

# Playful & Punchy

Vintage details get a fresh perspective.



A red tin star, a painting by Jennifer Saunders's father and a family gift of shoes from the Netherlands lend bold color to the fireplace.

## behind the scenes

**COLORWAYS** Bright, happy hues united by white woodwork

**TRADEMARK** Mix of items old and new, for use indoors or outdoors

**MOOD ENHANCERS** Areas such as mantels to display artwork

**FURNISHINGS** Pieces passed down by family members, or discovered at flea markets and salvage shops

**FABRICS** Fun, lively designs and whimsical patterns

WRITTEN BY MARA BRAGG  
PHOTOS BY TONY GIAMMARINO  
STYLED BY MONA DWORKIN

Jennifer and Chee Saunders's Victorian townhouse was built in 1912—and the rest is history. From its location within Richmond, Virginia's Historic Fan District to the enthusiasm of its owners for family heirlooms, flea market finds, antiques and salvaged goods, the home honors the past.

Any newly acquired pieces quickly take on a patina of an earlier time, like an unfinished



A trip yielded an unexpected solution for the old home's lack of closets: a storage cabinet fronted with reclaimed tin panels in the family room.

The dining room's garden-fresh green color palette was inspired by original green and cream fireplace tiles as well as the plates from Portugal displayed in the sideboard.





After years on the hunt, Jennifer found the perfect salvaged column—replete with its very own peeling paint—for the corner of the living room. A light coating of a matte sealant preserves the timeworn finish and adds to the home's unique style.

sideboard distressed in white, or the crown molding and wainscoting that replaced original woodwork that was removed by previous owners. Vibrant wall colors added to the mix satisfy modern-day tastes.

**“WHAT’S YOUR STYLE?”**

The Saunders found that question a tough one to answer when it was

posed by organizers of a local house-and-garden tour. While Chee jokes that their home’s decorating style fits the “early American yard sale period,” Jennifer takes a more nuanced view, calling it “evolutionary style.” After all, she didn’t order up a finished room in a single day. It’s a work in progress that you might say began when her great-grandmother discovered the end

table that now graces Jennifer’s living room and that continued whenever her father, Frank C. Norvell, would finish another oil painting.

**MAKING A MATCH**

“My philosophy is that if you really love something, it will work with other things you love,” says Jennifer. When she sees something she likes,



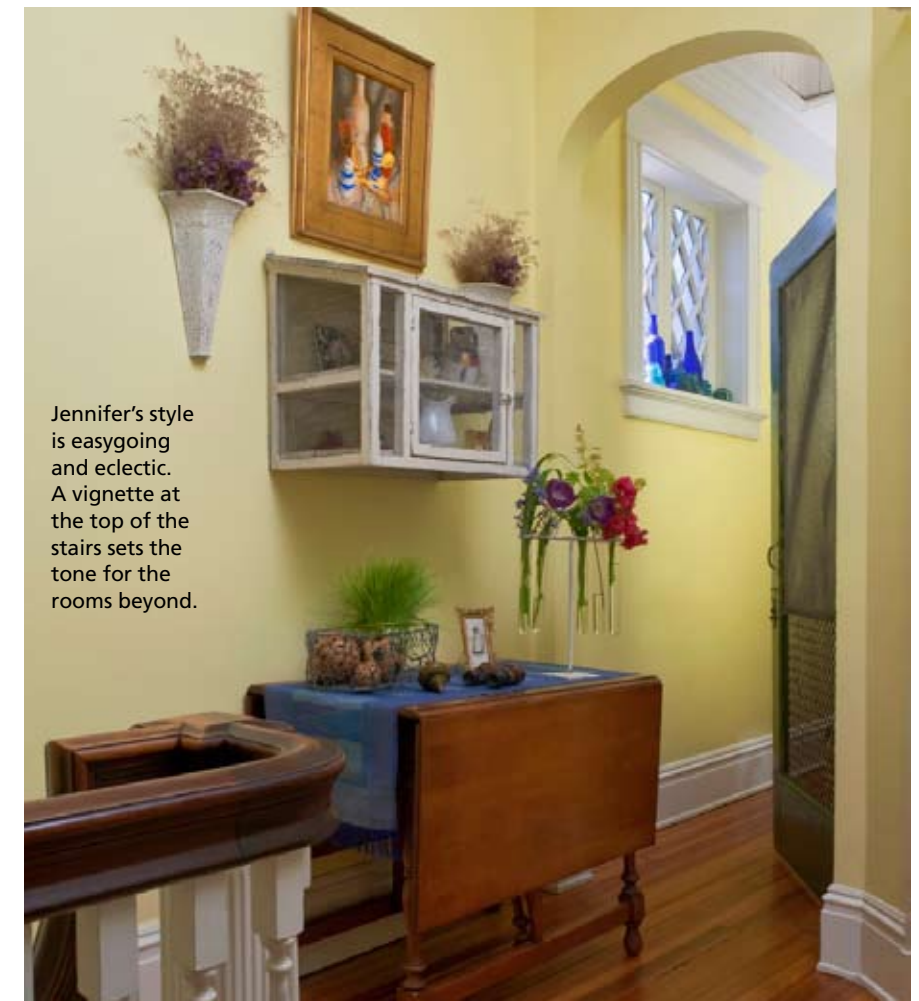
Top cabinets in a kitchen with 11-foot ceilings are not practical, so Jennifer removed a few doors to create decorative display space.



Roosters from a flea market in France take pride of place on the hutch.

she doesn’t waste any time wondering where it will fit in. Sometimes, if she’s lucky—like in the instance of the living room column with the peeling periwinkle paint—it’s a perfect match for an existing spot at home as well as the end of a years-long search.

“I know it’s silly to be in love with a column, but I was very excited,” recalls Jennifer. Sometimes the eventual



Jennifer’s style is easygoing and eclectic. A vignette at the top of the stairs sets the tone for the rooms beyond.



Romance flows into the bedroom on curtain scarves framing light-filled windows and flanking a decorative metal canopy. Glass sun-catchers hanging from ribbon cast shapes on walls by day and glimmer slightly when they catch some lamplight at night.

location is not clear—as was the case of the large tin screen from her favorite salvage store in Portland, Maine—but Jennifer knows she'll find a spot for it.

Chee is a "huge partner," notes Jennifer, whether he is convincing the guy at the salvage yard not to scrape off the column's peeling paint (which, after all, is what made it so appealing in the first place), or disassembling and then rebuilding a cabinet that wouldn't fit up the stairs of another home's basement. Jennifer's mother also knew how to scour markets for great finds. "It's in my genes!" Jennifer exclaims.

### SPLASHED WITH COLOR

To get the whimsically wonderful look they have achieved, the Saunders painted every room in the house—except the half bath under the stairs.

"There's not a white wall in the place!" says Jennifer. But white woodwork does run throughout the home to unify all the colors. Large, light-filled rooms with 11-foot ceilings also balance the vivid hues.

Since Jennifer had lived with the same red and purple colors eventually used in this house in her last home, they were easy repeat decisions (her choices: Benjamin Moore exterior acrylic in Heritage Red and Scandinavian Blue 2068-30, respectively).

Yellow seemed perfect for the living room (a custom mix of Benjamin Moore Sundance 2022-50 and 2022-60), with its bountiful essence of bottled sunshine. Getting the right green in the dining room, however, was trickier. "I had a color in my head that I

wanted, but kind of drove the painters crazy with spots of color," Jennifer says (eventually settling on Benjamin Moore Potpourri Green 2029-50).

The kitchen is a true red. It also is exterior paint. "It is bold, but I love the cheerfulness of it," notes Jennifer. The almost-apricot color of the family room (Benjamin Moore in Mellow Yellow 2020-50) is a gentle segue between the nearby red and yellow rooms. All the colors harmonize because they share the same intensity, generally falling between the third and fourth shade on the paint chip.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Jennifer Saunders loves the decorating process so much she started *Love Where You Live*, a home and garden coaching service ([lovewhereyoulive.wordpress.com](http://lovewhereyoulive.wordpress.com)).

# Top Sites For Salvage

Flee the market crowds and score great treasures at home.

IF YOU WANT to avoid the hordes of shoppers or just don't live near any good flea markets, don't worry. It's getting easier than ever to order unique finds from online retailers. From the comfort of home, shoppers can delight in buying antique, handmade or salvaged pieces with the click of a mouse.



### Glass Half Full

Once used as yogurt bottles, these vintage mid-century vessels look fresh-as-ever in today's home. Fill them with flowers for a gorgeous dining table centerpiece or leave them empty on a windowsill to reflect the sun's rays. Internet only. [potterybarn.com](http://potterybarn.com)



### Pop for This

These old soda crates stir up nostalgia for the drink that was first advertised as "Exhilarating, Invigorating, Aids Digestion." Years of use add interest. [potterybarn.com](http://potterybarn.com), 888-779-5176

### Home Tweet Home

Artist Simone Wilson salvages weathered wood and rusty tin from old houses and then marries the two materials together for whimsical garden accents. Use indoors or out. [uncommongoods.com](http://uncommongoods.com), 888-365-0056



### Turn the Tables

Made from solid reclaimed pine (from shipping crates), the Camden side table keeps trees growing in the forests while lending a charming farmhouse cabinet style to your bedside. Bronze-finished bin pulls add a flash of light. [potterybarn.com](http://potterybarn.com), 888-779-5176



### Light the Way

This is your golden opportunity to own an antique architectural artifact from the ruins of old houses in India. Each hand-carved stone lamp is its own work of art. Place a candle inside and enjoy the glow. [wisteria.com](http://wisteria.com), 800-320-9757

# Eat

### Soup's On!

Inspired by an artist's trip to a Paris flea market, this fanciful sign is handmade by an Amish craftsman known around Lancaster County as Rusty Merv. Perfect on a kitchen or dining room wall, signs are cut from sheets of steel and have a rusted, weathered paint finish. [sundancecatalog.com](http://sundancecatalog.com), 800-422-2770