



If you drive through Solvang, in California's lush Santa Ynez Valley, you will fall under the spell of the small town's European charm, just as Joanne Gordon did.

## CALIFORNIA CHARMER

"I love the area and the country feel of my neighborhood, where I'm surrounded by horses and donkey ranches," Joanne says. "After 35 years, I was ready to downsize from the home where I raised my two boys. When I drove by this cottage, I was instantly smitten. The front garden had a rose-draped arbor, a little picket fence and a brick path bordered with an abundance of white roses in bloom. It was dreamy!"

Not only was Joanne charmed by the home's curb appeal and location but it also answered her wish list. "I wanted a small home with a spacious outdoor entertaining space," she says. "A cozy little place that would allow me to declutter my life and live with only the things I need and that make me happy, not a home with empty rooms filled with stuff that's never used."

**OPPOSITE AND ABOVE:** *Vintage and new furnishings come together to create a sense of simple elegance on the inviting front porch, which is surrounded by lush shrubbery, fragrant roses and flowering trees. Antique accents bring romantic farmhouse style and balance the modernity of the wicker chairs.*



**ABOVE:** To show off meaningful items without creating clutter, Joanne had shelves built on either side of the living-room window. This allows her to create orderly displays, which can easily be moved around and updated over time.

**RIGHT:** Jodi Goldberg of Jodi G Designs sourced a number of pieces for the living room. It is a study in softness and comfort, new and old, coastal and rustic. Blue accents, including a beaded chandelier from Regina Andrew, speak of Joanne's fondness for the ocean, while gently weathered pieces speak of her penchant for farmhouse decor.



**GET HELP**  
 Don't shy away from hiring professional help for decorating or organizing.

At 975 square feet/91 square meters, the cottage was a perfect fit. Add a large lot for outdoor gatherings and mix in a Dutch door or two, a tin roof and a sheltered front porch and you will understand why Joanne says: "I had to have it!" The interior had also been lovingly maintained, she recalls. "The previous homeowner kept the vintage character but made it better, right down to the original wood floors with layers of white paint. They gave the cottage a very clean and bright feel."

The home was furnished with mostly French farmhouse-inspired pieces, but while Joanne opted to incorporate some of the style, she also wanted to bring in her collection of corals and sea fans for more of a coastal farmhouse vibe with a feminine twist. At this point, she decided to call in the Santa Barbara-based designer Jodi Goldberg of Jodi G Designs.



**ABOVE:** A low-profile credenza/sideboard provides extra storage for the kitchen overflow of dinnerware reserved for parties rather than for everyday meals. When not in use, the TV shows a scene with colors in keeping with the decor.

**RIGHT:** "The large hutch/dresser serves as entertaining storage for wine glasses, cocktail accessories, a place to display a collection of vintage vases, which I'm still collecting, and also artwork that hasn't yet found its spot," says Joanne.





"I cannot thank Jodi enough for helping me with that vision—she knew the items I loved and helped mix the old with the new," Joanne says. In particular, she recalls how the scheme for the living room came together from a variety of sources. "Jodi found vintage sconces to balance with new chandeliers, a beautiful vintage rug and had a modern couch built to fit the room. She also came up with a driftwood side table, which was made to look old to offset the modern credenza/sideboard and the coffee table, which I had brought from my beach house. Finally, she added a vintage mirror to pair with my sea fans. She pulled the look together."

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#### ORGANIZE

Organization is key. Label boxes, containers and storage bins either alphabetically, by purpose or by season.

**ABOVE LEFT:** Rather than upper cabinets, open shelves add storage and display areas without making the kitchen feel closed in. The sign, crate and hanging pans evoke farmhouse style.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** The back entrance to the cottage opens into a small laundry room. Clearly labeled boxes in the built-in cabinet keep necessities perfectly organized and readily accessible.

**OPPOSITE:** Joanne had the banquette built to make the most of the space. The little nook offers plenty of seating without interfering with foot traffic and provides additional storage inside the base.





*If I buy something new, it must have more than one purpose.*



**OPPOSITE:** *A lack of closets is typical of small homes. Joanne solves the bedroom issue with a mirrored armoire/wardrobe from Ballard Designs, which adds depth and dimension to the room.*

**ABOVE:** *The master bedroom takes its feminine cue from a Serena & Lily wallpaper featuring a timeless antique print of soft-hued flowers.*

The biggest challenge for Joanne was editing down her possessions to fit the limited space. "I was able to reach my goal of decluttering, but I have many items that are hard to part with. I gave away a lot and tried to only keep what I needed, but also ended up building a shed to store holiday decorations and seasonal clothes. Nowadays, if I buy something new, it must have more than one purpose. For instance, a pitcher/jug may serve lemonade, hold fresh cut flowers or become part of my decoration."

Joanne also had to learn to be very organized. "Everything has labels and everything has a place. When I have guests, they know exactly where to find something and where to put it back."



**ABOVE:** The bathroom needed to conceal essential items, be pretty and functional and maintain the master bedroom's romantic tone. Joanne incorporated a narrow sideboard, a vintage wall cabinet and flowing curtains.



#### LESS IS MORE

Take an inventory of each room and keep only what's important. Purge, purge, and purge some more!

**ABOVE RIGHT AND RIGHT:** The guest bedroom is all about the simplicity, comfort and charm of country life. By not setting the twin beds side by side, Joanne has freed up valuable floor space. A painting by Joanne's son Trevor and a bench-turned-side table add hints of color.

Joanne says she feels most at peace when she doesn't have clutter around her. "My closets are filled with the appropriate clothing for the season. In the summer, I pack up the winter coats and shoes and store them in the outside shed. I can't do knick-knacks, so I try to have fewer, larger items of decor. The key to living comfortably in a small space is to stay organized and have nearly every piece of furniture perform double duty. I think I have achieved that."

