



COTTAGES & BUNGALOWS
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"BE OUR GUEST"

Be Our Guest

Have you ever visited a bed-and-breakfast and wanted to live there forever?
This blogger did exactly that.

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How do you return an old home to its roots?

When blogger Michael Wurm, Jr. of Inspired by Charm bought his 100-year-old home in St Marys, Pennsylvania, it was an operational bed-and-breakfast. "I ran it as a bed-and-breakfast for five years," he says. When he closed the B & B to work on his blog full time, he decided to return the structure to its original state as a single-family home.

FALL FLOWERS. Don't just include fall leaves and pumpkins in your autumn decorating. Michael shows off late summer blooms such as sunflowers, as well as other flowers that flaunt red and orange hues. You could also try a bundle of wheat to add seasonal charm.

GILDED GOLD. Michael has added pops of gold into his décor to spice things up. "I've been attracted to gold and brass lately," Michael says. "You can tuck gold and brass into any design style and it works well. It gives it a little extra sparkle and shimmer."




SEASONAL TOUCHES. Michael keeps his seasonal décor simple, with added cozy layers and textures, as well as a few pops of fall color. "I have a love of neutral, but if you look closely, there are some small colors with orange," he says. "There's already that color in the space."



VINTAGE VIBES. Michael doesn't limit his decor to either new or old pieces—instead, his home is a mix of both. “I like looking for little economies that are vintage,” he says. “It adds an element of quirkiness and charm.”

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HINTS OF RED. Michael focuses on neutrals as his foundation, but then adds pops of color through small accents. In the upstairs guest bedroom, he layers reds over his neutrals through subtle pieces such as a small side table, red books and a few decorative pieces.

REINVENT YOUR ROOMS

The bed and breakfast contained six rooms—the four original bedrooms, a bedroom in the living room and a converted garage. Michael wanted to get rid of the extra two rooms so he could make full use of the house. The carriage house behind the main home was easiest. “I turned the carriage house back into a garage,” Michael says.

The living room was a greater challenge, however. “The previous owners put a bedroom into the living room,” he says. “That space is normally wide open, but they had put in a bathroom too.” In order to oust the sleeping quarters, Michael had to demolish several walls that partitioned the space, as well as remove the extra bathroom. When the room was once again an open area connected to the rest of the home, Michael turned it into his workspace.

FINDING STORAGE

The other conversion challenge was the upstairs bedrooms. “The previous owners turned all the closets into bathrooms, so I don’t really have any closets,” Michael says. But that storage is essential to hide away linens, extra holiday décor and other supplies—not to mention the basics of clothing and shoes. Michael didn’t need to use all the bedrooms, so he came up with a simple solution: he turned one of the bedrooms into a full walk-in closet. “It really works,” he says. He left the bathrooms in the other upstairs closets, which is convenient for any guests who come to visit for a few days.



CAPITAL CLOSET. With bathrooms taking up all his closet space, Michael decided to convert one of the upstairs bedrooms into his closet. He kept the color palette similar to his master bedroom, so the two spaces feel connected.



REPURPOSED SPACES. The previous owners had created an extra bedroom in the original living room, which Michael returned to its open state, the now uses it as his workspace. “When it was a bed-and-breakfast, I used that tall table as the cash register counter, so when I turned the space back into an office, I added a butcher block top,” he says. “It’s very versatile.”



LEFT: BED FOR A GUEST. Of the four original bedrooms in the home, Michael retained two of them as guest rooms. In this one, he kept the neutral base with the walls, trim and rug, but added a pop of color through the red day-bed frame and a modern gold stool.

LEFT BELOW: CUSTOM DESIGN. Michael's advice is simple: Decorate with what you love. "At the end of the day, you're creating a space you love, so if someone doesn't like your approach or method, it doesn't matter," he says. "You need to enjoy your own space."

Because of all the extra bathrooms, the walls are now full of pipes, which can sometimes prove difficult. "It's complicated to change lights because there are pipes everywhere in the walls," he says. Despite the challenges, he's been able to add unique lighting fixtures throughout the rooms that showcase his personal style.

CREATING HOME

As the dynamics of his house have changed, so have Michael's style tastes. "Originally when I bought the home I was more into country and rustic, but over the years I've been more attracted to midcentury modern style, so I've combined it to form this eclectic style," he says. He laid the foundation with a neutral color palette of grays, creams and whites on the walls and furniture, which allows him to add pops of color through statement pieces. "Part of that is what works in the house," Michael says. "With the trim, the grays and neutrals work best."

To create your own dream home, Michael recommends patience. "[On] HGTV shows, they do things quickly, so people expect things to happen overnight or in one weekend, and I don't think it happens that way," he says. "Decorating my own house has taken me years." Be patient, feel free to experiment and don't get frustrated when something doesn't look quite right. "Enjoy the process," Michael says. "Take your time with it." **11**



FALL CHEER. Taking the brighter approach to a seasonal color palette is more in keeping with Michael's year-round style. So instead of deep jewel tones, he embraces bright yellow and gold.





THE PERFECT COLORS. Part of the décor process is to experiment. In one iteration of his home, Michael painted the front hall green. "It was a bright green; I've tried all these different colors throughout the house," he says. But color on the walls just didn't fit with the trim. "So [now] I keep the walls more neutral," Michael says.



ABOVE: MIDCENTURY MIX. When Michael bought the bed-and-breakfast in 2008, he preferred country cottage style. But over the years, he's incorporated a few classic midcentury pieces into the mix, such as the dresser in his bedroom.

ABOVE LEFT: OFF TO BED. The master bedroom is a perfect collection of the eclectic feel Michael loves. A navy-blue tufted headboard hangs out with a midcentury side table and a textured jute rug. Michael also added bling through small accent pieces such as a lime-green lamp and a gold unicorn head.



Michael's Tips for Fall Decorating

- **Don't make major changes.** "I don't change too much with the major or large pieces," Michael says. Instead, he focuses on small accents that hint at the changing seasons. "I just change up small things like throw pillows to make it feel seasonal," he says.
- **You don't have to be obvious.** "You don't need pumpkins or really obvious accents to make it feel seasonal," Michael says. If pumpkins and fall leaves aren't your vibe, try adding other accents that make your home feel cozy and warm, such as soft plaid blankets and fuzzy throw pillows. Don't forget to light a fire!
- **Add color.** Whether you're adding yellow for summer, orange for fall or red for Christmas, don't be afraid to add various colors for the seasons. "I don't think new colors interrupt the design," Michael says. "With my walls being neutral, it's easier to add in extra colors."