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New Home, Vintage Look

Shady lanes and front porches are back. Find out how one cottage exemplifies the spirit of a traditional neighborhood.

If you've been keeping track of recent housing trends, chances are you've noticed that a good portion of new construction looks traditional. In fact, for the past two decades, whole communities have been popping up all over the South that intentionally pay homage to the well-loved neighborhoods of our cities and towns.

Appropriately known as traditional neighborhood developments, or TNDs for short, these new towns revive the images of tree-lined streets and of neighbors greeting one another as they sit on their porches or stroll about. The individual homes within these communities are designed to reflect the architectural heritage of their specific region, rather than a homogenized, could-be-anyplace style.

At Home in Habersham

Located just outside of Beaufort, South Carolina, Habersham is one such development in which all the nuances of Southern graciousness have been successfully captured. Set amid vistas of marshlands and live oaks veiled with Spanish moss, Habersham consists of quaint cottages, stately large homes, townhouses, live/work units, and generous green-spaces, all contained in a master plan that reflects the Lowcountry spirit.

One cottage in particular exemplifies the Coastal South. Designed by Savannah residential designer Richard Black, this home's charm lies in its deceptive age. "I wanted this house to appear as though it had been increased in size over the years," states Richard. "After all, many older homes are the result of modifications made to accommodate a growing family."



PHOTOGRAPHS: VAN CHAPLIN / STYLING: BUFFY HARGETT



above: Designed with the notion of having expanded over time—first the main body, then the addition of a porch, central roof gable, and other elements—this home typifies the tried-and-true details and design found in traditional neighborhood developments. **left:** What better place to spend a leisurely afternoon than on this shady porch? Note the simple 1 x 4 window and door surrounds, along with the shiplap siding, which may look like wood but is actually fiber-cement.

Convincing Details

Once you take the time to truly study this tranquil home, Richard's design intentions really come to life. Keep in mind, though, that everything you see is new.

The main body of the house alludes to having been, at one time, a modified dogtrot plan in which the front door opens onto a central hall flanked on each side by one room. To support his notion of a growing family, Richard incorporated a full porch that spans the cottage's front facade. Also, while the main roof is covered with composition shingles, the roofing material for the porch is standing-seam metal—furthering the idea of an addition. Even the central gable above the porch seems to have emerged from necessity. It's as if additional height was needed inside

when the stairway was enlarged to access attic space.

Other vintage details also reinforce the idea of evolution. Around the windows and exterior doors, Richard specified plain-faced 1 x 4 surrounds, topped with tapered 1 x 6 header boards. For the porch columns, he chose simple 8 x 8 posts with partially chamfered edges that give a refined look. The fiber-cement siding, which at first glance resembles wood, is virtually maintenance free. "To blend both natural and manmade materials," Richard notes, "I selected dirty white paint colors, which also hint at the influences of weather and time."

With the attention to details and lifestyle concerns demonstrated in this quaint cottage, who wouldn't want to live in a traditional neighborhood development? **ROBERT MARTIN**