



# Embracing HISTORY

A 1920s country home retains its historic charm while receiving needed updates.

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Although Holly stayed true to the home's century-old roots, she also felt inspired to introduce some modern elements, particularly with the new additions to the space like the bright sunroom. "I tried to add a lot of light to the house to keep it open and airy," says Holly. "I went a little bit more with the modern boho feel."

The wraparound covered porch is spacious enough to allow for comfortable furniture but also provides ample opportunities to display pops of foliage. "I tend to do seasonal stuff, like flowers in the spring and pumpkins in the fall," Holly says.



**Striking the perfect balance** between modernizing an older home while maintaining all the vintage charm that attracted you to it in the first place can be a difficult line to walk. For Holly Thompson, designer and owner of Holly Thompson Design (with studios in downtown Franklin and Nashville, Tennessee), finding this balance was the main goal when renovating her 1920 bungalow. "If you can go with the house rather than fight against it, you get the best result," Holly says.

Holly and her husband Dave knew that when they began their renovation project, they wanted the home to retain its original bungalow charm, even after their many thoughtful updates. "We did two really big additions, so some of it is new," she says. "But the additions were made to look like they were part of the house."



"Sitting on the porch is the perfect farmhouse experience," Holly says. She extends her home's relaxed, retro vibe to the exterior with two vintage butterfly chairs.



"The door is salvaged from an 1800s house," says Holly about the striking addition to the primary bedroom. Originally from a Federal-style home, the door looks as if it was meant to be in Holly's home all along—a testament to her strong vision.

## DIY: RESTORING A VINTAGE DOOR

Doors make great design statements in the home. If you appreciate a good salvage piece, incorporating a restored vintage door is a wonderful way to add charm and character. Follow these steps to replicate Holly's door restoration.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Screwdriver and hammer
- Paint stripper
- Paint scraper
- Gloves
- New doorknob (optional)
- Sander
- Stain (optional)
- Paint (optional)

### WHAT YOU'LL DO:

**1.** Take the door off the wall using the necessary tools. You'll want

to move it where you can apply the paint thinner freely (ideally outdoors or in a space that allows for proper ventilation).

**2.** Remove the doorknob and any other hardware.

**3.** Apply paint thinner according to the directions and wait for the required amount of time.

**4.** Scrape the paint off. For doors with many layers, it may be necessary to repeat steps 3 and 4 until the old paint has been removed.

**5.** Once you see the condition and tone of the natural wood, decide if you'd like to stain it or paint over it. Sand the door to prepare it.

**6.** Wipe the door down with a soft cloth to ensure it is free of debris; this will help the stain or paint adhere properly. Apply your finish and allow to dry.

**7.** Reattach the old doorknob or add a new one. Install the door, and enjoy!

Holly knew the library was missing some central piece to really bring the room together, so she added a cast iron mantle. "There's no fireplace, but the room didn't have any real focal point, so I added that," Holly says. The wallpaper peeking through the mantle paired with the empty gilded frame is a fun play on the typical fireplace/mantle design.



(above, left) The sunroom has a contemporary boho feel, but Holly's addition of vintage pieces, like the quilt and blanket draped over the ladder, keep it consistent with the overall design. "Vintage touches still tie it into the rest of the house," she says.

(above, right) Designing the home was all about straddling the line between retro and modern, and rooms like the library perfectly display that combination beautifully. "In order to not make it a museum in there, we did some modern furniture and modern lighting to add balance," Holly says.

### A COUNTRY BUNGALOW

Just an hour outside of Franklin, Tennessee, the home is in a lovely rural town, offering Holly, her husband, David, and their kids the opportunity to enjoy life in an idyllic pastoral setting. In their renovation, they added two large areas and brought some fresh, modern elements to the remodel, all while maintaining the vintage feel.



## KEEPING IT COUNTRY

Combine unexpected elements with farmhouse style while maintaining an effortless classic country look.

- **START SMALL.** If the larger elements of your home have a farmhouse look, adding in smaller items will not detract from the overall design. A mid-century modern table lamp on an antique wooden trunk is a fun mix!
- **FARMHOUSE FRAMING.** If the perimeter of a room reads farmhouse thanks to hardwood floors, white or neutral walls, and the like, feel free to add more playful elements, such as a boho blanket or contemporary coffee table. Finish with a vintage rug.
- **LIGHT THE WAY.** Light fixtures are a perfect way to experiment with style. If you're looking to add a more industrial feel, a steel pendant light is always a good choice. For a bit more glamour and softness, try a chandelier globe.



Never one to shy away from taking a risk, Holly admits that mixing patterns and styles can sometimes be a game of trial of error. "Be flexible and try something else if it doesn't look right," she says.



The dining room is a seamless blend of formal and classic with fresh and funky elements. "Mixing modern and vintage is a great way to keep the modern from being too cold and the vintage from being too old feeling," Holly says. The fun light fixture plays off the vintage transferware on display.



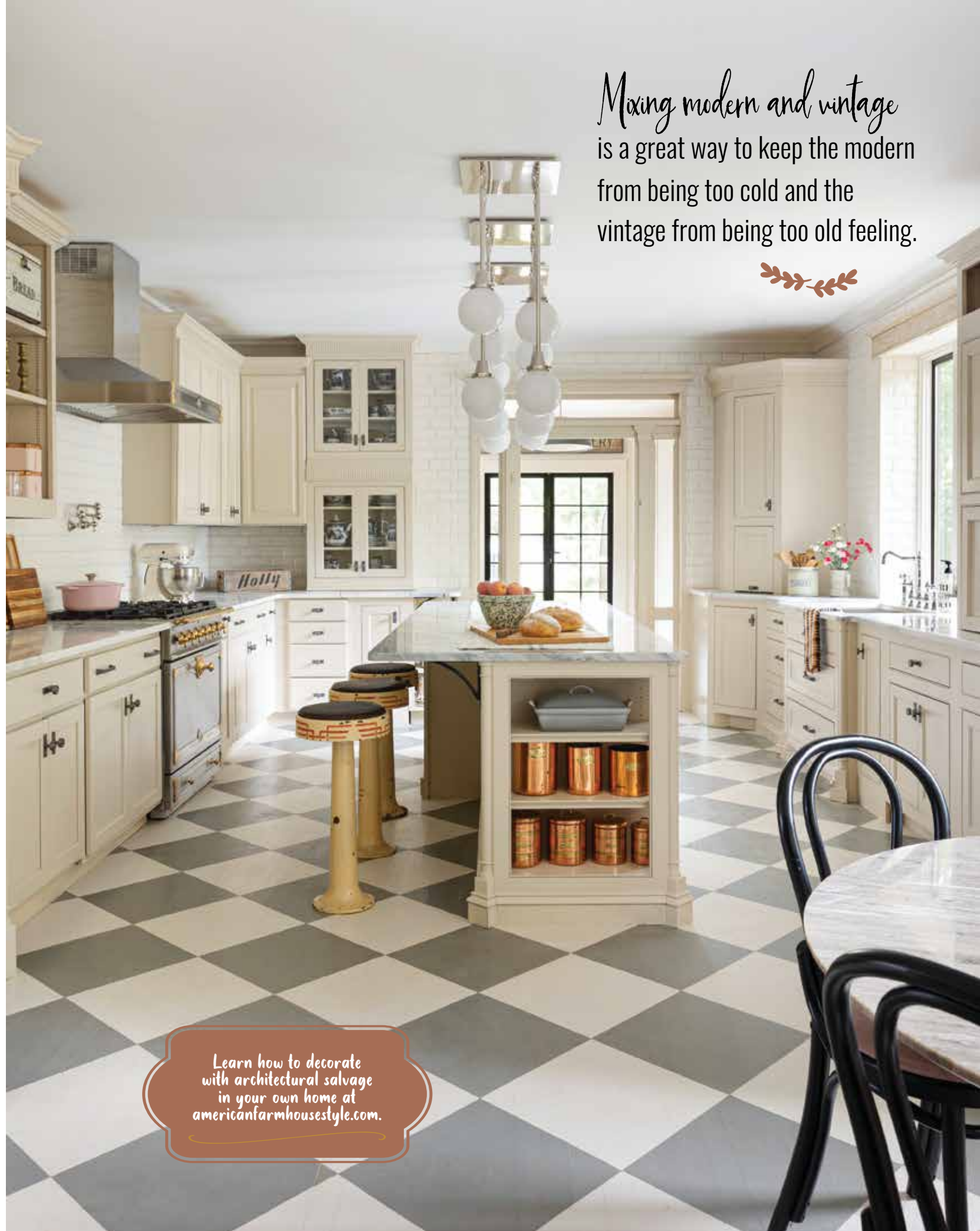
*(left)* If there's one room that is a clear departure from the home's 1920s origin, it's the kitchen. Holly looked at this space as an opportunity to try something different, citing iconic French cafes as her main inspiration.

*(right)* "I wanted the kitchen to be light, bright and open in contrast to some of the other rooms," Holly says. Instead of doing an all-one-shade white kitchen, she added dimension and character with a variety of white and beige tones.

"The finishes are really nice and everything is touched, but we kept the old character," says Holly. Elements like doors, doorknobs, fireplaces and the hardwood floors are all original to the home. Even where Holly made additions, she often opted for salvaged materials over sourcing new materials. Examples of this include the windows and door in the sunroom and the metal door in the pantry.

#### **TAKING RISKS**

With the right number of modern touches to keep it from feeling fussy or dated, the renovated bungalow never veers into what Holly calls "museum" territory. In fact, it's this fabulous mix that lends the home its unique feel. Modern light fixtures against retro Schumacher wallpaper and chic, modern coffee tables over layered vintage rugs



*Mixing modern and vintage* is a great way to keep the modern from being too cold and the vintage from being too old feeling.



Learn how to decorate with architectural salvage in your own home at [americanfarmhousestyle.com](http://americanfarmhousestyle.com).

Holly loves all the home's cozy nooks and crannies, but it also has a wonderful flow throughout, making the transitions from rooms like the kitchen and the dining room seamless even while they retain their distinct identities and functions.



In addition to "tons of counterspace," Holly wanted elements that evoked the feeling of being in a Parisian cafe. "I wanted it to have some iconic touches, like the bentwood chairs and the French bakery lighting," she says.





“I thought the bathroom would be a fun place to do something different,” Holly says of the pink handmade tile. She and her husband laid out the pattern themselves ahead of time so that they could get the design just right.



(above, left) When a professional designer is remodeling a home, you better believe that even the pantry is going to be beautiful. The mix of open shelves and cabinets makes it easy to put special vintage pieces on display and organize other goods out of sight.

(above, right) Some furniture and décor may get lost after enough moves, but some are too good to ever let go. This antique side table’s first home was Holly’s original design studio. She’s always been fond of it, so it’s stuck with her over the years.

(right) “The wood piece is an 1800s mercantile store fixture,” Holly says of the 12-foot-long antique stunner. While it’s not most practical item to move from house to house, it was absolutely worth the effort.

create that perfect blend. Most importantly, she’s not afraid to mix things up if a design isn’t quite working. “I love to decorate with vintage rugs,” she says. “It gives you the opportunity to pull together colors and patterns you wouldn’t expect.”

#### PLAYFUL DESIGN

The home’s cohesive design creates a beautiful flow between the spaces, and Holly took advantage of the plentiful rooms and corners that could serve as their own unique nooks. “It has all of these amazing spaces for being at home while not feeling like you’re in the same spot the whole time,” she says. Especially in the era of “work from home,” this is particularly appealing.





The gleaming copper tub looks vintage, but it is a new addition. To make room for it, Holly and her husband expanded the bedroom so that they could fit it in the primary suite.



(above) Holly's top priority when decorating a primary bedroom? "It needs to have nice materials and a decent view from the bed," she says. Luckily, the bed faces the beautiful, antique salvaged door.

(right) Holly has a gift for choosing colors that bring a bit of whimsy into a space without overwhelming it, such as this pink wallpaper. "You have to be careful with pink as a color, so I always make sure to get a really neutral pink," she says.

Holly's parting advice for decorating your home? "Being playful and fun with the space gives you the best result because it's your house—and if you're going to live there, you might as well like it," she says.



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