

# HOMES Designer At Home



*"It had to be cheerful and uplifting with hits of bright colour to offset the white winter landscape."* — MARY TAGGART



## BOLD, BRIGHT & BREEZY

WRITTEN BY JANE WHITING PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK HOLLERON

It should come as no surprise that Mary Taggart's new lake house reflects her colourful personality. Yes, she is *Ottawa At Home's* editor-in-chief as well as an interior decorator, so it's twice as much fun to peek inside Mary's home on Big Rideau Lake to see her bright and breezy décor.







### COTTAGE CONTEMPORARY

**THIS PAGE:** RECLAIMED WOOD FROM THE OTTAWA RIVER COMES FROM LOGS END; STAIR RAILING FROM OTTAWA VALLEY HANDRAILING. **FACING PAGE:** PINK CARPET FROM THE SECOND LIFE COLLECTION AT ELTE, TORONTO; AN ANTIQUE HUTCH FROM MARY'S IN-LAWS IS PAINTED IN BENJAMIN MOORE'S POOLSIDE BLUE TO CO-ORDINATE WITH THE KITCHEN CABINETS.

## MARY'S TIPS FOR INJECTING COLOUR

- ✓ Play with colour to get to know how you respond to certain shades and tones. Everyone feels colour differently.
- ✓ Start with a base colour and then pull other colours from there.
- ✓ When working with bright, strong hues, remember to ground the space and then inject pops of colour to avoid a riot of too much colour happening in the space.
- ✓ In the cottage, I used an all-white base and then added colour in fairly even hits throughout. So even with powerful pops of colour, the white keeps things under control and provides a clean palette to work from.
- ✓ White needs to be treated like any other colour and must work with your palette. I chose a white with a hint of grey to enhance the contemporary feel of the architecture, while also balancing the strength of the turquoise and hot pink.
- ✓ Never choose a colour for your décor just because it is on trend. Always choose a colour because you like it.
- ✓ Bring in three colours that work with your accent colours so the look is interesting. I used turquoise, pink and yellow as accent colours, along with their complements, for a feel that is fun and looks effortless.

### SUNNY DESIGN STATEMENTS

Replacing an older cottage that belonged to her parents-in-law was a big deal for Mary and husband Chris, as it held many fond memories of times past. But, she wanted a year-round home that the family could visit anytime — even for lunch!

Mary had a strong input into the structural design, in addition to planning the décor, and worked hard to find the right balance of contemporary elements with a cottage vibe. With influences from her summer home in Maine, she has instilled a breezy

Cape Cod style that flows through the tall windows of the two-storey home which sits right on the lakefront.

Yet, she also wanted to introduce some different design ideas to make the décor appealing for both hot, sunny days and cool, snowy visits.

“It had to be cheerful and uplifting, with hits of bright colour to offset the white winter landscape and all-white interior walls,” says Mary who implemented some novel ideas to bring summer inside. “Every bedroom ceiling is painted in a bold colour — with one in

a coral-tangerine that just brightens you up when you look at it.”

A vibrant yellow on the bathroom walls is very sunny and almost calls out for sunglasses. Mary even admits that she was a bit nervous about painting the kitchen cabinets in the turquoise shade of Poolside Blue by





Benjamin Moore, which is a favoured decorating hue throughout the home.

"I just love that colour," she says, and she certainly does! There are turquoise touches in all the bedrooms and bathrooms, and treasured family furniture – like the porch table and a lovely old cabinet – has been given new life by going blue.

from the original cottage and rebuilt with a recycled wood beam for the mantle.

Mary was careful to incorporate elements from the past into the new home and also reused pine panelling from the cottage in their private porch off the master bedroom. Injecting bold, unexpected touches that make an impact is a distinctive aspect of her decorating style, which she describes as "welcoming with hints of fun."

This is clearly reflected again in the kitchen, where Mary had a beer trough built into the island counter. Think of a long, narrow sink filled with ice where you can park wine bottles and your beer between sips. It's such a cool idea that is all Mary – stylish with a twist (see cover).



#### HINTS OF FUN

To add textural bursts of colour, the antique dining chairs in the porch were reupholstered in outdoor, floral fabric by Sunbrella. A redyed, vintage-style rug in pink from the Elte's Second Life collection makes a striking statement in the family room. It contrasts well with the stone fireplace which was salvaged



#### LIVING IN COLOUR

**CLOCKWISE:** BRIGHT CEILINGS ARE A DECORATIVE TRADEMARK THROUGHOUT THE COTTAGE; ONE OF THREE SCREENED-IN PORCHES SERVES AS AN ALTERNATE DINING AREA; THE DECK CONNECTS THE COTTAGE TO THE WATER; THE MAIN BATHROOM UPSTAIRS IS A CHEERFUL SPACE WITH VIBRANT YELLOW PAINT.

