

JUNE 2012

# House Beautiful

## Quick Changes!

LITTLE  
THINGS  
THAT  
MAKE A  
BIG  
DIFFERENCE

LIFE  
CHANGING  
PAINT  
COLORS

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# GOLIGHT

1. PAINT THE CEILING IN HIGH GLOSS.
2. DISPLAY A GREAT COLLECTION ON A DINING TABLE.
3. LAYER THE LIGHT WITH LAMPS, SCONCES, AND CANDLELIGHT.
4. ADD SOMETHING METALLIC.
5. HANG AN INTERIOR CURTAIN.





The finishes in an English country-style house in Atlanta were all “dark and darker,” designer Beth Webb says. She lifted the mood with white walls, glossy ceilings, and cerused oak floors. In the living room, an elm plank table from Clubcu, which often doubles as a dining table, dramatically displays a collection of Chinese porcelains. **OPPOSITE:** Limewashed pecky cypress was added to the vestibule outside the living room. The driftwood chair got a quick makeover in flat white paint. Pendant light from Parc Monceau.



**MIMI READ:** How do you make a house glow like this?

BETH WEBB: It's probably the all-white palette with blue accents. If you've ever been to the island of Santorini, it's like that—blue and white, really fresh and clean.

**There has to be something else.**

There's this one really amazing thing: We painted 12 coats of high-gloss enamel on the living room ceiling in this blue-green chameleon color. We just thought the curved ceiling was so gorgeous, we wanted to accentuate it. But then we got a surprise: When sunlight hits the swimming pool just outside the French doors, it bounces on the ceiling and makes this weird, watery shimmer—an otherworldly kind of thing. It has an incredible glow that reminds me of Venice, that surreal quality of the light reflecting on the water, and the effect it has on everything.

**Instant atmosphere. What else did you do that was dramatic?**

Everything was really dark—English and clubby, like Henry Higgins's house in *My Fair Lady*. It looked so dated. We limewashed all the gloomy paneling and the French oak floors, and we just generally lightened the palette. It gives it a major ethereal edge.

**Would painting dark floors and paneling off-white work as well?**

You wouldn't get the depth or these misty tonalities, but you'd still make a wonderful change. Benjamin Moore's White Dove and Sherwin-Williams's Alabaster are dummy-proof.

**The blue-and-white porcelains on the trestle table in the living room—are they always on display like that?**

No. It's pure theater, and that's a very quick change. You can always take a dining table and turn it into a library table by scattering the chairs. Then put one of your collections on it. The pieces don't have to match, but they do have to play together well.

**In the living room, you've covered the sofa with a cotton quilt. How come?**

I don't know if it had anything to do with dogs originally, but it's the perfect solution for a house like this one, where dogs get to go everywhere.

**ABOVE:** Antique Chamberlain Worcester plates make a fanciful display on a sitting room wall. **OPPOSITE:** Twelve coats of Benjamin Moore's Healing Aloe give the living room ceiling a blue-green shine with wonderful depth. Webb used an extra-deep sofa from Tecnosedia and dog-proofed it with a channel-quilted throw, in Helsey from Old World Weavers. The wool-and-silk Clochette rug is from the Edward Fields Riviera Collection. The coffee table is a vintage Indonesian seed safe from Primary Source. Inlaid box from Hollyhock.

Instead of throwing on the old beach towel or the completely worn-out blanket, why not get a simple, pretty channel-quilted blanket, so it can be thrown in the wash?

**All the French doors open up the house so gracefully. And the glass-and-steel doors, too. Love their soaring scale.**

The French doors are original to the house. The homeowners added the steel doors in this renovation. Everyone in Atlanta is using them now. I'm crazy about them—it's industrial chic. They just transform a room. For some reason they connect the indoors and outdoors so much more vividly than a standard wood casement.

**Every little corner of the kitchen has a glamorous view. But then you've hung a TV matter-of-factly, like in a train station or a bar.**

We want rooms to be comfortable and habitable and fairly casual. My client wanted a mix of high and low, and I think that's a lot of what we do as Americans. It's like dressing: You may have on your jeweled Verdura cuff with your old Gap jeans.

**Is there a formal dining room?**

They didn't want one. They love having intimate dinner parties at the kitchen table. The kitchen has more of a Belgian feeling than the rest of the house. Part of that is the light and all the textures. It's really warm. We made a linen curtain, and it runs on a track across the room—they pull it to conceal the mess of cooking. For larger groups, they clear off the trestle table in the living room and pull up kitchen chairs.

**What about the loggia's perfectly dressed daybed? More stagecraft?**

She really wanted it out there. In Atlanta, we use our outdoor spaces year-round. It's the perfect place for a nap in the summer, or to be in front of the fire on a cool day in the fall.

**You've used a lot of draped fabric in the master bedroom: the table skirt, the curtains, the Roman shades.**

It just feels sexy with so many soft layers. There's a lot of quilting—the curtains, a matelassé bedspread. It's got silk carpet, so when your toes hit the floor, it's sooo soft, almost decadent. And there's cerused oak flooring with limewashed trim—very tactile. That whole mayonnaise-and-aqua palette is very sensual.

**Was hanging those abbreviated bed curtains quick and easy?**

Absolutely. It's just a bracket with fabric on it. It doesn't move at all.

**How do you make a bathroom sensual?**

When you're doing the monochromatic thing, you've got to be obsessively concerned with textures and materials. You need a lot of contrast. The tumbled marble on the floors with the steel windows could have gotten really cold, really fast. We had the tub painted with automotive paint at a car place. I love the way the high-gloss blue-gray looks with that chalky chair and the metallic garden seat.

**The homeowner must love it in there.**

In the spring, she'll open the doors and take a bath. You do have to pull the curtains closed if anyone's outside, but it's still light, breezy, and gorgeous.

PRODUCED BY JENNIFER BOLES & DORETTA SPERDUTO





Quietly arrayed in Belgian style, the kitchen doubles as an intimate dining room. The oval table is from Mrs. Howard, and whitewashed chairs are from Holland & Company. A richly textured wood cabinet by BoBo Intriguing Objects has old glass in its unpainted doors. The floor is French limestone. **OPPOSITE:** Steel-and-glass casements frame views of the pool and garden. The linen curtain runs on a track spanning the room and can be pulled "to conceal the mess of preparation," Webb says. KWC Gastro faucet.







1. In the master bedroom, a 19th-century French armoire holds the TV. 2. For softness in the same room, Webb layered plush, creamy fabrics, including quilted matelassé bedding and curtains. 3. A Gracie chinoiserie panel lends an exotic touch to the sitting room off the kitchen. 4. The custom marble vanity adds curvaceousness to "her" bath, originally the pool pavilion. 5. A sumptuous slab of Paonazzo marble in the shower of "his" bath doubles as bold abstract art. 6. A painting by the homeowner hangs in the library—he created it when his wife asked him to clean her paintbrushes. 7. Crisp white upholstery keeps the sitting room fresh, and linen sheers filter the light. **OPPOSITE:** Steel-and-glass casements open for breezy bathing in her bathroom. A local auto-body shop painted the Waterworks Candide tub silver, based on a Mercedes-Benz paint color. The floor is French quarter stone tile from Materials Marketing. Garden stools from Clubcu. Amelie faucet, Waterworks.







Call it a happy accident that Connor, a wheaten terrier, matches the new cerused oak floor in the library. The homeowners, Webb says, have "oodles of books on interiors, art, and gardens," a few of which hold mounted masks from Parc Monceau on the wine-tasting table from Mimi Williams Interiors. **OPPOSITE:** The loggia—"an homage to blue and white"—opens to the pool and garden. Webb painted Victorian side chairs white and arranged them around a draped table for alfresco dining. The antique French daybed is dressed with French linens. FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES

