

A Quaint Little Cottage

Color and vintage finds complete the design of a 1940s home brimming with secondhand style.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW SHERMAN



With a style she defines as “comfortable elegance with a side of quaint,”

Melanie Bowe, interior designer and owner of En Vie Interiors, has turned her 1940s home into a showcase for her collections and classically vintage style. A devotee of 18th- and 19th-century Chinese and European porcelains, Melanie’s colorful home is anything but ordinary.

The house, which was originally considered a bungalow, underwent intense renovation. Melanie used one of the original three bedrooms to expand the kitchen area and now calls the cozy two-bedroom, one-bath home her cottage.

“I designed the renovation, which included moving walls and doorways, replacing plumbing and electric, moldings, refinishing floors and lots of paint! The kitchen and bath are entirely new,” Melanie says.





Get the Look

Melanie has mastered a fresh take on flea-market style, and she knows which elements will make décor come together seamlessly. When designing your home, be sure to use:

- **Soft colors**
(and always paint the ceiling)
- **White tiles**
- **Vintage-style fixtures**
- **Unique finds**
- **Worn paint**
- **Old lighting**
(rewired by a professional)

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The result is a one-of-a-kind design best illustrated in the kitchen, where Melanie combined mismatched cabinets for a personalized space.

“The humble interior of this kitchen keeps me grounded and helps me to feel calm, which is what your home surroundings should do in this hectic world,” Melanie says.

Her home is full of mismatched treasures that complement one another. The look was achieved by combining a collection of antiques 25 years in the making with seafoam-green and a careful eye.

With much of her furniture culled from different eras and locations ranging from local flea markets to Europe, Melanie used flooring and paint to create a cohesive look. By using the same wood flooring throughout, with the exception of tile in the bath and laundry, the common element grounds the design. A soft color palette of seafoam-green, neutral cream and soft yellow makes transitioning from one room to the next effortless and allows her collections to take center stage.

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Right: A Gustavian-style armchair upholstered in an elegant fabric brings the sophistication of this cozy cottage up a notch.

