

21 Creative Kitchen-Storage Solutions

AMERICAN HOMESTYLE & GARDENING

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Screen-Porch
Addition

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Retreats

Beach-House
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Style Makeover

Expert Guide

Easy-to-Grow Roses

Best Buys

Outdoor Grills 101

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Vintage garden chairs are cushioned to match their charm. OPPOSITE: Peaches tantalize Phoebe on a table set with dish-towel runners, embroidered with family names.



A screen porch offers the best of both worlds: open to the

designer Leslie Allen visits places in her memory—childhood places—that are as clear as any she inhabits today. Just thinking of her Aunt Rita's slate terrace that extended out onto Lake Mahopac in New York State or her grandparents' red-and-white porch sends her into blissful reverie. Those crystalline recollections guided her creation of the perfect porch for her Connecticut home.

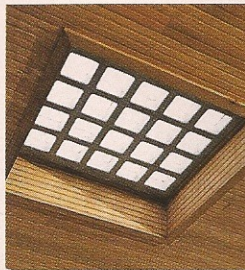
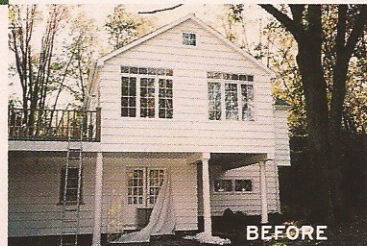
It started, as many inspired designs do, with a problem: how to eliminate the pall a bedroom addition had cast on the existing slate terrace. A 3-foot overhang, supported by four large columns, overshadowed the patio. Instead of fighting it, she extended it—designing a more generous balcony off the master bedroom and a 17 x 30-foot porch. Her architect, Jeanne Stoney Disston, of Austin Patterson Disston, wanted to make it smaller but, says Allen, "I kept saying, 'bigger, bigger!' because I knew the difference between having a porch and having a real outdoor living room." Disston retained the existing bluestone floor (although it had to be taken up for a cement foundation to be poured to support the weight of the bedroom terrace), and the white clapboard siding, then added a beadboard ceiling and 10-foot-tall screened walls with framing to hold exterior trellises.

Starting with a remnant of vintage cherry-print fabric she'd saved since high school, Allen mixed in candy-cane stripes, red-and-white dish toweling, vintage embroidery and pillows fashioned from Victorian runners to create a porch that recalls the idyll of her childhood summers. Aunt Rita's 1940s metal chairs and bamboo couch, Lloyd Loom wicker chairs and a street-find glass-topped table were all united by coats of white paint. A few pieces of darker wicker, a Mexican farm table cut down to coffee-table size and the jute rug were left natural.

The porch seats eight for dinner at the table or 16 for a buffet. In its inaugural season, it hosted everything from Phoebe's third birthday party to summer cocktail parties to Sunday-night suppers with the grandparents. The true measure of its success, however, is that it feels just like the Lake Mahopac porches of long ago. "Being there," says Allen, "is being home."

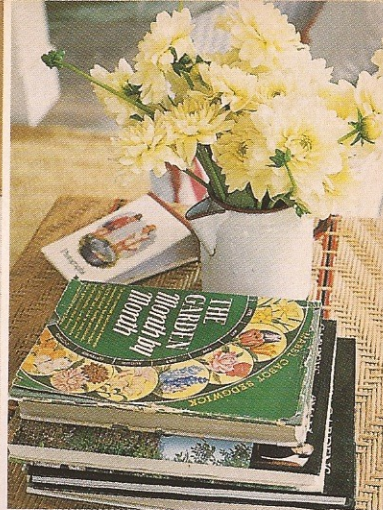
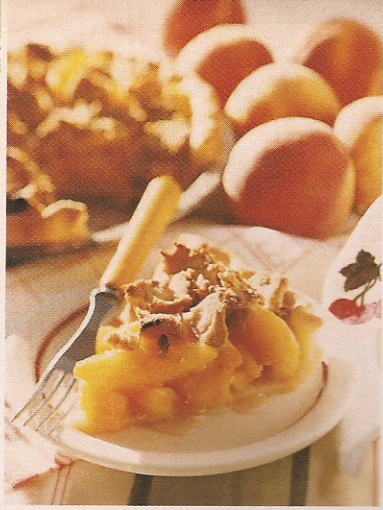


FROM TOP LEFT: All-star flip-flops line up. Miniature shelters encase votive candles. Depression-glass goblets are ready for lemonade. Peppermint-stripe fabric cushions Aunt Rita's vintage chairs. Leslie's peach cobbler tastes like summer. Fabric lines the back of a well-worn cupboard; paired with a glass-topped bamboo table, it serves as the bar.



A French café table holds summer reading. ABOVE: The overhang from a bedroom addition made the slate terrace feel claustrophobic. By extending the terrace and enlarging the bedroom balcony (above, left), a screened-in porch was made. LEFT: Glass-block skylights shed light on the porch. OPPOSITE: Ralph Lauren's "Odeon" stripe mixes with vintage-fabric pillows.

■ SHOPPING GUIDE, PAGE 128
■ RECIPES, PAGE 84



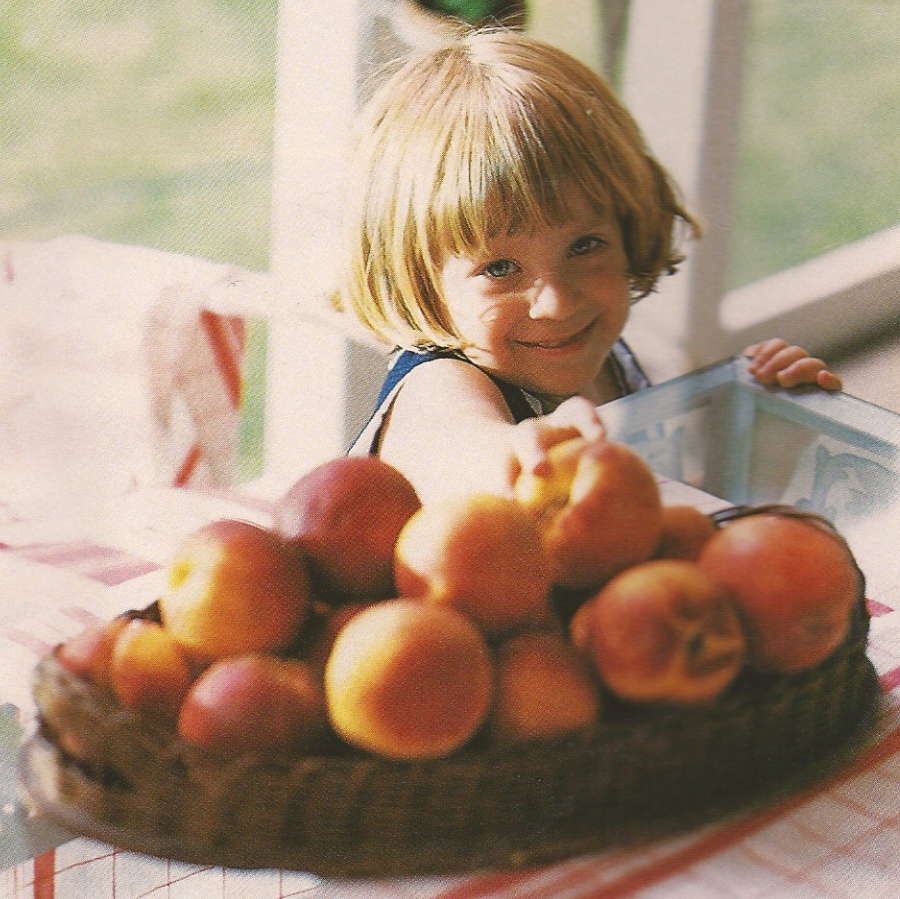
sun's warmth and cooling breezes, sheltered from bugs and rain



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALAN RICHARDSON (PEACHES, OPPOSITE);
EXTERIOR SIDING: T&E CEDAR PRODUCTS; WOODS: PIES WHITE SARKIN;
ON CEDAR SHAKES: STERWIL WILLEMIUS; SKYLIGHT: CIRCLE REDMONT

The day begins here, with a cup of coffee and an inspection of what flowers may have been coaxed into bloom overnight. The afternoon brings little ones, clamoring for lemonade. Inspired by memories of the porches of her youth, Leslie Allen creates the perfect spot for relishing the pleasures of the season.

a summer place



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