

Nostalgia Rules



REFRESHING FLORALS Grandmother Flora might not recognize her old sofa but she'd surely approve. Christine dressed it in a washable white cotton duck slipcover that can withstand everyday use.

As part of a large Italian family, Christine Glynn grew up surrounded by brothers, sisters, parents, uncle, aunts and cousins. All looked forward to spending weekends together at Grandma Flora's house. "Whether it was cooking Sunday dinner, or furnishing her living room, my grandmother's love of home and family was evident in everything she did," Christine reminisces. "The way she incorporated hand-me-down vintage items and beautiful, yet comfortable furniture into her home was what introduced me to romantic style decorating. As we say in Italian, her house was "tutti chic" (all things chic).



FIT FOR A QUEEN A rhinestone-studded pin elevates the rank of an ordinary napkin ring.

A home owner takes a sentimental journey back in time to create happy memories.

By Sophie Newman

Photography by Dan Mayers.
Styling by Fifi O'Neill.



FIRESIDE CHAT

Fabulous robins-egg blue slipcovers embroidered with sweet nosegays disguise rescued chairs in front of the living room's brick fireplace. Christine painted a lavender bow and garlands of ribbons on an old Victorian glass fireplace screen and embellished a wooden shutter with rose motifs.



DOLLOPS OF COLOR Christine hung a Mackenzie-Childs torquay pendant light above the sink and changed the cabinetry's knobs to whimsical ceramic ones to add personality to her kitchen. The window is set off with a wonderful lime green balloon shade lined with dark pink and cream toile.

Now a grandmother herself, Christine draws on her memories of time spent with all of her grandparents to infuse the décor of the Massachusetts home she shares with her husband Thomas with warmth and charm. "I want each room to make my children and grandchildren feel cozy, well cared for and, most of all, comfortable," she says.

Hub of the home

Christine admits that she loves to eat and enjoys feeding her family and friends. "Being Italian, the kitchen is the center of my world. My grandmother's kitchen was always full of life. It's where everything happened. We gathered there in good times and bad times."

The Glynn's kitchen is the same way. No matter who comes to visit they almost always end up in the kitchen. "The light is wonderful and a large island provides a place

for everyone to get together for breakfast, coffee or dessert," says Christine.

"My fondest dream is that my grandchildren will have happy memories of times spent here," she concludes. Judging by their reluctance to go home, Christine has nothing to worry about.

Paint to the rescue

In 1985, when Christine and Thomas built their house, the walls were builders' white. But not for long ... repainting the rooms in soft, garden-inspired hues topped Christine's "to do" list.

"Through the years, every surface has changed color to suit my whims," she says. "It's not unusual for Thomas to come home from work and find that a whole room has been painted a new shade in the eight hours that he was gone!"



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PLAYING DRESS-UP

A round maple kitchen table from Grandmother Flora's house is layered in linens that puddle on the floor. The pale lavender skirt is topped with a luscious pastel hydrangea and rose print fabric.



PRIVATE PARADISE
When Christine brought home a French woven cane bed that was too small for the master bedroom's queen-sized mattress, Thomas enlarged the frame to fit.

Recently, Benjamin Moore's Pearlescent paints have provided Christine with fresh inspiration. "They come in gorgeous barely-there colors that make a room glow," she explains. "The pearlescent finish looks dreamy on furniture, too."

That something extra...

When Christine inherited some of her grandmother's furniture she was thrilled, although she acknowledges that several pieces needed work. "If there's one thing my grandmother taught me, it's that there's nothing that fabric or a fresh coat of paint can't save," she says. "I've slipcovered and re-slipcovered her old sofa several times, but no matter what it looks like on the outside, sitting on it always makes me feel like I am at my grandmother's house again."

Since few things make Christine happier than designing a romantic makeover for old furniture, frames or architectural pieces, she's always on the

lookout for overlooked pieces that need some TLC. Friends often drop off something they have found that no one but Christine would love.

"There's no sense spending time painting and embellishing a piece that's going to fall apart," she cautions would-be furniture restorers. "Always make sure what you will be working on is sturdy and sound."

She also recommends adding something extra – a distressed or glazed finish, hand-painted flowers or three-dimensional appliques. It's the extras that make your creations special.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Christine's online boutique features a collection of home accessories and gift items that reflect her love of the romantic way of life.

MIX AND MATCH Decorative pillows in assorted styles remind Christine of her grandmother's eclectic approach to decorating.



OFFICE ROMANCE
Originally purchased for Thomas's office, a wooden desk with curvy cabriolet legs is now the hub of Christine's workspace. She inherited both the desk and room when her online boutique outgrew the kitchen table.

EMBELLISH A SUITCASE

MATERIALS

Vintage or vintage-looking suitcase
Benjamin Moore Linen white paint
Flat 1-inch paintbrush
Acrylic paints
Artists paint brushes
Ceramcoat interior satin varnish
Velvet ribbon

METHOD

- ❖ Paint suitcase with linen white paint and let dry thoroughly.
- ❖ Paint floral design freehand or use a pattern from your favorite gardening magazine, photograph or "how-to-paint flowers" book.

- ❖ Let dry.
- ❖ Seal with varnish to protect the surface.
- ❖ Embellish handle with velvet ribbon.

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