

*Warm*

# & Bright

Learn how an interior designer decorated a relaxing and soothing home with warm woods and bright pops of color.

By Dani Neiley  
Photography by Christina Wedge  
Styled by Cristi Holcombe

## **Stand-out style.**

The dining room is Cristi's favorite room in the house, and for good reason. It combines warm woods with the striped curtains for a fun splash of color—an aspect that her clients wanted to see carried throughout the home. The wood floor is five-inch white oak, with a Classic Grey and Jacobean finish. It carries through the entryway and into the kitchen.





**The color scheme of the home** came about because of the Schumacher fabric on the window shades. "There's only that small amount of fabric, but I used that to tie the entire home together," Cristi says.



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**1 Continuity.** Superlight marble and the clean white lines of the cabinets give the kitchen a modern touch, while the kitchen lights (rewired antique store finds), exposed ceiling beams and the antique pantry door ground it in farmhouse style.

**2 Farmhouse-inspired.** "The door that we used for the pantry—the antique door—that was a pretty expensive piece," Cristi says. Despite the expense, it provides a flattering complement to the exposed wooden ceiling beams, and an eye-catching contrast to the white wood of the cabinets. Plus, it gives the kitchen a distinct farmhouse feeling.



When creating a project from the ground up, you have to start somewhere. Interior designer Cristi Holcombe created a home around a single piece of fabric when she designed a recently built 5,500-square-foot home in Peachtree Corners, Georgia.

"I fell in love with the Schumacher fabric that is on the [kitchen] window treatment and used that as the anchor fabric for the entire home," Cristi says.

She had worked with the homeowners to design their previous home, so she wanted to create another successful interior that would best adhere to the wife's wish for bright color throughout the home. Cristi worked closely with the couple and their two children to design a look with an updated traditional, farmhouse-influenced style.

### **Pops of Color**

Cristi's clients wanted the house to be bright and fun. "I suggested going with a more muted blue and spiced orange, but she really wanted it to be bright and colorful," Cristi says. She achieved a happy medium for the couple by adding happy splashes of color to each room in the house.



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## Studious.

Cristi had the bookshelves at the back of the study custom-built. She added heavy trim to the walls to make the space feel more masculine, as well as the taxidermied birds. "The homeowner actually killed those," Cristi says. "He is an avid bird hunter." The orange-brown furniture in the room brings warmth to the gray walls.



This becomes clear in the dining room, which combines a light wood floor, tan walls, and chairs from Restoration Hardware with blue-and-white-striped Ralph Lauren curtains. "It's my favorite room," Cristi says.

Each bathroom in the house also adheres to the bright-color principle. In the bathroom just off the dining room, blue and white trellis wallpaper brings an element of visual interest. The bathroom near the entrance to the pool has a cheerful green, custom-made table, and another bathroom has a nautical theme, accentuated by a bold blue cabinet and mirror frame. "My clients wanted something fun to sprinkle throughout the house," Cristi says, so she made sure to incorporate eye-catching color into each room.

## Old but New

One of the challenges Cristi faced in the course of decorating the home was incorporating the couple's existing furniture. She repurposed several pieces by reupholstering, painting and distressing. "We made it really functional and made it look as if it was bought specifically for the home, but it really wasn't," Cristi says.

Repurposing became especially important in the daughter's bedroom. "The pink scalloped bedspread was what I had used for her previous room ... and [she] wanted to make sure that we continued to use it." Previously, the pink paired with sage green, so it had a traditional country feel, but Cristi used blue while designing the bedroom. "I thought this would be the perfect transition color," Cristi says.

Rather than buy new furniture to complement the old, Cristi and her clients browsed local antique and thrift shops for furniture. Some pieces, such as the antique door used for the pantry in the kitchen, were quite expensive – but others, such as the vanity in the powder room, didn't





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break the bank. “I think shopping at your local thrift and antiques shops is a great way to add a lot of character to a house,” Cristi explains.

### **Smooth Symmetry**

Much like the curtain fabric in the kitchen, Cristi found the blue material for the master bedroom shams first and designed the room around that color. “I wanted this room to be a soothing retreat, and I wanted it to feel very warm and cozy,” Cristi says. In order to make it a relaxing haven, she painted the walls a slate blue—dark, but not too “dark and dungeon-y that you never want to go in there,” she laughs. The wall paint pairs well with the rug on the floor, and the rug mimics the pattern on the shams, tying it all together.

Cristi also achieved symmetry in the husband’s study by painting all of the surfaces—trim, walls and ceiling—one color. Because the study is just off of the dining room, “a stand-out room,” she didn’t want anything to compete with it. The light gray works well to make the space a masculine one, with the husband’s own taxidermied kills on the wall, and a gorgeous antique table the couple already owned in the center of the room. “It’s striking but it doesn’t take away from the dining room,” Cristi says.

Ultimately, the finished result combines comfort with bright color for a calm and relaxing space that flows well from room to room. “They just wanted a comfortable and cozy home that could entertain one guest or 100 guests and still feel like their home was just as inviting for a small amount of entertaining or large,” Cristi says.

**1 Poolside perfection.** Because this bathroom is just off of the pool, Cristi and her clients wanted it to have a nautical theme, but still carry the color idea. Cristi had the bathroom table custom-made and painted it green for a burst of colorful energy. The glass bottles of sand, the wood mirror and the blue wooden crab provide beachy accents.

**3 Wood, white and blue.** In person, the blue and white trellis-patterned wallpaper in the bathroom just off the dining room looks hand-painted. “If you turn a 180 and look through the doorway you’ll see the dining room drapes, which are blue and white, so I wanted a wallpaper to offset that,” Cristi says. The cabinet was a thrift store find; Cristi had it modified for plumbing needs and installed a Carrara marble basin on top.

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—*trying to make a home feel collected.*”



### **Soothing sunroom.**

The green-and-yellow-themed sitting area is in a guest suite away from the rest of the house. “We just wanted this to be a cozy sun area,” Cristi explains. “There are a lot of black and white prints on the wall leading up to this, so I thought green and black and white really pop off of each other.”





**Spiced orange.**

A large window on one side of the master bedroom gives the space much-needed light. To add visual interest, Christi added a zigzag-patterned rug on the floor and an orange honeycomb throw pillow. Orange flowers in a vase on the floor and on the desk table, along with the botanical framed print on the wall, tie the room together.



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**Blue is the new black.**

Cristi wanted to make the master bedroom as soothing and relaxing as possible, so she painted the walls a deep slate blue to mirror the fabric on the pillow shams. Keeping the ceiling white gives the room a sense of airiness, and the light curtains, bedside tables and bedspread keep the room from feeling too dark and dreary.





**Masterful mix.**

Cristi designed this room around the pink scalloped bedspread; the daughter loved it and wanted to make sure it could be used again. To complement the pink, Cristi chose blue. She mixed patterns masterfully in this room by choosing a pink scalloped wallpaper and blue zigzag fabric for the pillow shams and bed skirt.

# Get the Look:

## Refreshed Cottage Style

- **Layering.** "I think layering is the most important thing in a home—trying to make a home feel collected," Cristi says. Textures, colors, patterns and different types of furniture can be easily layered for a visually striking room.
- **Mixing.** Cristi feels that it's important to mix and match. Your nightstand doesn't have to match your bed, and a room doesn't have to be painted in just one color. Combining two colors, like orange and blue, or blue and pink, can be aesthetically pleasing if used together in equal measure.
- **Experimenting.** "I think a lot of times people get so caught up in rules—what are the rules and how many furniture pieces can you have?" Cristi says. There aren't any hard-and-fast rules to be obeyed. No two pieces in her clients' home have the same finish, but it works because it "gives it that really lived-in, cozy feeling," she explains.



**Relax.**

Cristi purchased the zigzag blue curtain fabric from Lacefield Designs, and the fabric on the throw pillows of the window seat is from a local fabric store. For effective storage, Cristi installed four drawers into the bench, and the two pillars flanking the window have cubbyholes for books and toys.

