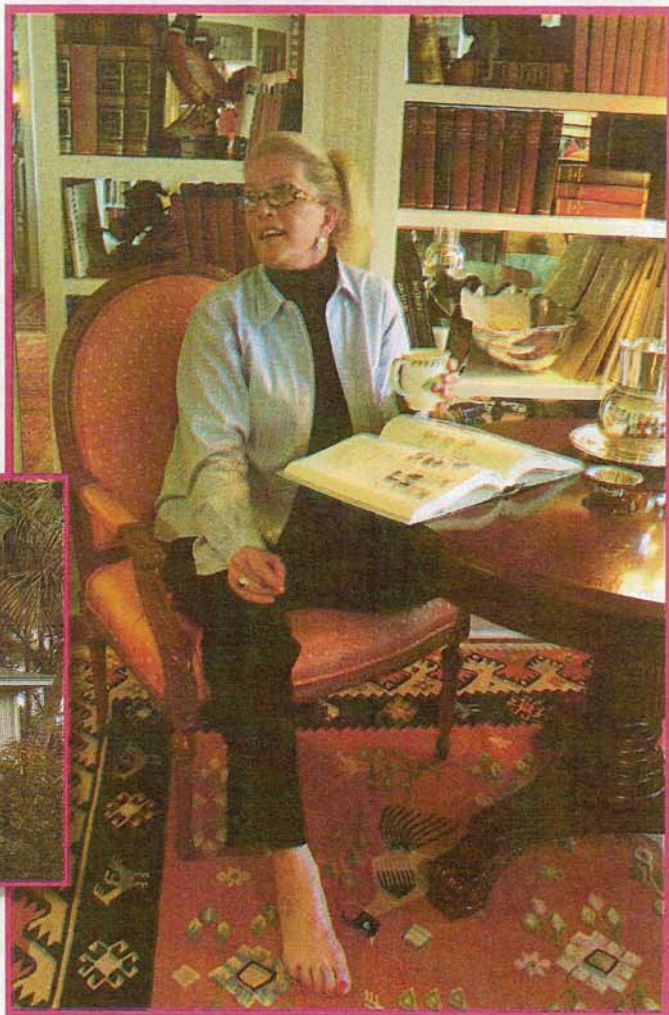


Pink goes home with

Andrea Palmer Cottage on the Creek



On a chilly February afternoon, barefoot, bushy-blonde-haired, statuesque interior designer Andrea Palmer sips coffee by a toasty fire, marveling, as she does each day, at the lush tidal creek, creeping along the edge of her backyard, inviting the outdoors in and painting the perfect picture to set off her main living area. To visit her home is to enter a place of peace—to be enveloped in its gentle light and warm ambiance.

Bathed in soft colors, the walls provide the perfect backdrop for eclectic collections, artfully combined with whimsical accessories, gifts from friends, and items of personal significance. Echoes of happy times resonate throughout this casually elegant home. "I set out to make it cozy and comfortable," she said. "All of my friends love coming here."

Owner of Andrea Palmer Designs, this multi-talented artist doesn't believe in over-designing. "A home should not bear the obvious imprint of the designer, but should reflect the individual," she said, explaining her personal style and decorating philosophy.

Born in Germany and raised in England, Andrea has made a lifetime pursuit of her passion for the arts. She earned a BA degree in German and English literature with a minor in art from the American College of Switzerland after which she spent a year in Austria studying art history. Between college and graduate school, she worked for Harpers Bazaar in London as a writer and shopper. She later went on to earn a Master's degree in educational psychology from Boston College.

As happens to many women, she took a career detour in the name of love. Married 15 years to Howard Siegel, 30 years her senior with children from a previous marriage, she chose not to have children of her own.

At Howard's urging, Andrea returned to school, attending duCret School of

the Arts in Plainfield, NJ, where she received her art and design training that led to a career she now loves.

Her first design project was her own New Jersey carriage house, which was featured in the New York Times antique section. "I didn't do much design work up there because my husband was so much older. We played golf together and traveled—that's how I wanted to spend my time," she said.

After suffering with heart disease for several years, Howard passed away peacefully in 1994. Andrea's parents had retired to Hilton Head, and she and Howard owned a vacation house here. So she decided to try fulltime island living.

After a brief second marriage to George Palmer, who remains a special friend, Andrea bought her house in Port Royal Plantation. As passionate about animals as art, she shares her home with a lovable poodle named Louis and three feline friends: Mr. Winston, a.k.a. Churchill, Mr. Percy and Mrs. Beluga.

Andrea began her local design career as a freelancer, working out of her house, eventually associating with House of Design, where she now operates on a co-op basis with three other designers. Most fun and fulfilling is the human aspect. "My clients are my very best friends," she said, emphasizing the importance of compatibility. "Personality-wise and taste-wise, you have to be on the same page."

In the future, Andrea hopes to find more time for writing and painting. "I love my work, but I need that outlet," she said. When she retires, she will live with 10 animals in a log cabin in the mountains where she will finish her novel.

Lending advice, she said, "It's never too late to follow your passions—law school, art, whatever it is. I went back to school as an old lady, and here I am."



Poodle

"My goal in life is to be the kind of person my dog thinks I am."—Anonymous

Never far from his master's side, Louis relaxes on his favorite chair. "He thinks I'm wonderful," said Andrea, who strives to live up to his image of her.



Oops! Not dry!

Andrea replaced the linoleum floor in the kitchen with Mexican tile. Baked outdoors, it inherently comes with "flaws" such as paw and chicken prints, she explained. She specifically instructed her tile layer not to hide it if such a tile were found in her bundle.



Gray Persian with Lion Cut

Only her hairdresser knows for sure. Although the "lion look" is all the rage among aging Persians and makes for easier personal grooming, it's not Mrs. Beluga's favorite style.



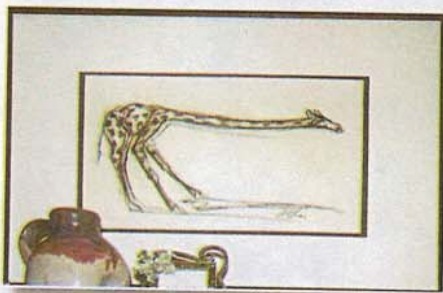
Top Cat

Mr. Winston, a stray who literally walked in and made himself at home, makes a fine addition to the family.



Comfortzone

Andrea surrounds herself with antique books, many with hand-painted covers. This room is her favorite place to sit and write letters. Underfoot is just one of her many fabulous rugs. Another great passion.



A touch of whimsy

"A house without whimsy or humor is not a cozy home," said Andrea. A reflection of her signature humor, her affection for giraffes is evident throughout her home. When first opening her business, a friend suggested that she name it the Blonde Giraffe—a take off on her own stature. "That was a little too cute," she said, although she did integrate the giraffe as her logo.



Girls just want to have fun

"I love a sense of humor, and I don't take myself terribly seriously," said Andrea. This wild and crazy wine glass was a gift from one of her design cohorts, adding some fun to her décor.

That's my story & I'm stickin' to it

"I love things with a story. If it doesn't have a story, I sometimes make one up," said Andrea. She spins a tale about the woman in the painting being her evil great, great aunt. Truth be told, the painting was acquired by her father at an auction in England in the '50s, and the subject is no relation to the family.



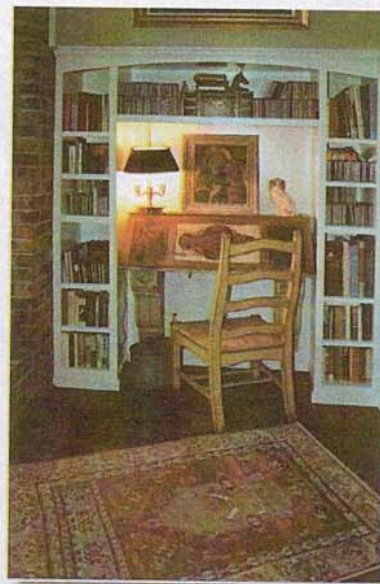
Man magnet

"Men love it," said Andrea of this old-fashioned woodworking bench that serves as a coffee table behind her sofa. Some have even tried to buy it from her.



Cock-a-doodle-do

A fine perch for her favorite rooster, Andrea remodeled the entire kitchen around this antique Dutch grain bin, having her cabinets made to match.



Antique pulpit desk

This exquisite antique pulpit desk came from Czechoslovakia or Hungary. Andrea had her carpenters build the bookcase around it. The Madonna icon above it was a gift from a friend. "I am more into philosophy than religion," said Andrea, explaining the mix of religious symbols found in her home, including a Jewish menorah. "Everybody is represented."