

Bachelor Pad

Guest Cottage

This Tennessee guest cottage, dilapidated after years of being a rental, found new life as a cheery home for a retired gentleman.

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For lighting, Holly chose modern lights with touches of black and gold to work with the subtle farmhouse feel. "The lighting is simple modern," she says. "I didn't want it to be a country theme, so I didn't go too rustic."



In the kitchen, Holly and her team moved some items around, but didn't change the footprint of the space. The warm neutral tones and bold natural cabinets create a space that works well for a single occupant to make meals and morning coffee.



If you live on a large property, it sometimes gives you the opportunity to bless family members.

That was the case for this family, who bought a large property outside Franklin, Tennessee. The main house was the perfect place for the couple and their four teenage children to live, but what to do with the crumbling guest house? "The wife's father was going to come live here," says interior designer Holly Thompson of Holly Thompson Design. "This was a tear-down, so we reimagined it and made it cheery and livable."

STRUCTURAL SECURITY

The guest house has 1,400 square feet with three bedrooms and was built in the 1950s or '60s. It also needed a lot of love. "It had structural issues," Holly says. "It was a rental for years, so it was never maintained well." Holly and her team came in and did the necessary structural updates to make the house safe. She also did some space planning, including combining a couple of smaller rooms into a larger bedroom.

DESIGN DECISIONS

When it came to design elements, Holly worked with the gentleman's daughter to pick the finishes and aesthetic she thought her dad would like. "Our goal was to make the house a fun, livable experience that's connected to the outside location," Holly says. "The [architecture] isn't farmhouse style, but the house is in the country," she says. "They have llamas right outside the window." As a result, Holly and the homeowner wanted to achieve the right combination of masculine taste and connection to the land outside.

Central to this was a dark wood flooring, as well as a textured, natural finish on the cabinets in the kitchen and bathroom. "[The homeowner] liked the rustic weathered oak to remind them of the country," Holly says. "We wanted it to be warm and masculine and not super trendy." Gold and neutral accents provide a subtle base, which Holly infused with several different textures for added interest. "The countertops are shiny, the marble backsplash is matte, and the cabinet finish is tactile," she says. And that's what Holly loves about this updated home. "It has real materials," she says. "Everything is authentic."

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Holly chose elements that provided diverse types of texture to the space, such as the shiny quartz countertops, matte marble subway tiles and textured weathered oak cabinets. "The beveled marble subway tiles have warmer colors and a lot of variety," Holly says. "They have a matte texture, to contrast with the shiny counters."

Kitchen Cabinet Trends

We're four years into the 2020s and are starting to see trends emerge for the decade. Here's what designer Holly Thompson of Holly Thompson Design is seeing these days.

- **STAINED CABINETS.** Rather than the white painted cabinets that were predominate in the 2010s, more homeowners are opting for natural wood cabinets. "People are wanting woods that aren't too warm, like the honey woods that were popular 20 years ago," Holly says. "But also, woods that aren't too gray. They want that medium, warmer wood."
- **MOODY PAINTED CABINETS.** Darker, moodier colors are in for painted cabinets. "It's a reaction from the white Shaker trend that was popular for so long," Holly says. "The gray trend is over too."
- **BOLD NEUTRAL CABINETS.** Alongside moody, dark colors are the bold neutrals, like green and blue. "If you add gray to any color, it becomes a neutral," Holly says. "Adding black to something turns it into a neutral, but then adding white lightens it. Any color that's neutralized like that is up and coming because it's a lot more interesting than just having white everywhere."



left | The 1,400 square-foot house has a single bathroom that still retained its original design when Holly and her team came in. They chose to stick with the neutral theme, adding black metal accents and a cheerful penny tile design for a pop of pattern. The dark wood vanity tones down the tile. "We didn't want it to look like a college kid in there," Holly says.

below | Holly chose the same cabinet fronts for both the kitchen and bathroom to make the spaces cohesive. "I would normally do [each room] differently, but I wanted the cheery tile; so, we did the cabinets the same to be cheery without being wildly colorful," she says.



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