

Packed with Purpose

Explore this Lowcountry cottage designed with thoughtful space-saving style ideas.



Before Pennsylvania-based interior designer Lisa Furey and her husband, James Colton, built a custom dream home on their lakefront property in Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina, they began with a modest one-bedroom cottage as part of an intentional phased build. The charming 690-square-foot cottage was built in 2013, and every element of its design was carefully planned to help the small space live large.

As the project developed, the couple made a wish list

of requirements that ranged from a place to cook and entertain to a walk-in closet, large shower, and laundry room. “We always had a multifunctional space in mind,” Lisa says of the cottage. Creative storage ideas like crisp white built-in cabinets to conceal the entertainment system in the living room and the office desk in the bedroom can be found throughout the cottage, as well as thoughtful space-saving design tricks like the sliding barn door to cover the stacked washer and dryer.



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To break the sea of white, Lisa selected a honed absolute black countertop for a budget-friendly contrast. She notes that the smooth-surface two-burner cooktop is also black. "That just kind of disappears, so that was kind of nice," she says.



"It was really purposeful," Lisa says. "It was thoughtfully designed so that nothing was wasted." She admits that with the home's small footprint, things stay relatively neat all the time. "It's pretty buttoned-up; we keep everything put away," she says. "In addition to that, the high ceilings and the tall windows make it live bigger than it actually is."

Beyond the creative space savers and thoughtful design elements, Lisa had a specific vision for the overall aesthetics of the modest cottage. "I knew I wanted it to look Southern, and I'm not Southern—I'm a Philadelphia girl," she says with a laugh. "So, I had to research a lot of Southern homes and what's in them." She knew she wanted wood walls and ceilings instead of drywall, so they worked within their budget to incorporate those elements "wherever we could afford in the places we thought made sense."

For the interiors, Lisa's design plan was understated Southern mixed with modern farmhouse charm. "I didn't want to detract from the view of the lake," Lisa shares. So, she opted for no window treatments, and she kept the walls and furnishings neutral to draw the eye outdoors. "My personal style is really about trying to have the nicest things in the most comfortable way and in the most timeless and durable way." 

TEXT AND STYLING BY KATIE ELLIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM DICKEY

Another one of Lisa's space-saving ideas was to install swing-arm sconces on either side of the bed.



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