

# Country Living

February 2011

## THE SIMPLE BEAUTY OF WHITE

How to mix  
and match neutrals

~  
Easy ways to  
add drama with texture

~  
Perfect paint  
shades: creams, ivories,  
and more

Display  
your  
collectibles!  
SEE PG.126

**COMFORT FOOD**  
Mashed potatoes!  
Short ribs!  
Chocolate cake!

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## Darryl Carter

He may be a minimalist, but don't call his work modern. Carter's M.O.: Strip away unnecessary embellishment (loud colors, busy patterns) to focus attention on a few carefully curated pieces, many of them antiques with traditional forms and warm patinas. "White makes old things seem more current," he explains. Of course, there's more to it than that: "White rooms are more complex than they appear," Carter says, "because there are no distractions. Every choice becomes critical."



*Carrara marble delivers a subtle hit of pattern and tone.*

(Traditions in Stone tiles, \$10.95 per square foot; buildersdepotdirect.com)

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Carter's kitchen in Plains, Virginia

## What I Know About Decorating with White

**WHITE IS INDEED A COLOR—WITH LOTS OF RANGE.** Benjamin Moore alone offers over 200 different shades. If you look carefully at the undertones, some are blue, pink, green. You really need to paint a wall and experience the color at different times of day, to see how the light changes it.

**WHITE UPHOLSTERY CAN BE PRACTICAL.** I often use outdoor fabrics inside. Faux leathers and suedes are also very forgiving. Once, I vinylized a linen kitchen banquette to give the sense of texture without sacrificing stain resistance.

**WOOD WARMS UP EVEN THE MOST SPARSELY FURNISHED WHITE ROOM.** There's a lot of movement in wood. In effect, it starts to feel like a print—just a very subtle one.

Other low-key ways to add interest and depth: Fabrics with woven tone-on-tone chevron or herringbone patterns, marble countertops, and antique rugs on the reverse (just flip the rug over so the muted side shows).

**WHITE HAS THE POWER TO UNIFY DISJOINTED SPACES.** My country home in Virginia is an old farmhouse that had been added to over time; even the floors didn't match. White—on the walls and underfoot—harmonized the space and established continuity from one room to another. It encourages flow, whereas an abrupt color change can destroy the sight line. On a more prosaic note, an all-white decorating scheme lets you move furniture around: A chair pulled from the living room can also work at the dining table.

*Outdoor fabrics and faux leathers are dog- and family-friendly.*

(From left: Perennials outdoor fabric; 888-322-4773.

Pindler & Pindler faux suede; pindler.com for stores)



[white] SERVES AS THE PERFECT BACKDROP FOR COLLECTIONS.

# More Is More

\*As long as the palette's minimal

Sticking to neutral shades allows Joanna Madden to pile on the collectibles in her family's Point Pleasant, New Jersey, home. Here, her seven key pieces of advice for living comfortably with vintage finds.

written by KATHLEEN HACKETT



Joanna Madden relaxes on a sofa passed down from her parents, then updated with a crisp-white canvas slipcover.