

Charleston

Style

ICONIC GARDENS
ELEGANT HOMES



ICONIC AZALEAS
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A seductive cocktail poured from equal parts gentility, beauty, and reverence for history, Charleston is the quintessential Southern city. Just look at its gardens and homes. Plants that thrive across our region

were first introduced here. (Turn the page to savor the lush gardens in “Charleston’s Colorful Gifts to the South.”)

And the city’s distinctive homes are echoed far beyond

its environs. (Step into their signature charm in “The Gift of Gracious Living,” page 74.) Join us as we explore the essence of Charleston—inside and out.



ELEGANT ENTERTAINING
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Streamlined upholstery ensures this living room is comfortable and current.



ABOVE: Local interior designer Jenny Keenan created the living room of this timeless home.

RIGHT: An antique secretary holds regional classics such as a silver julep cup and a sweetgrass basket.



A GRACIOUS LIVING ROOM

Step inside the living room of this 1830s, Federal-style home and you know instantly you're in Charleston. "This city has such specific architectural characteristics, no matter what the exact style of each home," says interior designer Jenny Keenan, who created the look shown here. Rooms are defined by symmetrical design, small size, a fireplace with a carved mantel, cornices with elaborate details, large windows, and well-worn heart-pine floors. "I love the imperfections," she says. "Many homes are so old and settled that a room often slants to one side."

When it comes to the decorating, Jenny says it's all in the mix. Many of the original Charleston settlers came from England and, later, other parts of Europe. They imported furnishings or had local craftsmen create new pieces with details from several items. "Rooms in Charleston have a personal, collected look that is rich with layers of history," she says. "If you don't include traditional pieces, such as a secretary, you're cheating all the people who lived in your home before you." She used antiques to anchor this room and then mixed in modern touches with bold fabrics, mid-century lighting, and sculptural white vases.

Along with antique furniture, hand-painted wallpaper is a unique Charleston tradition. "You can find beautiful wallcoverings as far back as you can date," Jenny says. "Today's twist is to pick a classic pattern in a fresh color."

This living room embraces elegance mixed with comfort. "Comfortable and formal can go together," says Jenny. Here she pairs silk curtains and a gilded mirror above the mantel with simple upholstery and lots of pillows for a living room that truly invites living. "Charleston style is really a melting pot with lots of different influences," says Jenny. "Rooms reflect the time and place where we are."