

the Bay

HeyRhody PRESENTS

FREE

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Spring Forward

PLUS:

The Mystique
of Rose Island

**LOCAL PROS
SHARE HOW TO
MAKE THE MOST
OF YOUR HOME
AND GARDEN**



LANDSCAPE DESIGNER'S PATH • PORTUGUESE BREAKFAST IN EP • THIS MONTH'S RHODY GEM

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Photo by Andrea Pietrangeli, HEYDT HOME

Cover Story: Cottage Goals

How a Newport-based interior designer made a tiny house feel twice its size



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Photo courtesy of Brook Merriam



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Photo courtesy of The Heal Room



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Photo courtesy of The Cluck House

ON THE COVER: The breezy appeal of open windows. Photo by Joseph Keller Photography.

COTTAGE GOALS

a wakefield ting home feels twice its size thanks to streamlined updates

BY ANDREA E. MCHUGH





good vibes goods

Four independently owned stores for unique home accents:

A GRACIOUS SOUL
Cranston & East Greenwich

CHRISTINA'S LTD.
Westerly

BALI BUNGALOW
Providence

WALD & SEA
Newport

“Less is more,” is how the saying goes, but when Ara and Pamela Millette purchased a 285-square-foot cottage just steps from the sea at Mary Carpenter’s Beach Meadow in Wakefield, the mother-daughter duo were ready to test the bounds of exactly how much “more” they could get out of their tiny new home.

The Millettes turned to Bernadette Heydt, an interior designer and owner of HEYDT HOME, a Newport-based interior design firm with a distinct focus on creating, remodeling, and furnishing both residential and commercial spaces – especially compact ones. “Our design ethos revolves around the transformative power of minimalism, where less becomes more, and functionality seamlessly blends with style,” explains Heydt, who works alongside her husband, master carpenter Andrea Pietrangeli. Where one might have seen a tiny, tired, two-bedroom home with nothing but limitations, Heydt saw a petite (pink!) palace with possibilities.

Tasked by her clients to turn the space into a modern, fully functional family home, Heydt was mindful of making every inch count while also making the home ADA-compliant to ensure accessibility and comfort. “Every element within the interior serves a distinct purpose, ensuring that the space feels open, efficient, and welcoming,” explains Heydt. She started by raising the ceilings and adding exposed beams overhead, then installed light-hued wide plank pine wood floors throughout. True to her design firm’s signature style,

Distinctive features include vaulted beam ceilings, a Dutch entry door, porcelain slab kitchen countertops, and properly scaled/storage furnishings that create a spacious feel

big ideas

Even if a 285-square-foot cottage isn’t for you, there are still take-aways applicable to any sized home. Here are ideas to get started and resources around the state to help make them happen. • By Elyse Major

LET IT GO

Turning the task of decluttering into a game could be just the ticket! In the *Minimalist Rulebook: 16 Rules for Living with Less*, Joshua Fields Millburn puts fun spins on chores, like finding someone to be your purge buddy; hosting a photo scanning party; and sorting things into piles of essentials, non-essentials, and junk. Similarly, the 90/90 rule prompts this key question: have you or will you use something in 90 days? If the answer is no and it’s in decent condition, consider donating it to a worthy organization. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island has a list of clean, odorless items they’ll accept posted to BigSRI.org; they even offer curbside pickup statewide, and a tax receipt. Another route is to sell gently used things at a consignment shop or ecommerce website (to possibly fund Refresh a Room!).

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island, Providence

The Creative Reuse Center of RI, East Providence

South County Habitat ReStore, Charlestown

GET ORGANIZED

Once you’ve decided what brings you joy, having a professional organizer create storage solutions can be a worthwhile expense. Beyond closets, consultants can help make sense of everything, from pantry items, to medicine cabinets, to the nightmares that are garages and basements. Many offer free in-home consultations, too.

Closettec, Inc., North Smithfield

Inspired Closets, East Greenwich

NEAT Method, Providence

The Nest, Providence (for closets)

Organized Abode, Westerly

REFRESH A ROOM

After a cold winter, there’s no better mood booster than something new and colorful in a room, whether it’s a plant or a custom accent like fabric Roman shades or a reupholstered chair. Try out DIY skills by painting a piece of unfinished furniture (Knock on Wood) to match your new scheme.

All About Redecorating, Newport

Cottage Chic Decor, Wakefield

East Coast Designs, East Greenwich

Fabric Gallery, North Kingstown

Jessica Hagen Fine Art, Newport

Knock on Wood Furniture RI, Smithfield

HOME IMPROVEMENTS

If you’re ready for larger scale modification, Little Rhody is rich with talent and businesses to help you make changes, whether it’s new cabinetry, a door, or a wall coming down.

Arnold Lumber, Bristol & Wakefield

Cole Cabinet Co. Inc., Cranston

Design by Keri, Coventry

Douglas Lumber, Smithfield

Dzyna Signature Kitchen & Bath, Portsmouth

DiStefano Brothers Construction, Wakefield

East Coast Designs, East Greenwich

Fagan Door, Coventry

McCormick Home Improvement, Warwick

Michelle Lee Designs, Johnston

SPRING CLEANING

Why not treat yourself to a fresh start by hiring a residential cleaning service?

Level Up Cleaning Services, Cranston



A crisp white has the remarkable ability to visually expand any room while also acting as a blank canvas, allowing other design elements to take center stage



the interior is characterized by clean lines, a neutral color palette, and rich textures. To maintain a sense of spaciousness and clutter-free environment, Heydt carefully chose furniture with storage capabilities to complement the overall decor.

Rattan dining chairs, bamboo window treatments, a handmade bamboo dining pendant light, and vintage family photographs (many taken at waterside locales) collectively evoke a sense of seaside charm and simple luxury. “The synergy between minimalistic

The fully equipped kitchen features an LED-illuminated coffee bar and custom drying rack shelves. Mantra cabinets are from Riverhead Building Supply in Middletown.



simplicity and coastal chicness results in an interior that is not only visually captivating, but also highly functional,” explains Heydt. “It embodies the idea that less can be more, demonstrating that a thoughtfully curated blend of design elements can transform a compact space into a coastal oasis of both style and comfort.”

In a calculated move, the living space extends to the exterior, merging indoor and outdoor living. A unique railing bar with a trio of stools provides an idyllic spot for cocktails on



try this at home

- OPT FOR FURNITURE WITH STORAGE
- USE GRAVEL TO ZONE OUTDOOR AREAS
- REPLACE HARDWARE, EVEN FAUCETS
- LIGHTEN WITH BAMBOO SHADES
- NAME YOUR ABODE AND POST IT

ABOVE: Storage beds and pendant lighting over nightstands saves surface space

LEFT: The bamboo dining pendant light was an Etsy find.

Photos by Andrea Pietrangeli, HEYDIT HOME

the porch, while a white marble gravel patio accommodates a dining lounge that invites both quiet mornings in the salty air and decompressing at sunset.

From the outset, the home's existing outdoor shower and wrap-around porch captured Heydt's attention. "Our redesign involved relocating the porch's entry to the front of the building, providing a more inviting approach," she says. The shower was meticulously sanded, then refreshed with white paint, gold hardware, and a handy shelf for amenities, giving it a crisp, modern vibe. "These changes not only preserved the charm of the original features but also added a touch of contemporary elegance to the overall design."



Of the project, Bernadette Heydt says, "it's a testament to our commitment to innovative design in tiny homes."



Photos by Andrea Pietrangeli, HEYDT HOME



The name “Sea La Vie” both captures the homeowners’ coastal surroundings while also paying tribute to their French-Canadian heritage



Get Rhody Style

Ideas and resources for making the most of living in the Ocean State.

All Natural

Heydt suggests incorporating native plants, like seagrass, into your landscaping to create a natural, coastal look. “It not only adds to the Ocean State vibe, but also supports local biodiversity,” she says. Consider swapping traditional mulch for beach sand. “It acts as a moisture barrier for your plants, and adds a nod to the coastal environment.”

Shop Small

Heydt believes local, mom-and-pop hardware stores, like Newport Hardware, are gems. “It’s one of the oldest hardware stores in town. What sets it apart is not just its longevity, but also the personal touch you experience when you walk in,” she explains. Best of all, she adds, it provides everything you’d expect from a big box store but with a charming, local touch. “It’s a small business with a big heart, making it one of our favorite spots in town.”

True Colors

The Color House, a paint and design retailer with five locations in Rhode Island, specializes in finding the perfect shade of paint every time. “If you have a specific color in mind that isn’t readily available in their shop, they’ll go the extra mile to make it happen,” says Heydt. “A great example of this personalized service was when Pamela Millette had a silk blouse in the perfect pastel pink shade. We took that blouse to The Color House in Middletown and their expert team skillfully matched it for the exterior color of the cottage.”

Finally, the home was dubbed “Sea La Vie,” (meaning “sea life” in French). “In Rhode Island, giving your home a name is a cherished tradition that adds a unique touch to your living space,” says Heydt. “This tradition allows homeowners to infuse character and personality into their homes, making them feel like a true part of the Rhode Island community.”