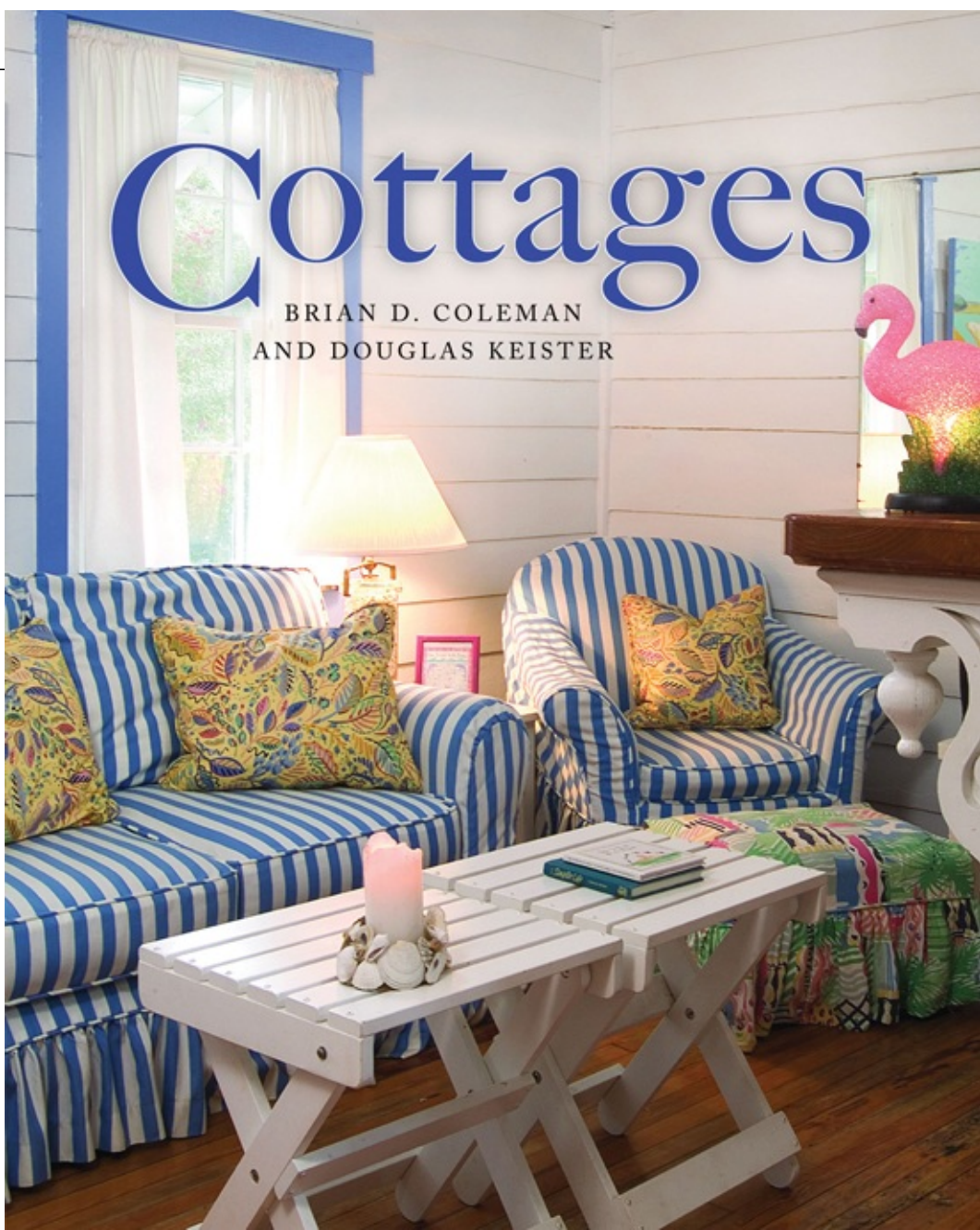


Cottages

BRIAN D. COLEMAN
AND DOUGLAS KEISTER



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Brian D. Coleman and Douglas Keister



GIBBS SMITH

TO ENRICH AND INSPIRE HUMANKIND

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Introduction

Just what is a cottage? Characterized as a small, romantic dwelling, a cottage can range from a simple restored fishing shack overlooking cattails on a riverbank to a colorful casita surrounded by cacti in a sunny southern Californian suburb. Casual, comfortable, and inviting, cottage interiors should not be too serious. They are a place to relax and unwind from the stress and pressures of modern life, an escape to a slower time and pace where simple pleasures can be appreciated.

Cottages gives ideas and inspiration from across North America for cottage-lovers of all persuasions. We take you to the picturesque Catskill Mountains in upstate New York, where rustic, nineteenth-century cottages perch on mountain slopes in charming communities with names like "Twilight." With interior staircases of golden birch logs, their bark still intact, and diamond-paned windows overlooking the treetops, these simple, mountain retreats are hard to resist. Furnished with warm, colorful Turkish rugs and pillows and simple tag-sale sofas and chairs, these snug cocoons are the perfect places to spend a long weekend just sipping hot chocolate and savoring the leafy tranquility of the mountaintop.

While many are rustic, cottages can certainly be urban as well—take, for example, a narrow aluminum and corrugated steel building that for all outward appearances is a small warehouse in an industrial area of Victoria, British Columbia. Once inside, you realize this is a futuristic creation—a true cottage of the twenty-first century, complete with furniture that slides away into the floor with the flick of a switch and an underground swimming pool.

The seashore is traditionally a favorite spot for cottages, and we visit a beautiful seaside community: sunny Tybee Island off the coast of southern Georgia. Full of small homes and diminutive guesthouses, many just plain wooden shacks built in the early twentieth century for summer and weekend holidays, Tybee Island today is a cottage lover's delight, thanks in a large part to designer and preservationist Jane Coslick. Over the past decade, Jane has restored dozens of these simple buildings, infusing them with new life and giving them a fresh, laid-back charm. Painted with bright, cheerful colors such as rain-slicker yellow and seafoam green and furnished in a casual country chic, these cottages invite you to take a deep breath, kick off your shoes, and just relax.

The appeal of cottages began for many in the 1920s with the resurgence of interest in historic architecture. Spanish Revival cottages in particular were appealing to homeowners, especially in California, where the climate and geography mirrors that of Spain. We visit a lovingly restored example in San Diego, whose red tile roof, rough plaster walls, and original wrought iron light fixtures evoke a simple and devout Franciscan monastery. Designed and built as a model home in 1926 by Richard S. Requa, a popular architect of the period, this cottage championed the simplicity of the sun-washed white stucco farmhouses of Spain.

Tom Mix was a popular star of the silent screen who spared no expense when he built a Spanish Revival cottage for his mistress in 1926 (even though she later left him to marry Hopalong Cassidy). Beautifully restored in the 1990s, the cottage features hand-stenciled ceilings, handsome Malibu tile fireplaces, and rooms painted in a colorful Mexican palette of bright blues, reds, and oranges. Furnished with period Mission, Spanish Revival, and Craftsman pieces, the cottage is at once colorful, comfortable, and inviting.

We hope that *Cottages* will help you to create a cottage of your own. Remember, a cottage can be

anywhere—perched among trees on a mountaintop, nestled among the sand dunes on a sunny, windswept island, or just tucked away on a pleasant suburban lane. After all, it's really only a state of mind—a special spot to unwind and reenergize so that we can face life's challenges with renewed vim and vigor.



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