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JULY 2008
BHG.com

*Summer
Casual*

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GREAT LAKE escape

A colorful and casual decorating style suits this remodeled cottage's sun-splashed rooms.

BY MIKE BUTLER PHOTOS JAMES YOCHUM PRODUCED BY GISELA ROSE



The ten Brink family confined most of their remodeling to the interior of their cottage but did add dormers, *opposite*, for more headroom in the attic bedrooms and rearranged the entry to give them a roomy enclosed porch, *above*.



For many Chicagoans, the villages of southwest Michigan's Harbor Country are but a blur in a frantic drive up the coast to the resort towns of Grand Haven, Ludington, or Traverse City. Jeannine and Frank ten Brink took the road less traveled to Harbert, one of those villages, 15 years ago and fell in love with its humble, early 1900s foursquare-style cottages built on large wooded lots.

"We couldn't afford anything back then," says Jeannine, "but we'd always drive around, dreaming, then I'd go back home and clip pages out of magazines."

The ten Brinks leaped to buy this 1,700-square-foot house, even knowing they'd have to shore up its foundation, tear down walls, and move rooms around.

Under designer Robert Zuber's guidance, a first-floor bedroom became a country kitchen that's open to the living areas, and the former kitchen was reworked into a master suite. Since the heart of every summer retreat is a porch, Zuber designed a new one on the home's south side. With its wide-plank paneling and exposed beam ceiling, the new space looks like it's always been there.

After the remodel, Jeannine brought her vision of an old-fashioned lake cottage to life. She chose slipcovered sofas and sisal rugs that can take three teenage children and constant traffic to and from the beach in stride. Then she shopped catalogs and antiques shops for wicker chairs, wooden tables, and accessories in red, white, and blue—colors of the Stars and Stripes and the flag of Frank's native Netherlands.

"I wasn't looking for anything special or fancy," says Jeannine, "just casual and comfortable."





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Opposite page:

- 1 A Netherlands sailing flag flies over the living room mantel. The rug binding completes the red-white-and-blue theme.
- 2 The window behind the farmhouse sink is a pass-through to the porch, handy for serving casual meals.
- 3 A painted cupboard from France and bentwood chairs are two of Jeannine's many vintage finds.
- 4 Dazzling dahlias and a flag greet visitors in the remodeled entry.

This page:

A dining spot in the corner of the living room gets even cheerier with red wicker and a plaid tablecloth. The pendant is a rewired vintage fixture. Bare floors and windows throughout contribute to the unfussy feel.





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PATRIOTIC PALETTE

Red, white, and blue is a can't-miss color combination for summer, but too much of it can look gimmicky. Here's how Jeannine keeps the theme in check:

- White walls and ceilings handle bright colors, yet their many different textures (beaded board, horizontal planks, subway tiles) keep the rooms from looking stark or cold.
- Vivid patterns abound, but there's only one per space—a patchwork quilt on a bed, a checked pillow sham—and it's always surrounded by plenty of white so the patterns don't compete.
- Honey-brown floors and rattan furniture warm up all the white. Woven baskets do the same.
- Wrought-iron lamp bases, curtain rods, and cabinet hardware are the tiny shots of black every room needs to look pulled together and finished. 🏠

For buying information see page 188.

“Even when we spend just a weekend here, it feels like we’ve been away for a week. It’s so relaxing.”

JEANNINE TEN BRINK



Opposite page:

- 1 Rather than remove walls in the bathroom, the ten Brinks used a custom furniture-style vanity that's an exact fit for the niche.
- 2 Jeannine mixes sconces, floor lamps, and table lamps. Her only rule: Each must have an interesting look.
- 3 Collected magazine clippings inspired the rustic built-in armoire with heavy black metal hinges.

This page:

A sea of serene white, enlivened by a gingham comforter and red piping on a pillow, greets occupants of the guest room. The four-poster bed and twig chair show off Jeannine's ability to mix old and new.