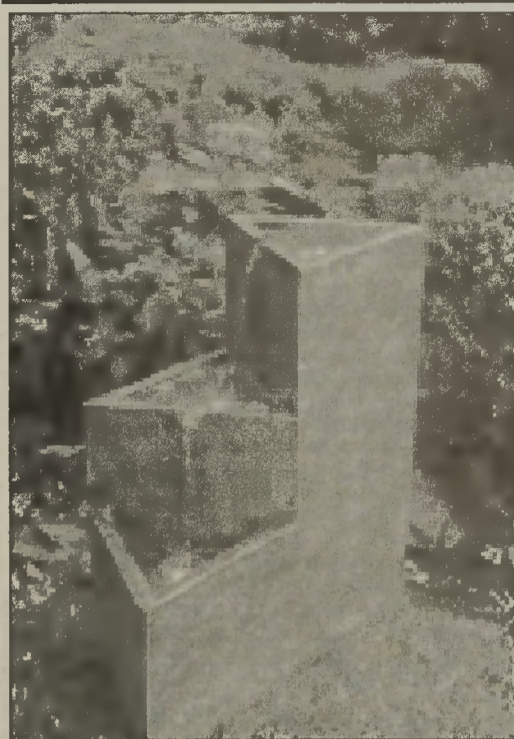


5C

REAL ESTATE



PHOTO/ARA CONTENT

Statuary or fountains add an artistic touch to gardens.

Create a garden that reflects upon your taste, style

ARTICLE RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

Just like our homes, our gardens reflect who we are. From the flowers, herbs and shrubbery we select, to the lighting and decorations, our gardens are an outdoor room that fits our personal style.

Whether you have a tranquil Zen retreat, an elegant, rose-filled oasis or a casual country backyard, decorations such as fountains and statuary are an important part of any design. They create a focus for your garden and set the tone for the rest of the space. Whatever your style, there is a fountain or other accent piece to match your décor. Although many of us are familiar with the classical-style fountains found outside museums and public buildings, there are a lot of other options available on a smaller scale.

"You can find fountains in all kinds of styles, and they are surprisingly affordable," says Larrisa Gleason of the Beckett Corporation, a water gardening products manufacturer. "You can get an elegant, beautifully designed fountain for under \$200."

Gleason suggests that when choosing a fountain, you first consider your decorative theme. For a simple, uncomplicated garden, a birdbath may be just the thing to use as a focal point. Birdbaths attract birds to your garden without fail, since they serve as a valuable, refreshing place to play and drink.

For an elegant centerpiece for your garden, consider a decorative pool similar to those found in English gardens. Beckett makes beautifully crafted designs enhanced with hand cut, inlaid stained glass that will not fade and small whimsical figures that camouflage the pump re-circulating water. Create a whole different mood with a Flower Bed fountain, which gives the illusion of water gently gurgling up from underground.

Choose Enchanted Fairies for a classical look, the Bamboo Cascade for an Asian-influenced design or the Pump and Bucket for a vintage touch. The perfect size for a patio, balcony, flower bed or garden landscape, these versatile fountains can be easily moved to any spot. For a more contemporary look, try a Flower Pot Fountain. Either decorated with a sun design, lion head or a bamboo spout or clacker, they make a great accessory for transforming an ordinary pot.

This is a great option for a windowsill or smaller garden that may be overwhelmed by larger accents. Beckett's entire line of fountains is made from polyresin, a man-made material that has the look and feel of concrete, but is much more lightweight (materials made with it can be picked up and moved from place to place with ease).

Unlike their more expensive counterparts, polyresin fountains don't chip, and they can stand temperature fluctuations without cracking. "As a result, they are just as popular in Minnesota as in Florida," says Gleason. For more information about Beckett Garden Accents, visit www.888beckett.com or call (888) BECKETT.



Updating cottage state of mind



PHOTO/ARA CONTENT

ARTICLE RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

In 1848, architect Andrew Jackson Downing bid readers of *The Horticulturist* to practice "beautiful and appropriate architecture. Do not build your dwelling places like temples, churches or cathedrals," he implored. "Let them be, characteristically, dwelling-houses...let the cottage be a cottage."

There's a lack of pretension about cottage style. It is what it seems — straightforward and practical, with an enduring simplicity and grace. Like the architecture from which it derives, cottage furnishings are compact, informal, crafted from indigenous materials, and in harmony with their surroundings — whether by the sea, nestled in the woods, or adding heart to a historic downtown neighborhood or a new "cottage community."

It is the way cottage's endearing characteristics

tap our most basic concept of shelter that leads so many of us to strive to recreate its feeling in our homes. But with its myriad forms of expression, cottage is more a state of mind than a geographic location or architectural style. How we express it becomes our own personal vision of comforting shelter.

"Unlike some styles that come and go, cottage endures, though each generation endows it with its own expressions and icons," says Karen Sexton, creative director for furniture manufacturer, Lexington Home Brands. "Shutters, gingham fabrics, and farm animals still have their devotees," she says, "but new twists on cottage can lend the style a cleaner, even urban, sophisticated feel — a sense of calm, of less is more, a reminder that nurturing the relationships within its walls is what cottage style is really all about."

The clean, cottage canvas Few styles are truly so versatile. With its simple lines and subtle contours, "cottage style is an easy canvas upon which to draw. And its adaptability allows it to change as our lives and tastes evolve. Adding to its appeal, today's savvy furniture designers update cottage designs with features that fit the needs of contemporary life — such as a granite-topped sideboard and a wine storage cabinet — as well as offer a rainbow of finishes to mix and match for a personalized look.

Waverly, the nation's best-known decorating resource and lifestyle authority, illustrates the fashionable style directions cottage can take by blending its newest home furnishings line, Breeze, from Lexington Home Brands, with an eye-catching mix of comfortable Waverly woven and print fabrics. Here are some ideas

for giving your cottage retreat a modern day flavor:

Urban Warmth — For a fresh, urban approach to a traditional look, show off oyster white painted furnishings paired with Waverly's "La Belle Campagne" cranberry and white toile against warm yet dramatic red walls. Balance the strength of red with an ebony accent, perhaps Breeze's rattan bed or a living-room cocktail table. Tie in rattan with tropical wall décor and plants, but, for this look, keep accessories minimal. Red walls and traditional prints are warm and inviting, while the black lends an updated punch. Contemporary, uncluttered, striking.

Jet Set Chic — For a more daring, urban look, let ebony furnishings dominate, using a white piece as an accent. Sophisticated, inviting, dramatic.

Tropical Retreat — Trans-

Please see **UPDATING/6C**

Celebrate spring with the magic of color

ARTICLE RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

Faux finishing is one of the quickest and least expensive ways to bring color and dimension into any room in your house. And what better time than spring to create a fresh new look? "White walls are out and color is in," says Jessica Kilpatrick, design specialist for Wagner Spray Tech, the painting experts.

Faux finishing allows you to combine complementary colors to create a textured or dimensional effect and add character to any room.

"Faux finishes take color to a whole new level," says Kilpatrick. Painting techniques such as sponging or rag rolling typically use two or more colors in combination. "Combining colors creates a wide variety of dimension and personalized effects."

When selecting colors for faux finishing, the more dramatic the difference between the colors, the bigger the statement you'll be making (think dark red and dark brown). Choosing color combinations where the colors are more similar to each other creates a more subtle effect (such as yellow and cream).

Hiring a professional painter to apply a faux finish to your room can cost thousands of dollars. But the good news is that this is a job homeowners can easily tackle themselves, especially with the right tools. For example, WallMagic from

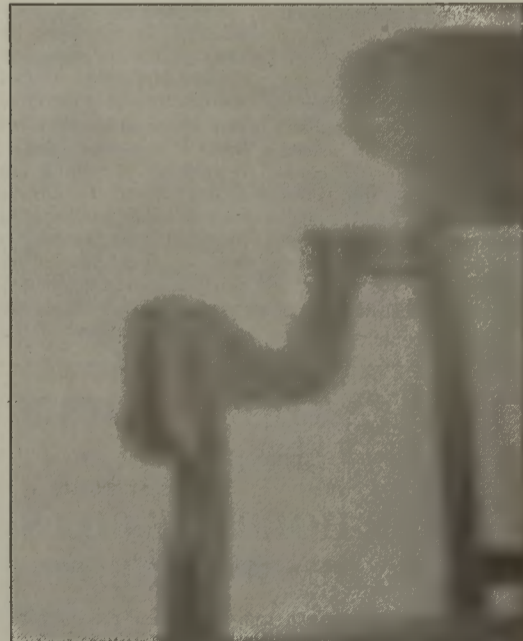
Wagner offers a wide variety of fast, easy and foolproof tools for faux finishing.

Whether you're interested in rag rolling, sponging, wool, textured paint or color-wash, WallMagic demystifies the process into an affordable weekend project that will transform your room. Faux finishing requires no more preparation than any other home painting project; however, typical faux finish effects require multiple coats of paint, requiring dry time in between each coat, translating into days of work.

WallMagic uses a patented dual roller approach that combines your colors on the wall all in one easy step, dramatically cutting painting time. Most kits include an instructional video with detailed step-by-step instructions and color selection guidance. For rooms where you want to make a bold statement, use a strong solid color scheme like pure reds, blues and yellows.

For a more mellow feeling, use cooler blues, greens and purples; they'll provide subtle color that doesn't overpower. If you want something neutral but updated, today's shades of brown, beige, grey, white and taupe create a modern yet conservative look. Once you've chosen your colors, the rest is easy.

The WallMagic dual roller system includes a patented



PHOTO/ARA CONTENT

divided paint tray and a dual two-color roller. This allows you to simultaneously blend two or more colors onto the wall without smearing paint or overblending. "The dual roller does the work for you," explains Kilpatrick. Simply pour a small amount of each color into the divided paint tray, load your dual roller, and start painting using a criss-cross arching motion.

The dual roller is a fool-proof way to create beautiful dimension without the mess, hassle and time. Edging is

fast and easy and clean-up is a breeze. All roller covers are washable and reusable. With a new faux finish and perhaps a few new accessories, you can update your room without spending a fortune. Look for WallMagic at most home center and paint stores, including Sherwin Williams, Lowe's and Home Depot.

For more information, visit www.wagnerspraytech.com or call (888) 925-6244 for expert advice on faux finishing.