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For one local couple, their newly built home proved to be newsworthy with upgrades throughout the house including a stylish grotto-styled shower and open floor plan



# BOWLING GREEN Home Lifestyle

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**FALL... AN ABUNDANT** and colorful season. It is a perfect time to make ready for those comfort foods that bring the best flavors and garden bounties to our tables. *Bowling Green Home & Lifestyle* recently visited Creative Kitchen and found these remarkable wares.



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# Floor to Ceiling Changes

## One Element at a Time

BY MARY LEE



Amy Beth Nuckols  
Co-Owner, AB Designs  
[www.amynuckols@hustonscarpet.com](http://www.amynuckols@hustonscarpet.com)

**FALL IS THE** ideal time to consider updating the great indoors since those decidedly indoor activities such as snuggling by the fire, and hosting family dinners are just a turkey timer away. Without breaking the bank on holiday cash, homeowners can give any room a fresh appearance by strategically adding specific elements from furnishings to floor coverings to window treatments and wall paints.

Decorator Amy Beth Nuckols owner of AB Designs says that trending now are natural products like metals, mercury glass, and reclaimed woods. These durable, functional materials are both innovative and timeless.

She and her husband Randy Nuckols own Abbey Carpets of Bowling Green on Lovers Lane. In addition to floor coverings, Nuckols emphasizes a range of solutions from rethinking furniture placement to entirely redecorating a room.

Nuckols says homeowners are seeking unique pieces without the custom price point. This holds true across the board from antelope trophy mounts to zebra rugs. Part of a





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lamps with burlap shades can be the perfect excuse to curl up in bed on a chilly day and catch up on some reading.

With the synergies created by being both decorator and retailer, Nuckols moves easily from discussing tin-topped tables from one of her favorite furniture lines to the merits of sisal and wool blends in flooring or even the process of “serging” carpet into rugs.

(“Serging” means wrapping or binding raw carpet to give it a polished finish. It also means that Nuckols can offer her clients area rugs to size rather than depending on premade rugs in standard sizes.)

Nuckols points out that designers long ago designated the floor as the fifth wall, flooring offers a palette where form really does follow function. From engineered tile, to age-old woven textiles, the right flooring can enhance the décor and homeowners can chose from an array of colors and textures.

Ultimately, homeowners are seeking that custom look without the accompanying sticker shock and their choices reflect that desire. That means rustic, reclaimed pieces can be paired with colorful poufs, pillows or panoramic posters where no two rooms come out alike. ☐

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➔ From Boulder, Colorado: the retro-refrigerator-guys, co-founders Orion Creamer and uncle, Thom Vernon.



# Something Old, Something New

**The bold new look** of kitchen appliances





BY ASHLEY F. JOHNSON

**AFTER SPEAKING** with Orion Creamer, Co-founder of The Big Chill, it was obvious that he is as “cool” and funky as the refrigerators he creates. Big Chill is a company founded in Boulder, Colorado by Creamer and his uncle, Thom Vernon in 2001. Creamer has found a way to marry the classic look of the Vintage ice-box of the 50s with all the updated amenities and perks of a modern day refrigerator.

Creamer’s uncle was working on the kitchen in his vacation home in California and wanted to create a retro feel for his home, namely, his kitchen. He quickly realized that using an actual vintage fridge wasn’t going to work. The small storage space and having to defrost the freezer on a regular basis was not an ideal situation. He wanted something that looked old, but worked like new. Vernon gave his nephew the task of creating a refrigerator that fit precisely that criterion. After the creation of that first fridge, the idea for Big Chill took off. “He basically asked me if I wanted to start up this company with him and he gave me the task of product design.” The idea couldn’t have been more promising.



🕒 The stove and hood combination is seen here in Jadite Green. The warm mint hues add a warm and sunny attitude to the kitchen space.

🕒 The signature “Big Chill” refrigerator, shown in Beach Blue, acts as a pop of color with the existing stainless steel appliances.

*“They have found a way to marry the classic look of the Vintage ice-box of the 50s with all the updated amenities and perks of a modern day refrigerator.”*

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Steve and Terri Sheldon  
Co-Owners



➤➤ For a bolder look, the D3 line by Viking allows you to choose your favorite color for your appliances and coordinate with surrounding fixtures. Shown in Lemonade.

➤ The bold and the beautiful! This custom colored magenta refrigerator by Big Chill doubles as a trendy focal point in the kitchen.



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With the financial help of his uncle, he had all he needed to launch the new company. “It’s great because you don’t have to market an orange fridge. It really just sells itself. I wish I had the email my dad sent to me when I told him what I was doing. ‘Who’s going to want to buy an orange fridge?’” Creamer exclaims laughing. Apparently, a lot of people do. Big Chill has sold to a long list of celebrities, and their signature retro fridge has also found itself on the set of Rachel Ray’s cooking show. With dealers all across the country, their products are just a mouse click away.

Their products come in 8 standard colors, from basic black to retro ‘Pink Lemonade’. Can’t find just the right shade? No worries- Big Chill creates custom colors, (184 custom colors to be exact) with every shade of the rainbow imaginable. Their products are made of durable steel using the “traditional stamping process” just like they did in the good old days. Their powder color paint finish is the “longest-lasting, and most color-durable quality finish available” which gives their appliances longevity as well as spunk. They also have added to their line, retro stoves and dishwashers to complete the look. With these funky, sleek and bright pieces your kitchen will have a beautiful conversation piece with a story to tell.

Raising the bar of innovation and creativity on a larger scale, the Viking Corporation has recently introduced its own line of products

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For a small touch of color to coordinate with you decor, choose among Viking's many available interchangeable options for stove knobs and handles.

The classic cherry red color of this vintage looking fridge gives these sleek and modern style stainless steel appliances a bold shout out! A perfect combination.

with panache. The new D3 Collection was designed for the consumer who wants to add a more customized design look to their cooking appliances. Sue Bailey, Viking Director of Product Management explains, "Viking D3 is the first and only line of major appliances offering knobs and handles which can be customized with colors and wood finishes to match any décor. We know purchasing kitchen appliances is a big commitment so customizing knobs and handles is another great option." The Viking appliances are now available in 24 colored finishes which gives consumers, architects and designers more options to coordinate with personal tastes. New colors such as cinnamon, Dijon and Wasabi have recently been added to the Viking palette of finishes- which already includes lemonade, sea glass and mint julep to name a few. Bailey states, "As the originator of ultra-premium commercial-style appliances for the home, Viking Range Corporation is dedicated to consistently delivering the highest quality and most innovative products to consumers".

With their new D3 line they are doing just that. Whether it's the Big Chill's retro classic look from the 50s, or a spunkier feel for commercial and professional appliances from the Viking D3 collection, your personalized kitchen becomes an artistic expression and a well functioning space. □

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FORM &  
FUNCTION

# Kitchen's Newest Trends

All the latest kitchen design tips for improving your space

BY WANDA PERKINS

➤ This parakeet green kitchen features firefly pendants from CB2; cabinetry by IKEA, with custom pecan fronts and shelving; and a self-leveling concrete overlay floor. Kitchen Design by Jennifer Ott, Loop Design; Architect: Christy Seals, Loop Design; Builder: Jason Williams, Shoal Creek Construction; Photographer: Patrick Wong, Atelier Wong.





## IMAGINE YOU'RE THE

grand prize recipient of a fabulous kitchen makeover with all the latest trends in design, appliances, gadgets and features. What would you change? How would you turn your space into the kitchen of your dreams?

First, consider the concept of design, both workability and sustainability of your space. "What I see as critical to kitchen design is improving the ways in which family and friends can be connected together, as the kitchen continues to assert itself as the hub of domestic life," states David O'Brien Wagner AIA, Principal, SALA Architects in Minneapolis, Minnesota. "Today's kitchens are open to adjoining eating and gathering spaces, while incorporating elements of daylight, views to the outside and good air flow."

"Window seats and eating nooks also give guests and children a place to sit and chat with the cook without being underfoot," adds Jennifer Ott, Designer at Loop Design in Austin, Texas. "Walk-in pantries are popular for storing dry and oversized items. Also, replacing wall and upper cabinetry with shelving or windows creates open kitchen space, making utensils more guest-accessible."

Connectedness definitely is a key word for today's kitchens, which often operate as small workstations. "The kitchen often functions as the IT hub where you plug in cell phones, iPods, and laptops," notes Ott. "Homeowners can search recipes, check email, and play music while preparing and cooking meals."

The latest kitchen appliances are not like those of the past. High-tech and energy efficient appliances are replacing the old with the new. High-performance, induction cook tops, induction ranges, ranges with two ovens, built-in wall combination ovens, steam ovens and microwaves (for healthy food preparation), and column refrigeration that accommodates various kitchen sizes are the latest appliance trends.

"Stainless steel remains the popular choice. Some homeowners like incorporating wood overlays or wood panels to match custom cabinetry," states Errin Bjerke, Appliance Specialist with Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery. "Appliance manufacturers are providing more flush-mount options. Also new are white and black glass options, trimmed with stainless steel, that mirror the look of iTechnology. Homeowners are more budget-conscious of how much they're spending on coffee at




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➤ Prefer a bit of kitchen color? A Caesarstone countertop and island accents a stainless steel range and hood by Wolf and dishwasher by Miele. Kitchen design by Jennifer Ott, Loop Design; Architect: Christy Seals, Loop Design; Builder: Jason Williams, Shoal Creek Construction; Photographer: Patrick Wong, Atelier Wong.



➤ Sleek, sophisticated and high-performance, today's appliances are high on technology and style! Whirlpool's Ice Collection balances stainless steel against sparkling white and black. Photo courtesy Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery.



high-end coffee shops, estimating the cost of a built-in unit will typically pay for themselves in 2-3 years. Plus, they'll enjoy gourmet coffee at home!"

Today's homeowners are looking beyond just lighting and appliances, when considering energy efficiency and green designs in their kitchens. "Homeowners and their architects should carefully consider the embodied-energy in each of the materials that are brought into living and cooking spaces," adds Wagner. "Choosing locally sourced materials, recycled materials, and reclaimed items can have a profound impact on the overall ecological footprint of your home."

Don't forget to consider color options! Whether trendy or individual, everybody has a preference. "Gray has overtaken beige as the new neutral, and citrus-greens and watery blues are showing up in the latest kitchens," states Ott. "Bold colors are in! Remember to incorporate color into items that are easy and affordable to change, such as wall paint and accessories."

Backsplashes are not going away either! "Folks are getting more and more daring when it comes to backsplashes," concludes Ott. "Back-painted glass and colorful tiles look great with quartz countertops that are extremely popular right now."

What's on the horizon for kitchen trends in 2013? "LED lighting is making big



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strides in the marketplace,” notes Wagner. “We’ll see high-quality designs with low power consumption, good color rendering, and 50,000-hour lamp life in down lights, pendants, and under-cabinet lighting.”

“Open kitchens will remain popular, as will stainless steel finishes for appliances,” adds Bjerke. New black and white glass finishes will likely be a popular alternative. Additionally, kitchen range hoods with LED lighting and design options and outdoor kitchen spaces will increasingly become more popular.”

Today’s homeowners are embracing technology. “People are getting savvy about home design. They watch home renovation and design shows and visit websites and read blogs,” adds Ott. “Individuals want to express themselves via their kitchen and design an inviting showplace in which they’ll enjoy spending time.”

Like clothing and hairstyles, styles change. Design trends and gadgets will come and go, but timeless, functional kitchen space planning, energy efficiency and family and friends will always find their way into the kitchen. Design a kitchen space that works for your lifestyle. Add a bit of preference and some heart. You’ll soon be on your way to transforming your dream kitchen into a reality. ☐

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## INSULATION: Stay Warm or Cool without Sweating Energy Bills

**QUESTION:** *Tim, what new products are being used to make homes more comfortable and energy efficient?*

**ANSWER:** Our custom homes and remodels are built to save energy and maximize comfort, and a primary component of that goal is insulation. The definition of insulation, however, is rapidly expanding as homebuyers and energy codes demand even better energy-use performance and comfort from new homes.

Today, there are far more options than those rolls of fiberglass you see on the shelves of big-box home improvement stores. While “batt” insulation remains an inexpensive and sometimes effective option, other materials have emerged that help optimize thermal value in new structures or when replacing conventional insulation.



*Cavity Insulation with OSB Sheathing*

↻ *Yellow areas indicate the greatest heat loss through uninsulated wood studs.*

➔ *Blue areas indicate minimal heat loss.*



*Cavity Insulation with OSB and R-5 Insulated Sheathing*

For instance, in addition to insulating between the wall studs, we may add a 1/2-inch thick rigid foam insulation panel behind the finish siding of a new home. That technique is commonly called a thermal break, and many of the latest energy certification standards,

such as the federal Energy Star program, require it. In addition to taping the joints between the insulation panels, a thin, woven air-water barrier (also called a weather-resistant barrier or housewrap) can be applied over the panels to shed incidental water that gets behind the siding or brick and prevent air infiltration through the structure.

Another increasingly popular insulating technique is called “flash-and-batt,” a practice that combines conventional fiberglass batts with a “flash” or thin layer of expanding foam insulation.

Specifically, a 1-inch deep layer of foam is sprayed into the wall cavity first. As the foam expands, it seals any gaps in the cavity to block air and moisture vapor from flowing through the wall. Then fiberglass insulation fills the rest of the cavity to resist thermal (or heat) transfer. The result is an air-tight and well-insulated wall.

Most of a home’s energy is lost through the attic or roof structure. The difference in air temperature and pressure between the attic and the living space below can be dramatic. This causes air to escape into the attic and puts an extra burden to maintain a desired temperature on the home’s heating and cooling system.

A flash-and-batt application can almost entirely eliminate thermal loss into the attic. Often, after the flash layer is applied within the floor cavities, a loose-fill fiberglass or cellulose (made from recycled newspaper and similar fibers) effectively covers the floor.

Another option is to apply an air-tight version of spray-foam insulation to the roof rafter cavities to block air and heat from entering the attic space. The result is what is often called a “semi-conditioned” attic because the air temperature of the attic and living spaces below is almost the same, but without actually having to heat or cool the attic space.

The push to make new homes more energy efficient and comfortable is rapidly driving new and better insulation products and applications to the marketplace, and professional builders are at the forefront of keeping up with that evolution to provide better indoor comfort and help reduce monthly energy bills. ☐



*Tim Graham has been building homes in South Central, KY for over 20 years. He is a Master Builder, a Registered Builder and a Certified Green Professional.*

*Tim Graham  
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# The Best Laid Plans

*Make Lousy Headlines*

WRITTEN BY **MARY NESTOR**  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JOE IMEL**  
LAYOUT BY **M. SCHOFDING**





From the curb, a dynamic roofline and carefully constructed palette establishes the old world styling. Inside, the aesthetic takes a turn toward Craftsman thanks to custom trim and warm tones.

The formal dining area is Porter Paint's Deep Chestnut. Blonde hardwoods and white trim combine with the natural light to keep the foyer bright.



**OLD SCHOOL JOURNALISTS** remember the adage used to determine newsworthy topics. Dog bites man is not a story but when man bites dog, that's different.

Sometimes, however, the old sayings don't apply, as is the case with this newly built Providence Home. Under the watchful eye of builder Steve Nelson and his wife Liz, empty nesters Ruth and Craig Groendyk right-sized and upgraded. The two couples met at church, developed mutual respect throughout the process, and remain friends. No dogs suffered indignities.

But while the construction process itself might not make good television the finished home steals the show. Providence's signature elements — 12-foot ceilings, Ovation cabinets, custom case goods — mesh with the homeowners' aesthetic and incorporate their must haves — a downstairs master with a tricked out grotto style shower, an open kitchen and a garage entry with mud-room.



↻ An expansive granite countertop on the working island is ideal for several reasons. It adds counter space, creates a focal point, and establishes a permeable border between great room and the kitchen.



↻ Custom hardwood shelving is a signature element of a Providence Home. This kitchen pantry also keeps large appliances off the countertops and within reach.



↻ Glass-front cabinets in the kitchen cabinets duplicate the actual transom windows, which are used throughout the home.



↻ The view from the foyer suggests the open floor plan of the adjoining great room. And by rotating the dining table and adding leaves, the homeowners can easily host holiday dinners.

From the front door, each of the singular decisions that add up to a finished home blend seamlessly from one to the next. The well-lit foyer is anchored by a formal dining room, which as Ruth points out, is the perfect size for entertaining where she can serve sit down dinners, buffet style spreads, or by rearranging and adding the leaves, she can accommodate twice as many guests for special occasions.

The great room features hardwood floors and a wall of windows with wood blinds and custom draperies courtesy of decorator Kim Cochran, with whom Ruth had worked in the past.







↻ Natural sunlight is filtered once through the adjoining lanai porch, and then again through the wooden blinds. Custom window treatments and Porter Paints in cheerful tones help keep the room bright.



↻ The cozy bistro dining table overlooks the patio in the backyard. Placed within the footprint of the kitchen, it is the ideal place to enjoy a cup of coffee

For her part, Liz helped maintain the consistency of the palette using her tried-and-true method of guiding her clients. “Once the contract is signed, I give (clients) homework. I say, ‘search through magazines and the web and bring me pictures that absolutely make your heart sing.’”

With this love it or leave it approach to personal style Liz is able to help clients identify a trend, be it old world or contemporary, French Country or Shaker Farmhouse. But this time she says her job was easy. “Ruth is an awesome decorator, as you can see, so she didn’t need a lot of help.”

In the kitchen, one request made by the homeowners was for an induction stove to conserve energy. Steve installed it. Then he suggested staggering the cabinet heights across the back wall to add architectural interest. The Groendyk’s were fine with that. An adjoining pantry features custom shelves and places to “garage” the appliances, and keep them from cluttering the kitchen which was Liz’s idea. Ruth loves it.

They built the television on pivot and painted the frame black to eliminate eyestrain and balance the scale of the tall ceilings. Surround sound is a signature of a Providence Home. Ruth and Craig call the finished entertainment system “perfect” but Craig is quick to credit his builder saying, “They’re my components, but Steve did all the wiring.”

Mature landscaping shields the back and adds atmosphere to the lanai porch complete with a fan in the center of the bead board ceiling, stamped, stained concrete floors, and a rough-hewn wood timber frame. The lanai started as a much simpler patio space, but Steve convinced the Groendyks to screen it in and make it a more essential part of the footprint of the home.

In the master bath, an old-fashioned tub stands elegant and unadorned and marks the



⤷ *Upstairs, a large home office allows for full sized executive desk, a credenza, and comfortable guest seating. The space had originally been tagged as storage, but the builder redesigned the space.*

entry to the walk-in tiled shower. Without a glass door, cleaning is a breeze and Ruth couldn't be happier with this design.

Strategically placed windows throughout the plan enhance the natural light and offer more evidence of Steve and Liz's ability to view interiors through well-practiced peepers that can spot glare, dark areas, and potential hot spots before they're trouble.

Initially, there was only one office in the plans, but when Craig started shopping for his new desk he realized how much it crowded the space of the small office in the existing plan. So ultimately, this is the story of a home building project where anything that could have gone wrong didn't and even the "wrong" thing turned out right.

After Craig's newly purchased desk



⤷ *This small office serves as the perfect place to pay bills and check email, but throughout the home sunlight became a decorating element thanks to the many windows.*



⤷ *Even in the bathroom natural light is a design element. Here, the mirrors above the "his" and "her" vanities serve a dual purpose by reflecting sunshine around the space.*



⤷ *Tucked into a private cove in the bathroom, this freestanding bath has graceful lines and a clean design reminiscent of old copper washtubs.*





➤ The yard is small and the landscaping is easy to maintain, which is exactly what these empty nesters requested from their builder.

➤ In the master suite, the homeowner moved away from her signature palette to incorporate Porter Paint's "Dusty Trail."

threw him a wrench, Steve kept the smaller downstairs office for Ruth to use and revisited the large unfinished room at the top of the stairs. He tweaked the blueprint to accommodate Craig's desk, a matching credenza, printer stand, bookshelves, and just about anything else the busy executive would need.

Then, thinking that he was doing his builder a favor, Craig had the desk delivered before the hardwood floors were installed so they



➤ Bursts of orange are the perfect accent in this lovely lanai. The design includes screened walls, rustic woods, with transom frames and stained concrete floor.

wouldn't get scuffed in the process of carting heavy furniture up a flight of stairs. "I felt like I covered myself kind of," says Craig. The desk was delivered and placed in the upstairs office before the banister was even in place.

But Steve wasn't exactly thrilled. He worried that one of his subs might come along and mistake the expensive desk still in the shipping carton as a workbench.

Craig remembers his builder saying something like, "...you know, I've gotta work around your little deal here."

"It was the only time I saw a little smoke come out of Steve's ears," laughs Craig.

And there it is: Smoke pours from builder's ears. Film at Eleven. ☐





➤ Do zebras come in coral? They do in fabrics from Calico Corners – Calico Home. A sense of the exotic results when paired with a settee covered in the “Allora” bird print.

♥ “Vintage Plumes” in jade gives modern elegance to a vintage-inspired arm chair.



# Neutral ROOMS

COME *Live*

Birds, botanicals take flight in decorator fabrics

BY ELIZABETH ANN WELLS

IT'S NOT JUST the season. Birds and botanicals are soaring in home interiors via drapery and upholstery fabrics that take your breath away.

These are not the patterns remembered from your parents' or grandparents' homes. While steeped in tradition, today's contemporary interpretations are bolder in color and more dramatic in scale.

“We have multiple designs of some stylized birds,” says Jan Jessup, director of communications for The Calico Corners-Calico Home Stores, a national retailer with an online design store. “Some are more natural in their inspiration, and others use cinnabar and teal for an altogether different look.”



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☞ *Mellow Yellow* — Animal, bird, and floral prints have taken on a larger-than-life scale for a fresh new appeal.

☞ This proud peacock print is from Calico Corners' IMAN Home collection.

The fabrics' fresh new appeal also comes from larger-than-life scale, says Mark Knight, director of design at Kasmir Fabrics, a Dallas-based trade wholesaler.

"Everything is over-scaled. Twenty years ago, botanicals were made to fit a 27-inch sofa cushion. Today the designs spill over," he says. "It's like coloring. You don't color inside the lines. You explode outside them. It's trendy to have a section of a larger design on the cushion."

Fabric makers and designers recognize that coloring outside the lines is familiar to younger generations. They also understand younger customers are comfortable in traditional décor having grown up with it, says Knight.

"The trend in the market is for a younger, fresher customer. What is considered traditional has been updated to appeal to a younger taste. The more mature customer is also attracted to these fabrics because they are not so avant-garde that they become uncomfortable," says Knight.

Botanical and bird themes date back several centuries. "Bird shapes are very sculptural from the body to the wings, whether they are soaring or perching," says Jessup. "Botanicals resonate with our love of flowers and plants."

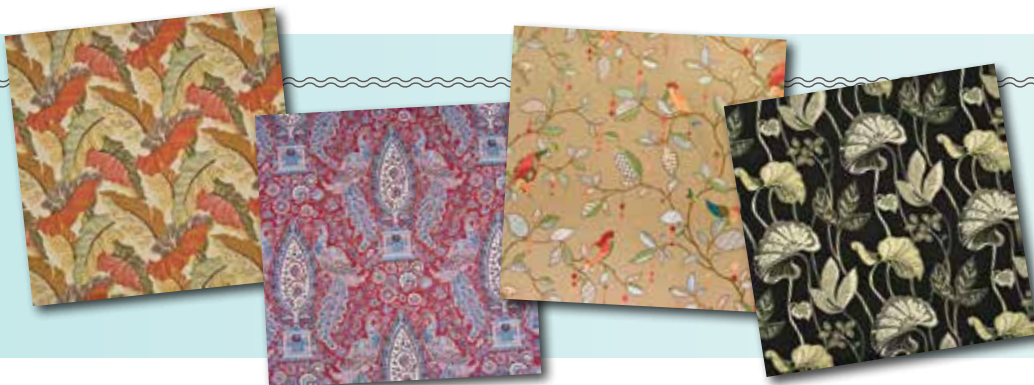
Fabrics with botanicals and birds emerged as 16th century European explorers illustrated their discoveries in exotic new lands, according to Jessup.

Today's designs can work wonders in a home with a neutral palette that looks a little tired.

"Too plain has become boring," says Jessup. A homeowner's personality or style can really shine in furniture or drapery depicting an exotic bird or magnificent flower. "These kinds of designs really complement an off-white sofa."

The fastest way to change up a room, Knight says, is through paint and upholstery fabric. Accent pillows for sofas and chairs, and simple, tailored window treatments with opulent yardage are easy updates.

"A pillow can take less than a yard of fabric," says Jessup. The result of a well-chosen pattern: Room-changing. If a fabric inspires a total redo, keep this in mind from Jessup: "A person's choice of artwork and colors — even what they don't choose — tells me something very distinctive about the person who lives in that space." ☐



## Botanicals & Birds

While botanical and bird prints date back several centuries, bolder colors and more stylized designs create a look perfect for satisfying younger, fresher tastes/customers.



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# Building on BLU CONCEPTS

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BY **ASHLEY F. JOHNSON** | DESIGN AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY **BLU HOMES**

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🔄 *The Evolution from Blu Homes features an open, two-story, eco-friendly home, available with three or four bedrooms and an open kitchen and living area.*

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The architects and designers of Blu Homes make every effort to create homes that fit homebuyers' preferences. Options such as cabinetry, countertop finishes, siding and flooring materials and home orientation to maximize sunlight and air flow are just a few options available to homebuyers.

With innovative technology, utilizing the Blu | 3-D Configurator, Blu incorporates superior design visualization. "We wanted clients to experience their new homes before they were ever built, so we developed a hyper-realistic, 3-D environment that makes this possible," adds Haney. This unique approach by our designers and architects promotes consumer confidence and assurance in design choices.

"By utilizing all the personalization options possible, our clients are able to reflect the unique beauty of each location, from wooded, lakeside retreats to expansive desert compounds," Haney concludes. "Our



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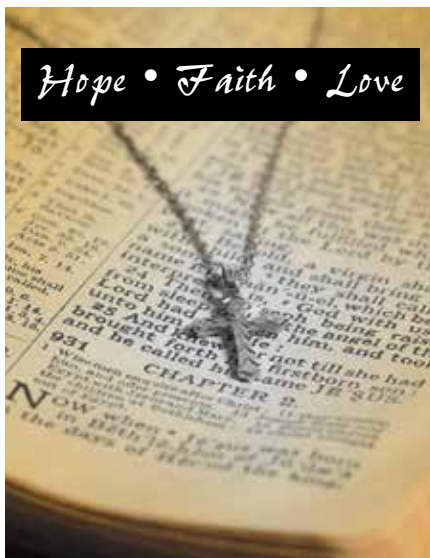


↻ Exterior designs are unique and innovative, offering homeowners a home of exquisite style that is also earth-friendly.

designers create homes that are flexible, while maintaining their aesthetic integrity.”

The entire building process is kept simple, from the initial consultation until the move in date. “The price is pre-agreed and fixed, so homebuyers can relax,” Haney notes. “Working as a designer and builder, the stress of dealing with multiple architects and a contractor is eliminated for the homebuyer. We also assist homebuyers in selecting and working with a site contractor, ensuring they have everything they need, including foundation specifications, through every step of the building process.”

Strong. Healthy. Beautiful. Simple. These are the words that describe the architectural design and insight that Blu Homes, and others like them across the country, are melding into home construction. One thing is for sure, attitudes and ideas are evolving to accommodate the changing patterns of designing and building homes. ☐




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DIY  
TIPS

◀ *Brian Santos is a contributing writer to Better Homes and Gardens magazine and frequently appears on HGTV's "Smart Solutions" and "Trading Spaces."*

# PAINTING FROM THE

BY CHRIS CHRISTEN

## Pantry

**AUTUMN** traditionally is a popular season to paint. "It's a good time in Bowling Green," says national painting expert and author Brian Santos. "The kids are back in school, which gives you a few uninterrupted hours a day to tackle a room or hallway. "You can complete the project before you close up the house for the winter."

Take the next month to ponder ideas in this issue, plan your approach, collect paint chips and materials, and brush up on techniques.

The preparation you do, Santos says, will be more important than the actual application of the paint. "A good paint job lies in the details. Eighty percent of your time should be in your preparation, not the application of the paint itself."

Tools are especially important. "If you spend fifty or a hundred dollars on paint and two dollars on a brush, you get a two-dollar paint job," Santos says.

Santos, who lives in Tampa, has how-to videos and makes about 25 appearances a year at home shows across the country. He talked with *Home*

and *Lifestyle* by phone from San Antonio, where he was presenting a workshop and touting his latest how-to book, "Painting and Wallpapering with Brian Santos, the Wall Wizard" (\$21.99, Wiley).

A fourth-generation painting contractor, Santos picked up his nickname years ago from a client who noted his "wizardry" in completing a project in record time.

"I learned from the college of hard knocks," Santos quips. "My best friends are Trial and Error."

His best results have come from mistakes.

And the use of simple items around the house — like lip balm, fabric softener, and nonstick cooking spray.

Painting, Santos says, is one of the most affordable ways to improve your home's appearance. But more

important than aesthetics: You should be painting to maintain the value and enjoyment of your home.

*"Eighty percent of your time should be in your preparation, not the application of the paint itself."*

**Brian Santos is famous for using common household items in painting preparation. Here's a sampling.**

**Nonstick cooking spray:** "Original. Not the garlic version." Spritz on your arms and rub in, and water-based paint won't stick.

**Lip balm:** Keep paint from sticking to window glass by running lip balm along the inside of each pane. Paint can't stick to the wax in the balm. When paint dries, score around glass with butter knife and peel away the balm and excess paint.

**Pre-moistened sanitary wipes:** For removing lip balm from glass. Follow with paper towel and glass cleaner.

**Rubber cement:** Apply two coats to window and door hardware before painting. When the paint is dry, simply rub off the rubber cement. Clean the surface with rubbing alcohol or sanitary wipes.

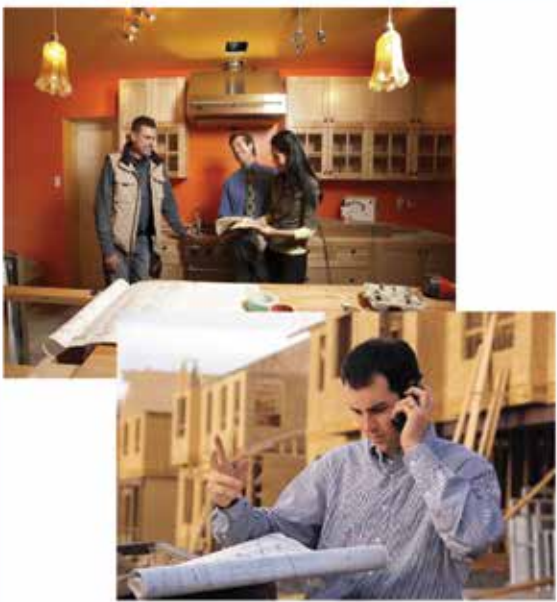
**Stick deodorant:** Don't use toothpaste to fill holes in drywall. Use stick deodorant. "Toothpaste whitens and brightens from the inside out," Santos says. "Deodorant is quick-drying, self-priming and leveling."

**Rubbing alcohol:** Refrain from washing walls with soap and water. Soap leaves a residue that resists paint. Rubbing alcohol de-glosses, degreases and evaporates, leaving a clean surface for the paint to bond.

**Fabric softener:** Add a half-cup fabric softener to 1 gallon water to create a cleaning solution for brushes. Every two hours, swish your brush in the solution for 10 seconds. Paint slides right off the bristles.

**Plastic cup, bowl or bucket:** Never paint directly from a can. Prolonged exposure to air changes the quality of paint, causing it to thicken and dry out. Pour a half-inch of paint into a disposable plastic cup or reusable plastic container lined with a plastic bag (for easy clean up). You'll be able to hold the container easily, and if you trip and spill, you'll have less paint to clean up. Santos once put a can of red paint on top of a ladder — in a room with white carpet. You can guess the rest. "I got the paint out with fabric softener and a dry vac. It was wizardry." □





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AUTUMN  
*Harvest***NEW POTATO & GREEN BEAN SALAD**

*This salad takes its cues from traditional American-style potato salad and French summer salads.*

**SERVINGS: 4****INGREDIENTS**

1½ lb. new potatoes, scrubbed  
 ½ lb. fresh green or yellow beans, trimmed and blanched (partially cooked in boiling salted water, then chilled in ice water to stop the cooking)  
 3 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and quartered  
 1 shallot, minced, or 2 green onions, minced  
 1-1½ cups vinaigrette  
 Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste  
 Fresh herbs to taste

RECIPES BY ANDREA BAUMGARDNER & PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARIA MILES

**DIRECTIONS**

Place potatoes in a sauce pan, cover with water and bring to a simmer. Simmer until potato is barely cooked (eight to ten minutes). Test by skewering a potato with a paring knife. If the knife easily can pierce to the center of the potato without cracking it, it is done.

When the potatoes are cooked, drain in a colander and cool with running cold water. Depending upon size, quarter or halve the potatoes for the salad.

Add potatoes, beans, eggs, and shallot together. Serve as a composed or tossed salad. If composed, drizzle with dressing, and sprinkle with salt, pepper and your choice of fresh herbs. For a tossed salad, add dressing to the bowl of ingredients and stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add fresh herbs if you like: chopped thyme, rosemary, basil, oregano, savory or chives are all good additions. Chill until ready to serve.



## GARDEN VEGETABLE GRATIN

*This recipe is loosely based on a Southern French tian. We like to use a mix of vegetables that are available and plentiful.*

### SERVINGS: 4

#### INGREDIENTS

½ cup olive oil  
1 garlic clove, minced or halved  
1 globe or Japanese eggplant,  
1 or 2 medium zucchini, sliced  
1 or 2 yellow crookneck squash,  
sliced into ¼ inch coins  
1 fennel bulb, trimmed of greens  
1 medium or 2 small tomatoes  
½ red onion, peeled and sliced  
1½ cups bread crumbs  
¼ cup fresh herbs  
½ cup Parmesan, freshly grated  
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

#### DIRECTIONS

Take one or two tablespoons of olive oil and drizzle in gratin dish, swirl in minced garlic. Salt eggplant slices and let sit for about 20 minutes. Wipe dry with paper towels, or rinse with running water and let dry.

Cut vegetables into ¼-inch coins, or slices, and layer in the gratin dish. Layer vertically so that slices are standing up and the layers form a mosaic of colors. Once the dish is tightly filled (the vegetables will shrink when baking), sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Mix breadcrumbs with about a ¼-cup olive oil, fresh herbs and Parmesan. Sprinkle liberally over the tian.

Cover with foil and bake at 375 degrees for 20-30 minutes. Uncover and continue cooking an additional ten minutes, or until breadcrumbs are golden and vegetables have softened. Serve warm or chilled.



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## PERFECT PAIRS

**DUXOUP WINES** are the creation of free-spirited winemakers: Deborah and Andrew Cutter.

They built their winery in 1981, on the gravelly hillsides of the northern end of Sonoma County's Dry Creek Valley.

As a perfect pairing; sample this silky and fruity Syrah, known for it's delicious balance.

Also try with lamb, duck or any full-throttle pasta dish. ✿



## GINGERBREAD CAKE

*(From Julia Child's Baking with Julia)*  
We adapted this recipe to make one Bundt pan.

**SERVINGS:**  
**ABOUT 12-16**



## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
  - ¼ cup instant espresso powder
  - 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
  - 1 tablespoon ground ginger
  - ½ teaspoon baking powder
  - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
  - 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
  - 8 oz unsalted butter, at room temperature
  - 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
  - 4 large eggs, at room temperature
  - 2½ tablespoons fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped
  - 2 cups unsulphured molasses
- Melted butter for greasing the bundt  
Flour for flouring the bundt

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Brush the Bundt pan with the melted butter and dust with flour.

Whisk together the flour, espresso powder, cocoa, ground ginger, baking powder, salt and black pepper to mix.

Cream the butter and brown sugar in a mixer on medium-high for about five to seven minutes until the butter and sugar is very light and fluffy. Reduce speed to medium and add the eggs one at a time. Beat in the fresh ginger and molasses on medium speed for one minute, or until completely smooth.

With a rubber spatula, fold in the dry ingredients, mixing only until they are incorporated.

Bake the cakes for 45-55 minutes, or until the cakes are springy to the touch and a skewer or toothpick inserted into the cake comes out clean. Transfer the cakes to a rack and cool for ten minutes.

Unmold and serve. The cakes will keep covered at room temperature for at least three days, or, if wrapped airtight, can be frozen for up to a month.

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## BRAISED CABBAGE AND FRENCH LENTILS

*Braised cabbage is a lovely bed for grilled sausage or other meats. The long cooking brings out the sweetness and silky texture of cabbage — two things that cabbage isn't generally known for.*

### SERVINGS: 4

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 head green or red cabbage, washed, halved, and separated into leaves
- ½-¾ cups duck or bacon fat (cooking oil or butter may be substituted).
- 3 cups French lentils (lentilles du Puy), cooked
- 1 cup red or white wine
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme, rosemary and chives
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

#### DIRECTIONS

Heat a large sauté pan over medium high heat. Add duck or bacon fat. When melted and hot but not smoking, add up to five cabbage leaves. Once cabbage starts to wilt and shrink (approximately two minutes), add five more cabbage leaves. Continue until all of the cabbage is in the sauté pan.

Once cabbage is softened and a little fried around the edges, add the French lentils. A bit more cooking fat can be added at this point.

Add wine and cover three-quarters of the pan with a lid. This will allow the wine to deglaze the pan and reduce at the same time.

Add herbs, salt and pepper to taste. Pour into a serving dish and top with freshly grilled sausages. Serve with a dollop of Bavarian or Dijon mustard as garnish. □



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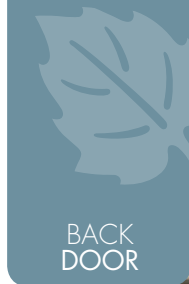
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# Quite the *Palate*

Dinner really isn't about the food we eat


BY DAYNA DEL VAL

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## THERE'S A CONSTANT

conflict at our house, and it involves the kitchen. The conflict is actually multi-layered. I am a vegetarian; my husband and son adore meat. I like simple food where the flavors are very bright and clear; my husband thinks if one spice is good, 10 must surely be better and Worcester sauce absolutely goes with everything! I like cold soups, pasta dishes and salads in the summer; my husband likes whatever is on his plate to be steaming up the whole kitchen with its temperature. I could go on, but I'll spare you the gory details.

Needless to say, our kitchen can be a place of disagreement from time to time. Were it up to me, I would never purchase meat, potatoes or lemon pepper, and until he moved in, I had never thought about or bought Tobasco or Worcester sauce. Now, I often give him large bottles of them both for holidays. Pre-marriage, my husband was quite content to mix hamburger, mushrooms, tomatoes, garlic and whatever spices he had access to and pile that on to a piece of white bread. I would be happy eating homemade granola 2-3 times per week. It's been a bit of a challenge finding a compromise.

Four years into our marriage, however, we mostly have found a place to settle in together. My husband and son pretty gamely eat quinoa,

vegetarian dishes and even Quorn, a fungi substitute for meat, regularly. I agree to grill meat and boil or roast potatoes on at least a weekly basis. Then, the three of us sit down to a meal that is often 2/3 one kind of protein and 1/3 another.

Here's the thing, though, it's not about what we eat; it's about what we talk about and how we communicate that really matters. Taking the time to enjoy each other's company, learning about our days and getting to the bottom of any concerns can be done over steak, pork chops, TVP, cereal or many dishes of beautiful vegetables.

It would probably be easier if I craved the occasional piece of steak, but I don't... ever. I would love it if my husband suddenly pined for gazpacho and a simple green salad, but he's not going to... ever. That's ok. My son and my husband have broadened their culinary palates because of the food I am interested in, and I have overlooked how unappealing I find meat in general to feel satisfaction in them enjoying it as the three of us routinely take a little time at the end of every day to reconnect. I thank the cows, the pigs, the chickens, the fruits and vegetables, the grains and even the spices that allow us this time together. ☐



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