homes she writes about, she says she is very glad to have done the project. For her, as for many people, a log home has a kind of mystical appeal. “It reminds people of camping,” she says. “It’s a connection to the land you can’t get at Home Depot.”

“Dream Log Homes” has plenty of ideas and resources that are useful for any homeowner, and it comes with a handy glossary of home remodeling terms; from trompe l’oeil to footcandle. Steves’ brother and his wife bought a log home in South Carolina. His report: “It’s like being on vacation every day.”

Women like Winfield and Steves are an asset to our upstate community. Their insights can help you create a country home you will always treasure. Both books can be found at amazon.com and at some local bookstores. Steves can be reached at gale@right-sizing.com. Winfield can be reached at barbarw@mac.com.



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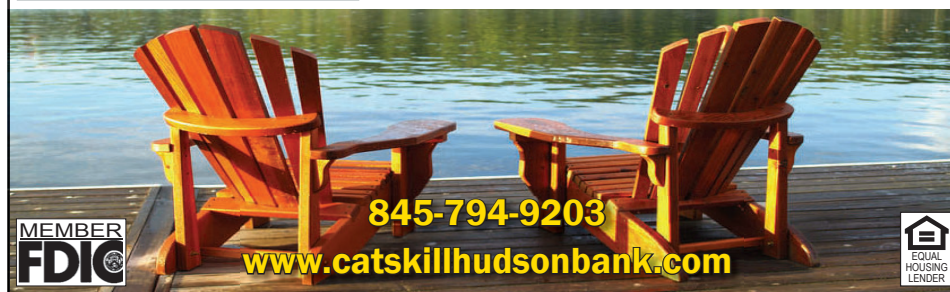
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SWEET &...

Text and Photography: Danielle Gaebel

Dolce

Yes, I do like to indulge and there is nothing better than good quality dark chocolate... unless you happen to pair it with delicious ingredients like raw nuts, dried fruit and quality extracts. These recipes are really easy to make and upon first bite I think you'll agree that homemade is best. Enjoy, indulge and savor every bite.



JP's Peppermint Patties

- 1/2 cup coconut oil, melted
- 1/4 cup agave
- 1 teaspoon peppermint extract
- 1 cup dark chocolate chips, melted (allow to cool a bit before dipping)

1. In a double boiler or saucepan, melt chocolate over low heat.
 2. In a small bowl combine oil, nectar and extract. Place in freezer or fridge to chill.
 3. Once mixture starts to solidify give it a good whip with an electric hand mixer. If mixture is still somewhat solid continue. If not, back to the freezer or fridge for a few minutes to set-up.
 3. Use a small cookie scoop (or spoon) and drop onto baking sheet (lined with unbleached parchment).
 4. With the tips of your fingers gently pat little balls down to form patty shapes.
 5. Back to the freezer or fridge to set (about 3 - 5 minutes if using the freezer). If you choose to skip this step the chocolate won't adhere.
 6. Dip your chilled patties into your slightly cooled chocolate and place back onto parchment.
 7. One last trip to the freezer or fridge will allow them to set.
- Eat one. You've earned it after all those trips across the kitchen.



Chocolate Fruit and Nut Clusters

- 1/2 cup mixed raw nuts and dried fruit (I used raw almonds, walnuts, cashews, pumpkin and sunflower seeds and raisins).
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips

1. In a double boiler or saucepan, melt chocolate over low heat.
2. Add fruit and nut mix.
3. Give it a good mix so all the fruit and nuts are enrobed in chocolate.
3. Use a spoon to drop mixture onto baking sheet (lined with unbleached parchment).
4. Place in the freezer or fridge to set.



Chocolate Coconut Almond Clusters

- 2 cups dark chocolate chips
- 1 cup almonds, toasted then coarsely chopped
- 1 cup shredded coconut, toasted

1. In a double boiler or saucepan, melt chocolate over low heat.
2. Add almonds and coconut. Mix well to blend.
3. Use a small or large cookie scoop (or spoon) and drop onto baking sheet (lined with unbleached parchment).
4. Cool in freezer or fridge.

“Chocolate doesn't make the world go around. But it certainly makes the trip worthwhile.”

– author unknown

Turn the page for Savory recipes!

Text and Photography: Danielle Gaebel

Pasta is a quick and easy dish that pairs well with many ingredients. Quinoa, a protein-packed super food, is like rice and can be used with a variety of meats, vegetables and spices. Both of these dishes are savory and simple to make. Add to your delight and get your dinner ingredients at the local farmers' market. Not only is the taste and quality unbeatable, you're supporting the local economy and your neighbors!

Bon Appetite.



Pasta with Mushrooms

Ingredients

- 1 onion, cut in half, thinly sliced
- 2 large cloves of garlic, chopped
- A handful or two of greens (I used arugula and cut it into bite size pieces)
- 3 tablespoons of butter
- 12 oz. bag pasta
- 1 oz. dried mushroom medley
- 4 tablespoons cornstarch, prepare according to package directions
- Sea salt & black pepper to taste

Directions

Prepare mushrooms according to package. I typically put mine in a bowl and pour very hot water until they are covered, maybe 2 cups of water.

Cook pasta according to directions on bag.

Heat three tablespoons of butter in a large pan.

Add thinly sliced onion and cook on low-medium heat until onions are tender.

Add chopped garlic.

Strain mushrooms over pan so broth goes directly into pan.

Chop strained mushrooms and add.

Add cornstarch slurry. Sauce will begin to thicken. Make sure to stir. If sauce does not thicken add more slurry mix.

Add in greens and cook until they wilt and come down in size.

Salt and pepper.

Add drained pasta.

Mix well and serve, top off with freshly grated parmesan cheese.



Fried Quinoa

Ingredients

- 1 large carrot, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 - 2 cups bok choy, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 quinoa, cooked
- 1 tablespoons chopped ginger
- ¼ cup soy sauce or tamari
- Small handful sesame seeds
- Small handful cashews, chopped rough

Directions

Prepare quinoa according to bag.

Melt a little butter in a sauté pan. Add chopped garlic, ginger and carrots. Cook for a minute or two. Add desired amount of sesame seeds.

Add eggs and cook like scrambled eggs.

Add bok choy and quinoa.

Sprinkle soy sauce or tamari to your liking. Add in cashews. Give it one last mix.

No bok choy? Experiment. Change it up and make it yours. This dish is very easy and versatile. It takes me no more than half an hour from prep to on the table, making it perfect for a weekday dish.



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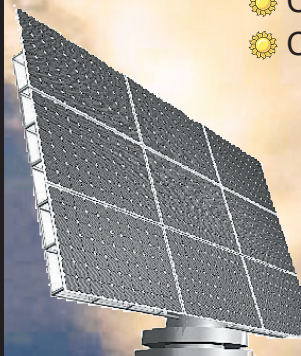
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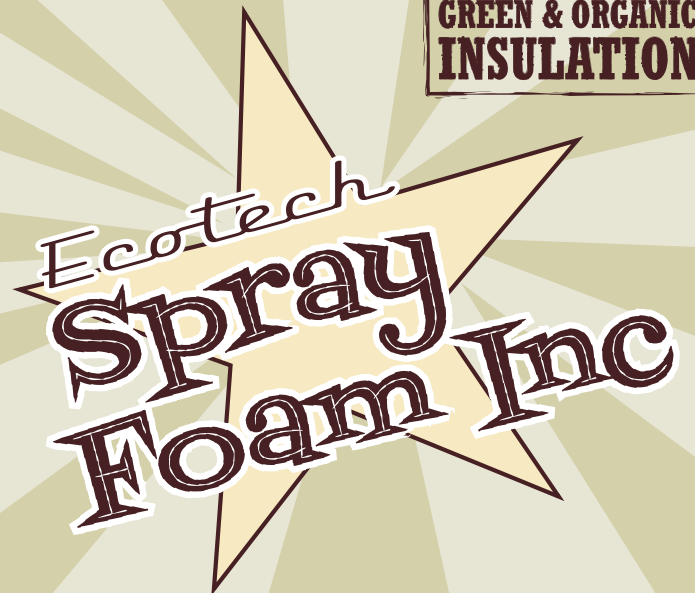
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