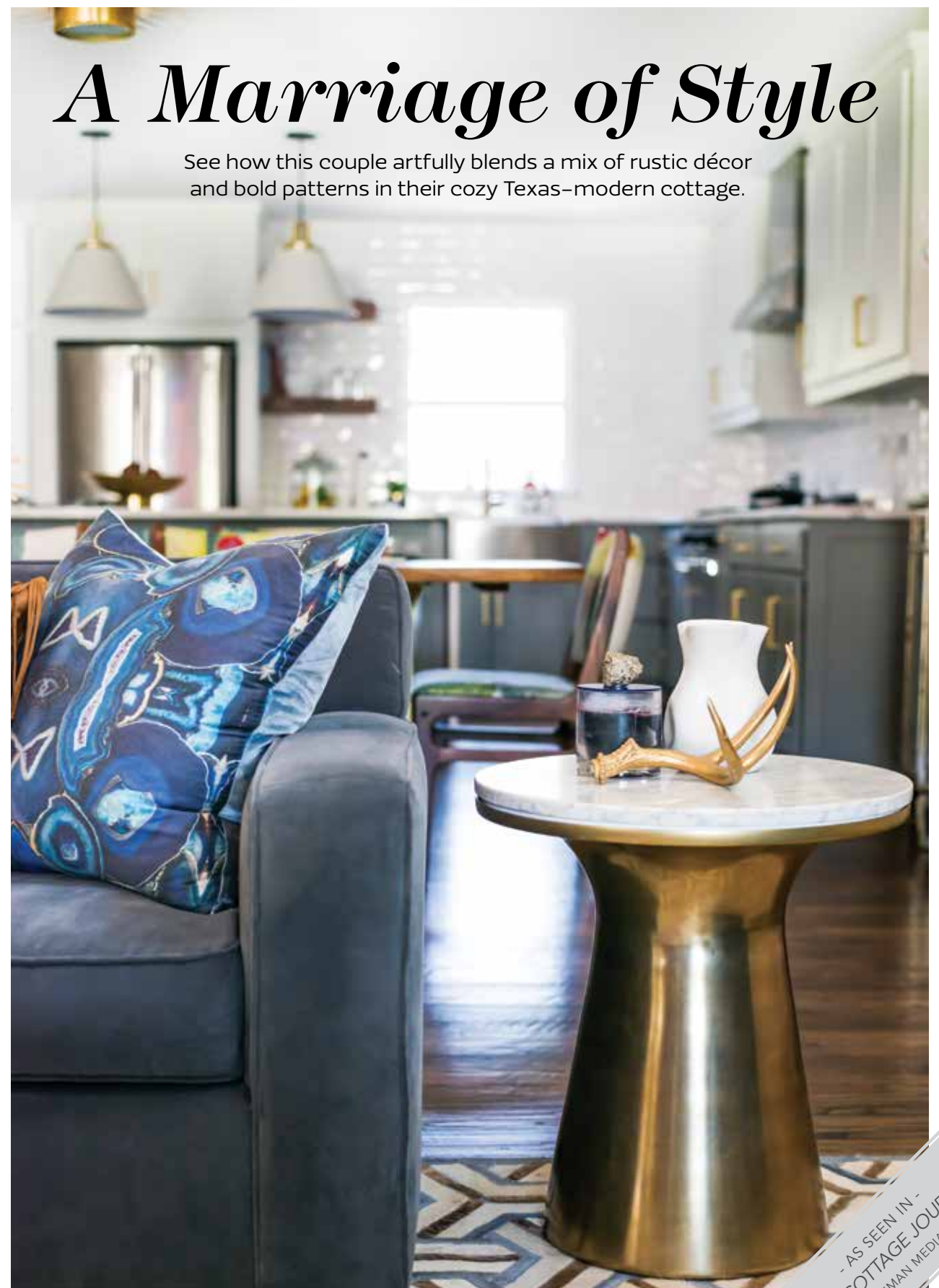




A Marriage of Style

See how this couple artfully blends a mix of rustic décor and bold patterns in their cozy Texas-modern cottage.



- AS SEEN IN -
THE COTTAGE JOURNAL
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When interior designer Abbe Fenimore and her husband, Dru, moved into their home nearly three years ago, the circumstances were nothing short of destiny—putting them in the right place at the right time. Just two days before they were supposed to close on a new home in Dallas, Texas, the deal fell through, and the couple was back on the hunt for a house. Much to their surprise, they found a perfect home in a coveted, established neighborhood, and as only fate could have it, they moved in just a week later.

At that time, they began a six-month renovation project, all while living in the 20-square-foot finished garage with their two bird dogs. “We’ve always loved this neighborhood,” Abbe says. “But we never thought we’d move over here because the pricing can be really aggressive at certain times. And it just sort of fell in our lap.”

The Fenimores chose to leave the existing foundation and room locations and gut the interior spaces to expand the living space and the master bedroom. By the end of the renovation, the two-bedroom, two-bath home had four bedrooms and three baths. And it “still has the vibe of the original house, which I love so much,” Abbe says.

One of the major must-haves was a stacked stone fireplace in the living area. “I knew I wanted a really beautiful fireplace up front,” Abbe says. “I wanted it to kind of feel a little bit Texas and a little Colorado. We go to Colorado a lot and I just love a big wood-burning fireplace.” The fireplace anchors the newly added living space and provides the ideal spot for a cozy gathering during the winter months. “It smells great—both outside and inside—and it always feels cozy and is somewhere you just want to be around and gather.”



The dining room hosts a prime example of the creative methods homeowner Abbe Fenimore employed to blend both her and husband Dru’s style preferences. The European mount deer heads were from one of Dru’s hunts in Kansas and are now stylishly displayed on 1/2-inch-thick acrylic. The edgy modern pendant light is a striking juxtaposition against the wooden dining table with colorful cactus-inspired upholstered chairs. Atop the mirrored buffet are portraits of the couple’s two bird dogs dressed in Victorian garb—one donning a brooch with a squirrel, the other a pheasant.

The heart of the home is one of the Fenimores' most-used spaces, so choosing design elements that felt both edgy and classic was key for Abbe. She added wooden open shelves to mirror the rustic beams above the living room and fireplace at the other end of the long, open room.



The open-concept layout connects the comfortable living space to the dining and kitchen areas. And while Abbe's style leans more playful and bold, her husband enjoys a more rustic aesthetic, so in nearly every design choice, Abbe found creative ways to blend each of their preferences into a cohesive interior design scheme. "I wanted it to be edgy and cool and still carry the same feel that marries little elements of Dru and things that he would love and appreciate," Abbe says.

And after nearly three years in their home, they have created a great versatile entertaining space that is truly a reflection of their lifestyle and personalities. "That was really a priority when we thought about how we were going to use the house," Abbe says. "Entertaining is definitely very important, but [the house] works well, too, when it's just the two of us. We don't feel overwhelmed by a giant space, so I love that."

The couple spends a ton of time at the island in their kitchen. Both Abbe and Dru love to cook, and with the bar just off the island and the dining table nestled in between, it provides ample space to gather while still feeling cozy. "The room is extremely long and rectangular, so I love that from the moment you walk in, you've got a great place to sit or you can move to the dining area or the bar," Abbe says.



"As an interior designer, you can get creatively drained sometimes," Abbe shares, but she's quick to add that the bright colors and happy vibe she's created in her home office actually help to keep her feeling refreshed and inspired. "My space in our previous home was very neutral because I really thought, 'I can't have a distraction; I've got to have it neutral when I'm working with all this color.' And then I stepped back and said, 'No, I want the space to be bold and fun and walk in here and feel uplifted.'" Abbe found her bold inspiration in the Madame Butterfly wallpaper in Peony from Designers Guild and a custom piece of artwork by Ashley Longshore.




The serene guest bedroom connects to Abbe's home office through a chic jack-and-jill-style bathroom. (Opposite) Abbe's love of bold color and pattern continue in her closet. "I knew from day one I was going to wallpaper that ceiling with something floral," she recalls. "I love pink, and I actually hang out in my closet a lot." Abbe gave fresh life to several treasured family heirloom pieces in her closet's design, including her grandmother's vanity—which she painted pink—and the mirror above, and her great-grandmother's chandelier hangs sweetly overhead.



of great little spots for people, and (no matter where you land) you don't feel like you're excluded; you still feel part of the group."

Throughout the house—and perhaps most notably in the bedrooms—the Fenimores have given fresh life to heirloom pieces passed down from family. Set against a striking wallpaper or dressed in fresh upholstery or paint, pieces they each grew up around have found a way to feel contemporary and special once again. "I spent a ton of time at my dad's parents' home [growing up]," Abbe says. "I can't imagine not seeing those [pieces] again."

If she could share one piece of design advice—which, she says, she's constantly reminding herself of as she's designing her own home—it would be to be true to your gut and what you love. "Making your home look like a magazine isn't how you actually live. I think it's important to have that talk with yourself and with your family [as you design] and think about how you use your home and what you really like," she says. "It's your home, and it's not only a reflection of your life and your family but it's also where your sanctuary is—it's where everything in your life is tethered. It needs to be right for you." 

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