

# House Beautiful

## Decorating Secrets FOR A Happy Life

SUN-FILLED  
ROOMS

DREAMY  
OUTDOOR LIVING

EASY, PRETTY  
FLOWERS



INDOORS OUTDOORS

# A SURPRISE WELCOME

At first glance it appears to be the epitome of traditional decorating—chintz, trelliswork, porcelain—but this Dallas house by Cathy Kincaid is so kid and dog friendly that no room is off limits.







Fanciful trellage adds another level of lovely detail to the sunroom. Huge arched windows bring big blasts of light into the space, where the homeowners do most of their entertaining. The sofas and chairs, by custom furniture firm DeAngelis, are upholstered in Robert Kime's *Jardinieres*. Custom ottoman in Claremont's *Serge Antique*. Temple jar lamps, John Rosselli. Elizabeth Eakins rug.

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Arched French doors open to an enclosed porch, and a stairway leads to a downstairs bar. Walls are painted in Clunch and the trellis and trim in Wimborne White, both by Farrow & Ball. The checkerboard pattern on the floor is painted in custom colors that mimic stone.





**LEFT:** Placed near the doors to the garden, a John Rosselli table and DeAngelis chairs in Veere Grenney's Temple upholstery provide a breezy setting for lunch. At night, a Moroccan-style light fixture throws sparkle onto the ceiling. **BELOW:** A pair of porcelain egrets perch on a palm wall bracket.



**LEFT:** A patio overlooking the pool runs the length of the porch and sunroom. Lounge chairs by McKinnon and Harris have cushions in a Perennials fabric. Shutters painted in Farrow & Ball's Studio Green.

**RIGHT:** Cathy Kincaid turned the porch into an inviting extension of the sunroom. Wicker seating, Janus et Cie. Vintage coffee table, Mecox. Rug, Dash & Albert. Genghis lanterns, Charles Edwards.





**BARBARA KING:** The trail-blazing decorator Elsie de Wolfe introduced America to elaborate trellised rooms that create the illusion of indoor-garden pavilions. Were you channeling her spirit in this Dallas solarium?

**CATHY KINCAID:** Maybe subconsciously—it's a very inside-outside room, although by no means a garden pavilion fantasy. The inspiration for the treillage actually came from Bunny Mellon's Manhattan townhouse. I was in there after a friend bought it a few years ago, and I was instantly enamored with the trelliswork on the walls and ceiling of the entry hallway. I took a photo, and we had the basic design re-created in a more expansive version for the solarium.

**Why were you taken with that treillage?**

It's delicate and refined. The lattice is on a diagonal, so there are no sharp corners, and it's not broken up by other design elements. It adds depth and dimension without being busy. There's also a whimsical aspect that cheers up the space.

**Every room here has a cheerful attitude.**

They needed it! This is a 1920s Tudor by the architect Hal Thomson, who designed some of the most imposing residences in Dallas. It's beautifully detailed and laid out, but the interior was very somber. There were small leaded-glass windows everywhere, drab plaster walls, dark brown woodwork. The main mission was to lighten, brighten, and conjure the relaxed elegance of an English country house for a young couple with three children. We joked, "It's time to neuter this Tudor!"

**Yet you preserved the essential integrity of the architecture—and even enhanced it.**

Wilson Fuqua, an architect who has renovated several Thomson houses, really opened it up. He doubled the size of the



solarium and linked it to the enclosed porch with steel casement doors—those two spaces are mostly where the family entertains. And he added big windows that flood the rooms with light. The glass wall by the back stairs brings the outside in. And I love the way the bay window in the dining room projects into the backyard. It's such a pretty spot for intimate dinners—you feel as if you're dining alfresco.

**Those lustrous finishes on the walls and ceiling are so reflective, they're like windows themselves.**

It's a tedious process to create a finish as smooth and shiny as glass but so worth the effort. It catches the sunlight and is incredibly glamorous at night in candlelight. The high gloss on the ceiling in the solarium throws glints onto the floor, which we painted to look like stone tiles—we thought it was softer and more interesting than the real thing. That's something Elsie de Wolfe would have done.

**So is the abundance of chintz—another design element she popularized.**

Upholstering all the seating in the same fabric makes the room look unified and

calm, even though it's a big print. Rather than using a fabric that was bright and contemporary for this young family, we chose a Robert Kime chintz in muted colors that imparts a traditional feeling without being stuffy. We wrapped the family room in another Kime print to give it coziness and an Anglo-Indian flavor. The trim was designed by the president of Claremont, Kristen Edson, who has done hundreds of trims for me. I give her a fabric swatch and leave the rest up to her. I really want to emphasize that all this interior design stuff is a collaboration of many talented people.

There may be some decorators who can do every single thing themselves, but I'm not one of them. I can't even arrange furniture.

**And yet look how good you are at making a space sing. That tiny attic guest room is enchanting.**

That's my homage to Sister Parish. I'm friends with her granddaughter, Susan Crater, and I once stayed in the guest room at Mrs. Parish's summer house in Maine. Everything was exactly the way she had designed it, as if she still lived there and had just gone out for a walk on the beach. Most of the floors were painted—what fun!—so I had this floor painted blue, and I used her classic Dolly fabric all over the room.

**What's the biggest compliment you've gotten on the house?**

I love hearing people say that as pretty as it is, and as well executed, it doesn't seem pretentious or forced. Every time you turn around you see something lovely, but you don't feel as if anything is off-limits, not even to kids and dogs. It looks like people live there and use every room and enjoy it all wholeheartedly.



The dining room features high-gloss walls painted in Donald Kaufman Color's DKC 10. A Georgian-style mahogany table from Florian Papp is surrounded by DeAngelis fret-back chairs with cushions in Claremont's Faille Rayee. Chandelier, Guy Regal. Oushak rug, Stark. **OPPOSITE:** The round table by the dining room's bay window is for intimate meals. Chairs in Claremont's Sibton.











For coziness and an Anglo-Indian flavor, Kincaid swathed the family room in Robert Kime's *Field Poppy*, a print based on a textile found in Jaipur, India. The large-scale striped *Avignon Red* by Kime on a club chair from George Cameron Nash contrasts with the discreet florals, *Kaveri* and *Bhavani* by Nicholas Herbert, on a custom sofa and chair.



An attic guest room is Kincaid's homage to legendary designer Sister Parish, whose classic Dolly fabric makes the tiny space feel as fresh as a spring meadow. A John Rosselli bedside table holds a Christopher Spitzmiller lamp. Bedding, Leontine Linens. Floor painted in Farrow & Ball's Dix Blue.







**LEFT:** The glossy barrel ceiling in the master bath is painted in Farrow & Ball's Skylight. P. E. Guerin tub fixtures. DeAngelis chair in Empress Satin by Fret Fabrics. **BELOW:** An antique writing desk serves as a vanity in the guest room. It's paired with a slipper chair in Colefax and Fowler's iconic Bowwood chintz.



**LEFT:** A crown canopy made with two fabrics by Chelsea Textiles—Forget-Me-Not and Carnation Vine on the outside, and Small Check for the interior—adds distinction to the master bedroom. London lamps by Colefax and Fowler. Rug, Stark. **RIGHT:** The addition of a dramatic two-story glass wall behind the floating back stairway floods the space with sunlight. "It's one of the most amazing features in the house," says Kincaid. "Everyone walks in there and goes, 'Whoa!'" FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES

