



ENHANCE YOUR HOME

Holiday Inspired Havens

Have you returned from a fantastic holiday at a cottage in Ontario or abroad, and now you're feeling inspired to recreate the serenity or excitement of your vacation paradise in your own home? Here are some tips for adding subtle holiday-chic style to your home:

Cottage Casual

If you've spent even a little time at a cottage, you know how naturally calming and inviting it is to relax in a room that feels like it's been put together over decades of collecting odd pieces. To get this look, use diverse pieces of furniture. If you are working with a set, paint and distress some of the pieces to set them apart from the rest. Sofas and chairs should be soft, with lots of cushions and curves. Next – and most important – use fabrics in a variety of patterns. For instance, find a beautiful vintage-looking chintz, and throw in a stripe and a check or a plaid. Just be sure the scale of each pattern is different, and the colours are in the same family, and you'll have a room that looks like it's always been a comfortable

haven full of much-loved pieces.

When striving for this look at home, be cautious. In an urban setting, Cottage Casual can end up looking eccentric if it's overdone.

Fabulously French

Perhaps you holidayed in the south of France and have fallen in love with the simple comfort of a cottage in Provence. French Country design is one of the most popular styles in design today. The look is casual, inviting and fuss-free – its charm is the rustic feel of the furniture and accessories, and the easy, cheerful combination of colours. The palette is warm, nature-inspired colour. Think ripe, golden pears; clear, turquoise waters; luscious green olives; and aged burgundy wine. Cabinetry and furniture are rich and dark; accessories are scrolled ironwork pieces and rustic, colourful pottery that define the regional character.

The fabric most closely associated with French Country design is toile, a fabric with a white or beige

background that is adorned with repeating pictures, often pastoral scenes. It's one of my favourites for lending a timeless look to any room. For a more distinctly Provence look, search out the beautiful designs that are typical of that area, usually identified by two, possibly three colours, and always bright.

The most appropriate flooring for your French Country Home is a wide plank, slightly distressed hardwood in a dark, rich stain. Colourful Oriental, Turkish or Indian carpets will complete the look.

There are many similarities between our Ontario cottage, and the cottage in the south of France. Both teach us to re-use and enjoy what we already have; to draw inspiration from our surroundings; and to surround ourselves with style born of comfort and a 'joie de vivre'. Hope you had a great summer!

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