

# Cottage Style

By Jennifer French

There's something comforting about walking into a room that has a range of "treasures" on display. Sitting there and taking in your surroundings you suddenly feel that you could be in the South of France, a Tuscan Villa or perhaps an English cottage.

As a distinct style of interior decorating, cottage style began as a collage more than a complete style. Holiday homes and cottages were often "decorated" using cast-offs from permanent homes; these cosy, relaxed, mishmashes of furniture and fabrics morphed into a style of decor.

Much of the charm in rooms like these, has been created by the finishing touches – pictures or plates on a wall, flowers in vases, glass bottles and jars. We all like to be

surrounded by things that make us feel good, things that transport us to another time and place. The accessories may have no investment value other than they finish off the look of a room, personalise the space and make you feel fabulous about it. These are the elements that give a home its individual personality, one that reflects the personalities of the inhabitants and makes it truly unique.

A collection of old bottles or mismatched vases, make unusual decorative focal points and fresh flowers in unexpected vessels add instant fragrance, colour and charm. Accessorising need not be governed by strict rules. Rooms gain more personality when different eras and styles are brought together.

Cottage style tends to put people at ease because of its emphasis on informal, cosy living rather than minimalist perfection or picture-perfect decor.

Take care when displaying objects. Avoid too much symmetry and strive for balance. The idea is to have different heights, textures, colours and widths but have a recurring theme that subtly draws them all together. Place items in groups, preferably in odd numbers, rather than having single items spread apart.

And..... know when to stop. There is no point having too many star pieces as you will just end up cluttering your home with too much stuff.

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## Creating a Cosy Country Nook

### Woodsmen's Cottage

Clockwise from bottom left

1. Tin pot with bird motif \$12, Twig & Twine
2. Lavender pot \$35.95, Sorrento
3. Fencing wire candle lantern cover, \$29.95
4. Shanghai candelabra \$49.95, Sorrento; Delta candle \$19, Twig & Twine
5. Old tradesman chest Shanghai \$98, Avenue Joffre
6. Bird votive lantern \$29.95, Bed Bath Table; "home" letters \$69.95, Sorrento
7. Bamboo ceramic vase \$44.95 and Lavender sprigs \$19.99 each (we used six), Sorrento
8. White bird \$29, Twig & Twine
9. Paisley check throw \$39.95, Bed Bath n Table
10. Wood/metal bird \$19.95, Bed Bath n Table
11. Wooden "bird painting" wall plaque \$45, Sorrento

### Chinois Style

Clockwise from bottom left

1. Jewellery box \$95, Avenue Joffre
2. Hand embroidered pure silk cushion \$395, Avenue Joffre
3. Hand embroidered pure silk cushion \$395, Avenue Joffre
4. Antique French cushion with fringe \$400, Edith Elizabeth Antiques
5. Antique French cushion \$300, Edith Elizabeth Antiques
6. Mahogany footstool early 19th century with classic T Ball feet \$2500, Edith Elizabeth Antiques



WIN!

One of 2, \$200 Homewares vouchers to spend at The Village. See page 31 for details.