

Better Homes and Gardens

20-MINUTE
Weeknight
Dinners

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*Easy
Holiday
Baking*

Simple Secrets for Your Best Desserts Ever

Fresh Cranberry Pear Pie p.237

**7 Smart
Ways to
Refresh a
Room**

**Giving
Thanks**
Flavor-Rich Feast,
Simple Celebrations

Plus:
*Bargain Decorating *Stretch Kitchen Storage
*Easy-Care Houseplants *Kitchen Makeovers





History Repeated



ACCENT MARKS
Architectural brackets screwed into the wide interior doorway frame the view out the living room windows. Durable black lacquer paint updates the home's old mismatched wood floors.

DRAWN TO OLD HOUSES, A HOMEOWNER FINDS CREATIVE WAYS TO BRING BACK THE PAST YET KEEP UP WITH THE PRESENT.

BY JODY GARLOCK PHOTOS BY JAMES SALOMON PRODUCED BY SUSAN SALOMON



ENTRY POINTS
Salvaged doors with leaded glass grace the entrance. Black, used as an accent color inside, appears on the door, stair treads, and window trim.

ISLAND GETAWAY
Nicola transformed a dark farm table into a bright and functional island. She had the legs built up onto wood blocks, added a shelf, and replaced the top with a marble slab. The old tabletop is now part of her kitchen table.



NICOLA MANGANELLO PREFERS to keep some details close to the vest. “You want me to tell you *all* my secrets?” the ardent old-house renovator jokes when asked about the black-and-white striped lamp shades hanging from her kitchen ceiling.

The secret is out: Nicola spotted the shades at a home center and, while designed for table lamps, she used them for chic low-budget chandeliers, *page 213*. “I always try to see things differently than how they’re pictured on the box,” she says. “When I look at something, my goal is to figure out how I can reinterpret it to make it work for my room.”

She may just as well be talking about her 1800s Colonial-style home in southern Maine—the fifth house she has renovated in the past nine years. “Old homes just seem to be where I migrate,” says Nicola, who grew up in a quintessential Maine town where stately homes lined Main Street. “I like to customize them for today’s living, but I don’t take the old out. I think there are ways to re-create the old.”

New England flea markets taught Nicola a thing or two about that and about decorating on a tight budget. Finding new uses for salvaged items is her speciality. In this home, she accented the corners of doorways with architectural brackets to help restore the character that previous renovations had obscured. Old barn beams detailing ceilings and painted wainscoting on walls give an addition to the house a sense of age.

On the flip side, Nicola’s appreciation for refinement and a sleeker look plays out in floors she painted black lacquer, stainless-steel appliances, and a few modern furnishings mixed in with slipcovered ones.

Other surprises—like chalkboard paint on pantry walls and those striped chandeliers—are solely signs of a decorating and renovating enthusiast who also wants to try something different. “When I get on a roll with a house, I go the distance,” Nicola says. “You’ve got to take some leaps. That’s when you find your best discoveries.” 🏡



"I wanted a really functional, working kitchen. That's what I think of when I think of an old house." NICOLA MANGANELLO



FIRESIDE CHATS

The kitchen sitting area features a fireplace with granite from the home's original foundation. Salvaged barn beams give the fireplace added prominence and character.

OLD SCHOOL

"I always try to be respectful of materials from the past so I don't take the old-house look away," says Nicola, with her daughter, Maeve.

POWDER COATED

Covered with chalkboard paint, the pantry walls, *far right*, have a similar powdery look as the slate sink and countertop. They're also a perfect place to jot grocery lists. "Chalkboard paint can be expensive, so to save costs I used a black primer and did just one coat of paint," Nicola says.



WORKING IT

With the addition of a desk—just a file cabinet topped with a piece of wood—a hallway off the kitchen is a functional place to pay bills. "It's a great use of what could be unused space," Nicola says. "It keeps the kitchen island from being a catchall."



STEP ABOVE

Black-painted detailing gives the staircase, *far right*, a modern edge. A salvaged finial tops the newel, in which Nicola placed her signed floor plans in keeping with an old tradition.



“Old houses come with great stories. Using salvaged items helps them live on a bit.”

NICOLA MANGANELLO



FRAMED OUT
"Exposed beams are a huge part of the character of the home," Nicola says. She discovered the ceiling beams in the guest bedroom, *left*, after removing a dropped ceiling.

FLIP FLOP
Nicola hung the antique mirror in the master bathroom upside down so it would fit between the sconces. The vanity is a retrofitted Indonesian cabinet.



GREEN SCENE
Part of an addition, the family room, *below*, gains vintage character with wainscoting. "Painting it green was a bold move, but I didn't want the room to be one big vanilla box," Nicola says. With legs sawed down, a well-used dining table is a right-height coffee table.



For buying information see page 304.