

# SOUTHERN ELEGANCE

An eclectic style and a classic farmhouse palette bring quintessential Southern charm to this heritage property in Valdosta, Georgia.

BY LYNN FONG

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JESSIE PREZA

The kitchen lanterns were a way “to incorporate some more brass elements,” says designer Tiffany Hinton.

Homeowner Caroline Stephens wanted more elegance and items with classic farmhouse style, and “this was a good blend between the two.”



There's something magical about a classic Southern farmhouse. The warmth of living with reminders of generations past is the inspiration behind this 3,275-square-foot heritage property in Valdosta, Georgia.

The homeowners, Shane and Caroline Stephens, inherited the estate "from their grandparents on her side," says designer Tiffany Hinton of Lola Interiors. Built on a street full of beautiful older houses, the home needed to "fit in with the classic style that's present there." An understanding of the elements of classic Southern elegance was the key to creating a farmhouse-style home full of historical charm.

#### ACQUIRED AUTHENTICITY

To create a sense of history, the designers "mixed a lot of different styles in the home, which made an eclectic and collected feel," Tiffany says. Even though the furnishings were mostly new, "we wanted everything to feel like it had been collected over time," Tiffany says.



**above:** In the kitchen, white paint creates a classic and elegant simplicity when paired with the wood and metal. The tile patterns break up the white and are an added point of interest. "We wanted something classic that would stand the test of time," says Tiffany.

**opposite:** The rose china "was my paternal grandmother's," says Caroline. "It was gifted to her in Saga, Japan, to celebrate the birth of my father." The design, she says, "is a personal reminder of my father and my grandparents."







The navy-blue dining room table brings a subtle touch of color to the otherwise neutral tones of the space and complements the rustic styles of the pale wooden chairs and metal light fixtures.

## Tip

WANT MORE RUSTIC IN YOUR HOME? USE A VARIETY OF WOOD, SUCH AS IN THE FLOORING, FURNITURE AND WALL PANELS.



# SIMPLE ELEGANCE

Colors, textures and furnishings—here are four tips for creating elegant simplicity in Southern farmhouse style.

• **NATURAL MATERIALS.** For classic farmhouse style, it's important to "incorporate real and natural materials," says Tiffany. "And don't be afraid to mix wood finishes!" In Caroline's home, Tiffany utilized stone countertops as well as wooden cabinetry, doors and flooring throughout.

• **OLD AND NEW.** A collected feel is essential for a historic look. "We love pairing older pieces alongside fresh, updated design," says Tiffany. "To achieve the collected look, we make sure there's something old in every room."

• **MIXING METALS.** "When it comes to mixing metals," says Tiffany, "every room needs a touch of black!" Black plays well with all other finishes, and it's a safe bet for adding texture.

• **LIMIT THE SHINE.** If your home is a newer build, make sure to "tone down the shine factor," says Tiffany. "While a bit of shine is welcome, we try to limit the shiny finishes and, when used, almost always mix them with matte finishes." This helps maintain the historic feel.



They did this by mixing different styles. For example, in the kitchen Tiffany chose acrylic bar stools, but in the dining room, she went with a different style through winter chairs.

Another way to evoke the past was to show off family heirlooms. Prominent displays of vintage china and silverware demonstrate a gorgeous collection of sentimental heirlooms and acquired pieces. Most were treasured gifts from Caroline's grandparents. "As we built and decorated our home, I tried in every way to cherish their legacy," says Caroline.

It was important for Caroline to include as many heritage pieces in the home as

she could. "We incorporated many of her sentimental belongings from her grandparents, including china, handwritten recipes and many other heartfelt touches to make this young family's perfect Southern dream home," says Tiffany.

#### CLASSIC COLORS

An integral part of developing elegant farmhouse style while maintaining a sense of consistency in the home was the use of a classically inspired palette of color and texture. "Sticking with natural materials helps create a new home that feels old," says Tiffany.

"The playroom is another one of those areas where Caroline wanted to incorporate a little nautical flair," says Tiffany, pointing out the blue-and-white striped fabrics. "The bed covers zip up, so it's very easy" for the children to make up their own beds.



Opposite the beds, this playroom's large window overlooks the pool. Letting in enough light opens up a room and makes it feel more spacious.



A mix of different metals, wood colors and wood species is a great way to create a rustic, eclectic farmhouse feel. Wanting to include “a little bit of a coastal feel,” Caroline was also drawn to an overall aesthetic of blue and white. Keeping it simple and not overwhelmingly “beachy” helped her achieve that quintessential Southern farmhouse elegance while still maintaining a uniquely personal touch.

The use of natural materials and antiques brought the full essence of the property’s heritage into this new build. “We always like to incorporate an antique in every room, preferably an antique with a story,” says Tiffany. “Adding old with the new,” she says, was essential to imbue this Southern home with the charming warmth of history and farmhouse style.

SEE SOURCES, PAGE 128.

“As we built and decorated our home, I tried in every way to cherish my grandparents’ legacy.”

—Caroline Stephens



## HOW TO CHOOSE METAL FINISHES

Use designer Tiffany Hinton’s stress-free tips to select the perfect metal finishes for your dream Southern farmhouse.

• **MIX AND MATCH.** Many different types of metal finishes often go into a classic farmhouse style for that rustic, eclectic feel. For Caroline’s kitchen, “we mixed polished nickel with a satin brass sink faucet and brass light fixture,” says Tiffany. Together with the black hardware of the barn doors, the hardware complements the general use of copper, one of Caroline’s favorite metals.

• **START WITH BLACK.** Black is a good way to go if you don’t know where to start. “Black plays well with every other finish,” says Tiffany. “It is a good color to introduce and incorporate for a rustic texture.” Another metal that plays well with many other finishes, she says, is polished nickel. “Polished nickel is a living finish, so it patinas over time, giving it more depth.”

• **MAINTAIN COHESION.** A few recurring metals will maintain a feeling of consistency throughout the home. “We tend to lean towards black interior door hardware ... in every room,” says Tiffany. But don’t feel too constricted in which finishes you choose—an amalgamation of metals “helps with the feeling of being collected over time.”

In the master bath, Caroline “really wanted to create that classic look with a shine,” says Tiffany. Real marble on the floor and countertop maintains a farmhouse feel with the clean, elegant style.





The symmetry in the home's build draws on a classic Southern aesthetic. A simple, elegant look is accented by the metal gas lanterns and rustic metal plant pots.



"Caroline had a very clear inspiration picture for the porch," says Tiffany. "She came to us with a palette in mind, so we helped her select the exact colors and door style."

"Sticking with natural materials helps create a new home that feels old."

—Tiffany Hinton

