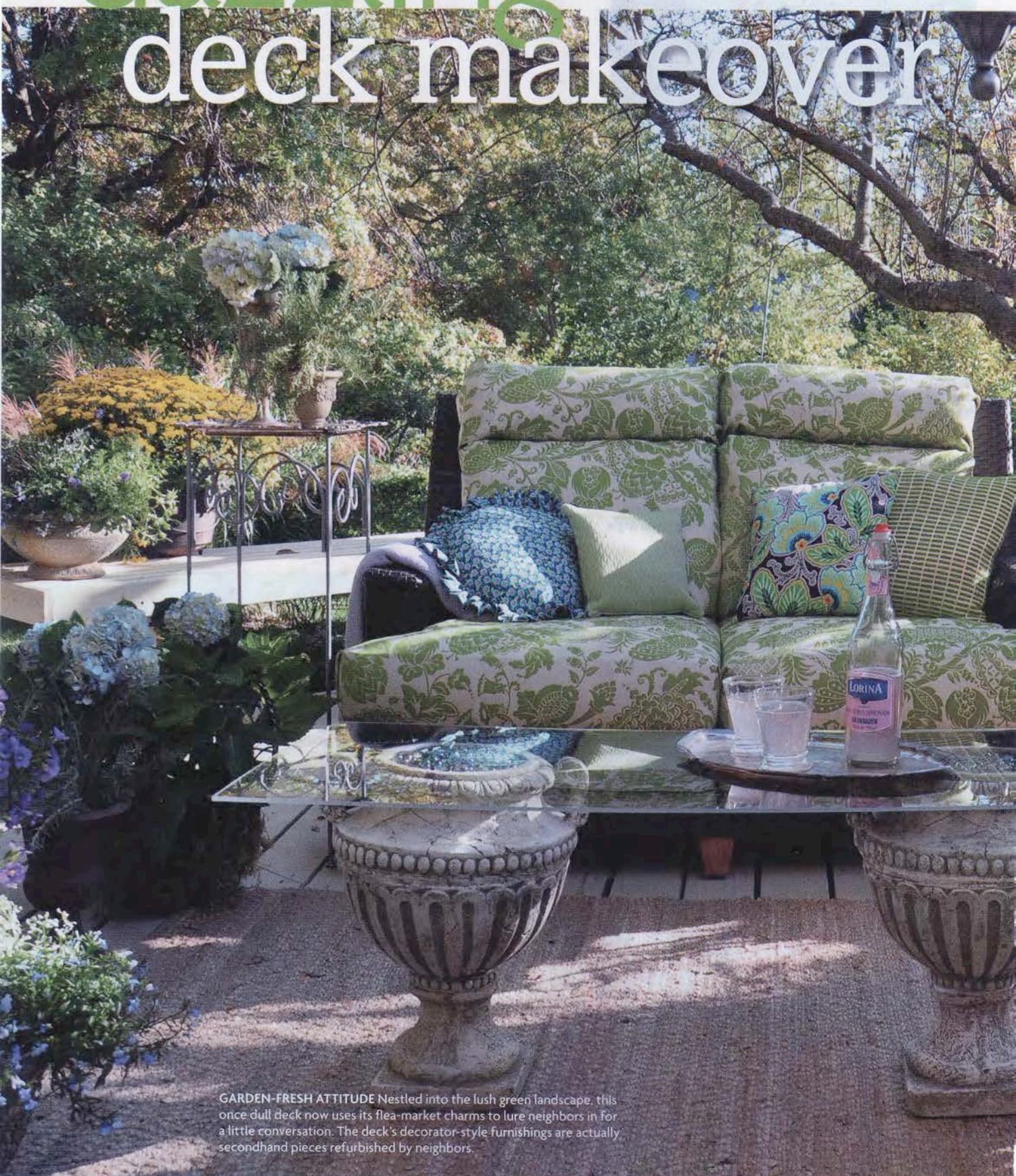


dazzling deck makeover



GARDEN-FRESH ATTITUDE Nestled into the lush green landscape, this once dull deck now uses its flea-market charms to lure neighbors in for a little conversation. The deck's decorator-style furnishings are actually secondhand pieces refurbished by neighbors.

written by Debra Steilen
photographed by Caruth Studio
produced by Debra Wittrup

With vibrant floral fabric as its design inspiration, a bare-bones deck becomes a cozy, colorful spot for neighbors to gather.

You could say this about the oh-so-ordinary deck: it offered a blank canvas for reinvention. Cedar planks had weathered to a soft gray. The adjacent ranch home added only beige siding and white trim to the scenario. Plain white patio furniture and plastic planters were serviceable, but not stylish.

Luckily, all the deck needed to spring into life was a creative group of neighbors—all gardeners—who often met in their shared green space to socialize. Here's what they did to make the most of the deck's potential.

Picked a great color scheme. Easy, breezy. The homeowner leading the charge chose a playful Amy Butler fabric to inspire a perennially chic attitude. The pattern combines stylized florals with glowing colors—kiwi-green, ivory, and plum—that she knew could be matched to flowering plants and gorgeous outdoor fabric from Chella Textiles.

Refreshed secondhand furnishings. The neighbors each donated to the project: hand-me-down furniture, orphaned accessories, and elbow grease. Together they turned the deck into a gathering spot with a fashionable personality.



BEFORE

make it TODAY

Look for sturdy trays—silver or painted metal—at flea markets and tag sales. Consider the tarnish, chips, and rust as part of their charm.

Stitched-up style. One neighbor sewed pillows from coordinating fabrics in green, blue, and plum. She also upholstered cushions for the wicker settee and metal bench in coordinating kiwi-green-and-white fabric that honors the lush landscape.

Spiffed-up surfaces. The energetic band of gardeners cleaned and restained the deck and perimeter benches, adding color to the wood while protecting it from the elements. They painted a donated metal chandelier, which was strung with crystals and hung from a tree branch for an elegant touch.

Fashioned furniture. Another neighbor donated a tarnished silver tray with ornate edging that became a tasteful tabletop resting on a painted metal stand. A third neighbor donated a pair of garden urns. Filled with packing peanuts topped by purple and green marbles, they support a glass tabletop that keeps cool drinks within reach.

Furnished for comfort. The gathering spot is defined with a neutral cotton rug, thereby making the deck feel more like a living room. The now-comfy settee and bench frame the garden-urn coffee table, creating a destination for conversation. Mismatched flea market containers hold flowering plants, and cut flowers pick up the colors in the floral prints. Tall tropical plants provide the perfect green backdrop to blend the deck with the yard and offer a modicum of privacy.

SPECIAL THANKS TO Olympic, Chella Textiles, Krylon, Westminster Fibers, and Proven Winners

FOR RESOURCES, see page 142.



BEFORE

create an outdoor room you love

Give your deck al fresco style with flea market finds that add character and set the mood.

PLAN FOR IMPERFECTIONS Carry the look you love into the backyard with secondhand furniture you can refresh with fabric or spray paint. Accept the fact those pieces will chip and peel when left out in the elements, but isn't that what flea market style is all about?

GET CREATIVE WITH ACCESSORIES: Part of the fun is using vintage items in unexpected ways. Hide the air conditioning unit behind hinged wood shutters. Turn galvanized buckets and old crates into covers for plastic planters. Build a primitive coffee table from weathered barn boards. Use old Christmas lights to add nighttime sparkle.

HANG THRIFT-STORE ARTWORK You're going for the living room look, right? Hang vintage platters from the privacy fence or on the side of your house. If your deck is protected by the roof overhang or a vine-covered pergola, go ahead and display wood-frame or etched mirrors to reflect your gorgeous garden.

SPLURGE ON AN OUTDOOR RUG Look for a pattern that will complement your vintage flea market treasures—such as a classic Greek-key border. Use the rug to define your dining/conversation area.



TRAY CHIC Tarnished silver offers a charming surface upon which to display your favorite plants: aromatic herbs or softly textured hydrangea nestled in a vintage silver trophy (*opposite top*).

PILLOW TALK Choose fresh fabrics in greens, blues, yellows, and pinks to blend the colors of landscape, plants, and petals into a botanical whole (*far left*).

WIRED FOR ACTION Turn any metal basket into a planter by first lining it with sphagnum moss. Add a layer of pebbles to help with drainage, then fill with clean potting soil. You're ready to add flowering plants in your favorite colors (*left*).

IN THE PINK Add the flavor of an old-fashioned garden party personality by serving pink lemonade from a smudged silver tray (*below left*).

GLASS ACT Colorful glass marbles offer interesting hues to amuse visitors when looking down through the coffee table's glass top. Choose colors that go with your outdoor decor (*below*).





You'll love what a comfy
deck can do for your state of mind.
Who can fret when surrounded
by fresh summery colors,
plump cushions, and
pink lemonade?



quick tip

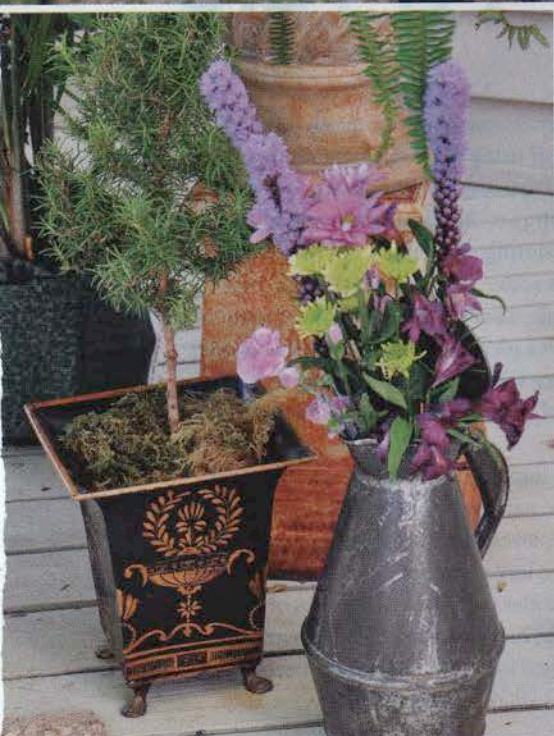
Painting metal? Spray paints offer myriad finishes such as hammered, crackle, dimensional and brushed for an instant patina of age.

BEAUTIFUL BOWER A cozy metal bench blessed with flea market patina becomes a prized perch when filled with pillows. Assembled from a sturdy glass top balanced on garden urns, the coffee table keeps refreshments handy. In the foreground, a basket of Superbells® Lavender calibrachoa pulls out the purple found in the Amy Butler pillows (*opposite*).

NO ELECTRICITY NEEDED Painted in hammered pewter, a shabby-chic chandelier adds a touch of whimsy. The candle-powered fixture dangles from a sturdy tree limb that overhangs the seating area (*left*).

SKIP THE PLASTIC POTS Use tag-sale containers to display both live plants and cut flowers. Drill holes in the bottom of planted containers and place pieces of broken clay pots beneath the dirt for drainage (*below left*).

FOCUS ON THE FABRIC Take fabric swatches with you to the nursery or garden center to pick out flowering plants such as Superbells® Miss Lilac calibrachoa, Laguna™ Sky Blue lobelia and Diamond Frost® euphorbia that complement your color palette (*below*).



Resources

Here's where to find some of the products shown on the pages of Flea Market Gardens. We cannot guarantee the availability of items or services.



MAKE IT THIS WEEKEND

Pages 8-9

Bowling balls—Val Lanes; 515-274-0493; vallanes.com.

License plates—Brass Armadillo; brassarmadillo.com.

Plants—Proven Winners; 877-865-5818; provenwinners.com.

MAKE IT TODAY

Page 15

Glass water droplet, glass marbles—Michaels; 800-642-4235; michaels.com.

LET THERE BE WHIMSY

Pages 64-65

Cast iron garden gnome—Ebay seller funspot; ebay.com.



DAZZLING DECK MAKEOVER

Pages 86-91

Deck floor in Eucalyptus solid stain, **built-in perimeter bench** in Almond solid stain—Olympic; olympic.com.

Chandelier and metal table stand in Outdoor Spaces Hammered Finish, Hammered Silver—Krylon; 800/4KRYLON; krylon.com.

Metal bench, cast iron urn, metal table, cast iron pedestal—Things on Douglas; 515-252-6250.

Large floral cushion and pillows in Polynesian Baroque Kiwi, **bench cushion** in Click Track Kiwi, **matelasse pillows** in Harlequin Matelasse Kiwi—Chella Textiles; chellatextiles.com.

Round pillow Button Flower in Navy, **Plum Floral pillows** Floral Couture in Pitch from Amy Butler's Lark Collection—Westminster Fibers; 866-907-3305; westminsterfibers.com.

Plum solid pillow, rug—Cost Plus World Market; 877-967-5362; worldmarket.com.

Table support urns, metal baskets, cut flowers—Bates Flowers and Greenhouses; 800-319-3197; batesflowers.net.

Silver trays—Vintage Chic Trading Co.; 214-819-3056; etsy.com/shop/VintageChicTradingCo.

Plants—Proven Winners; 877-865-5818; provenwinners.com.

Ferns and tropical plants, glass tabletop—The Home Depot; 800-466-3337; homedepot.com.

Moss, glass marbles—Michaels; 800-642-4235; michaels.com.

All other items not listed are salvage or flea market finds.



HANDMADE HARMONY

Pages 98-105

Wedding photos—Emily Crall Photography; emilycrall.com.

Washtub, garden urns, chandeliers—Sisters' Garden and Bloom; Sisters' Garden: 319-683-2046 Bloom: 319-683-3020; sistersgardeniowa.blogspot.com.



RECLAIMED PRAIRIE

Pages 110-117

Prairie Pedlar Gardens 1609 - 270th Street Odebolt, IA 51458; 712-668-4840; prairiepedlar.com.

Plants—Proven Winners; 877-865-5818; provenwinners.com.



POTTING POTENTIAL

Pages 118-122

Table, locker basket, baking tin, Ball jars—Brass Armadillo; brassarmadillo.com.

Gloves, garden twine, garden scissors, soil scoop, garden knife, ground staples, flower fertilizer, rooting hormone—Gardener's Supply Company; 888-833-1412; gardeners.com.

Bird seed, potting soil, seed packets, pruners, folding ruler—Lowe's; lowes.com. **Plants**—Proven Winners; 877-865-5818; provenwinners.com.

All other items not listed are salvage or flea market finds.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Pages 124-127

Egg basket, ball jars—Brass Armadillo; brassarmadillo.com.

Hemma cord set—IKEA; ikea.com.

Moss, candles—Michaels; 800-642-4235; michaels.com.