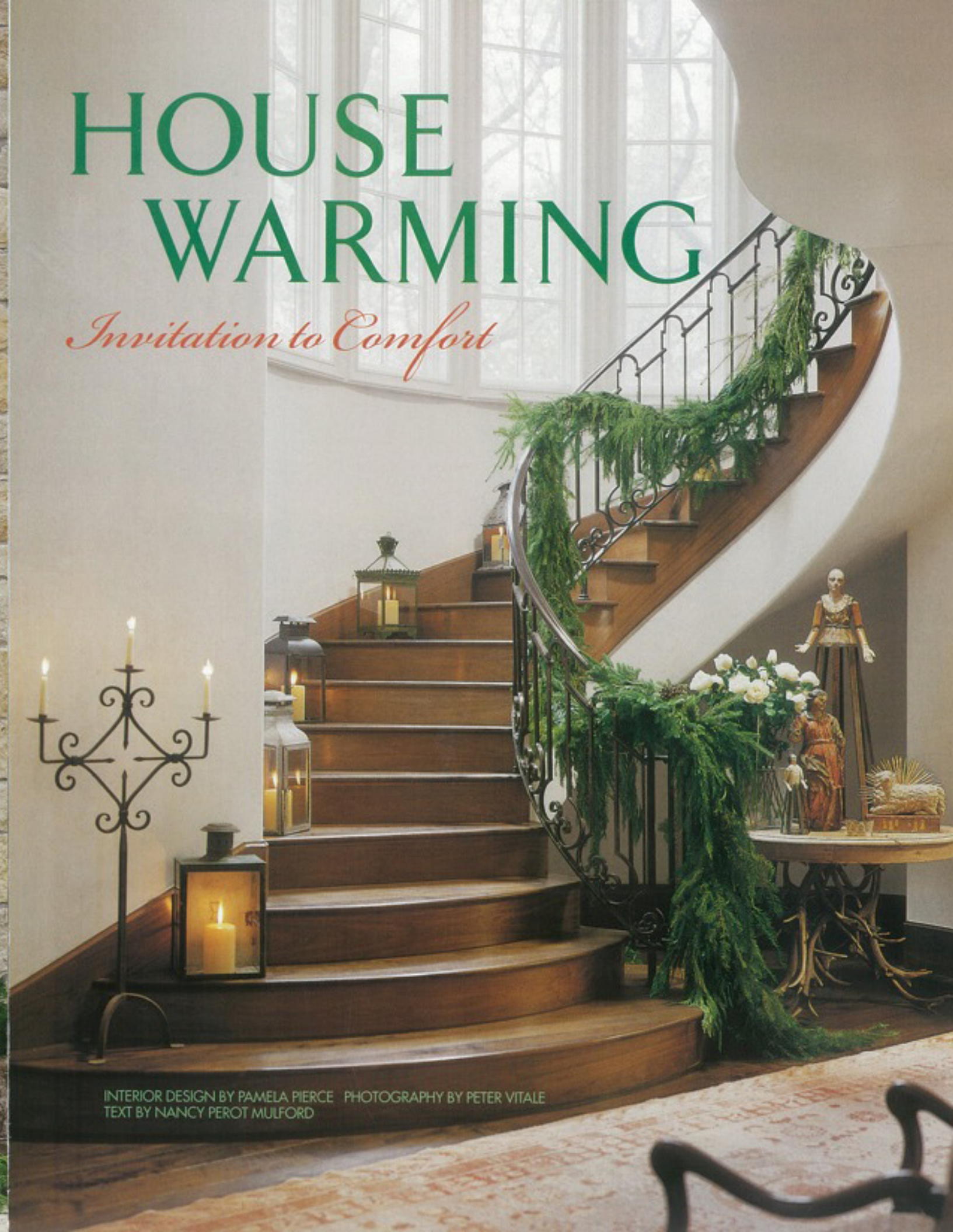




HOUSE WARMING

Invitation to Comfort



INTERIOR DESIGN BY PAMELA PIERCE PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER VITALE
TEXT BY NANCY PEROT MULFORD





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KELLIE HEPPER LAUGHS WHEN SHE RECALLS LAST CHRISTMAS, THE FIRST YULETIDE SEASON FOR HER FAMILY IN THEIR NEW HOME IN HOUSTON

She and husband Jeff waved goodbye to the last of the construction crews just minutes before greeting 175 guests coming in the door for his company holiday party. A week later, the house filled again, for a gathering of 150 friends. That was soon followed by the arrival of their daughter's Girl Scout troop, who took over the kitchen and baked and decorated holiday cookies. "There was flour everywhere," Kellie says. "That round of parties warmed up the house in a hurry."

In anticipation of such socializing, the Heppers knew even before they broke ground on the 11,000-square-foot, two-story French-style house that they wanted it "to feel like it had been here forever." Kellie, an art history major in college and a passionate antiques buyer, had already started assembling a collection of vintage European tiles, gates and doors, primarily from France, that she planned to work into the interiors and endow the new construction with an old-world ambiance.

A shop owner suggested, "You really need to call interior designer Pam Pierce. No one

OPENING PAGES: In Houston, stone entry surround, 18th c. Walnut 18th-c. doors and French 19th-c. gas lanterns. Khotan rug, 1880s. Antique French and Italian candelabrum and lanterns on staircase. PRECEDING PAGES: An 18th-c. limestone fireplace surround flanked by 17th-c. wooden angels. Venetian 18th-c. canapé and French 19th-c. wing chair both in Fortuny wool. Custom bench in wool. Six sepia engravings above Italian console, c. 1750. Drapes in Rose Tarlow-Melrose House linen. Oushak rug, c. 1880. LEFT: Italian 17th-c. door surround with mirrored panes. French 18th-c. fauteuil in linen. Child's chair. Italian 17th-c. sconces.

*"This is furniture with integrity.
It's not a copy of anything."*



ABOVE: A 19th-c. carving of shepherd on Portuguese table, c. 1720. Italian 17th-c. drawing. OPPOSITE AND FOLLOWING PAGES: Louis XVI trumeaux over French buffet; Swedish side chair in antique linen. Italian 18th-c. lyre table made of old elements. Tuscan 17th-c. chairs in Great Plains wool. Italian 19th-c. bibliothèque with Delft and French faience. Italian painting, c. 1830. Swedish sofa, c. 1740. Florio Collection embroidered linen curtains. Italian 18th-c. wood chandelier. Walnut floor.





"I enjoy putting things together in unexpected ways so



that every home has its own personality."

understands how to use old product better than Pam." Kellie called the Houston-based designer. "Pam and I clicked from the moment we met. She understood what I was after."

Says the designer, "In Kellie's home, her antique tiles and doors set the tone because they are very rustic. We did the formal areas with Fortuny fabrics and seventeenth- and eighteenth-century furnishings. In the less formal areas, the pieces are a little more rustic, a little more primitive. And there's a little more peeling paint, a few more cracks in the furniture. I tell Kellie, 'You paid extra for those cracks!' There's a wonderful charm to old pieces. They make the home feel warm and inviting."

She adds, "I offset the seriousness of the antiques by using slipcovers and gathered skirts to take things down a level. It brings a casualness in. The living room is all upholstered except for the skirted benches under a pair of Italian antique carved wooden angels."

The designer and Kellie chose antique cathedral stone for the kitchen and master bath along with walnut flooring elsewhere, giving the home a mellow solidity. For the kitchen cabinetry and butler's pantry, they used reclaimed pine from an old cheese factory in Sweden; rings from wheels of cheese are still visible in the patina of the wood. They suspended antique French-made doors from iron sliders to disguise the entertainment center in the family room.

"We shopped in Houston, Dallas and Paris and agreed on absolutely everything," Pam says. "Kellie has been involved in all aspects of this house, and it really reflects her beautiful taste. The home has an ease and sophistication that make everyone feel welcome." □

In family room, custom sofa and chairs slipcovered in Gretchen Bellinger velvet. Custom bench slipcovered in Rogers & Goffigon camel hair. Pair of 18th-c. terra-cotta baskets on French limestone mantel. English barley-twist chairs. Louis XVI canapé in Scalamandré check. Oval 19th-c. wine table. French 19th-c. round garden table with marble top. Curtains in Old World Weavers toile. Piedmontese 18th-c. table behind sofa. Far right, painted panels above antique French doors that hide entertainment center. Antique Oushak rug.







PRECEDING PAGES: Pair of antique doors on sliders uses custom barn hardware. Framed herbs on wall. Biot jars from France. Parefeuille flooring. In breakfast room, antique walnut farm table with rush-seat armchairs, c.1800, in Rogers & Goffigon linen. A 19th-c. still life above 18th-c. French limestone mantel. Custom lounge chairs slipcovered in Rogers & Goffigon camel hair. Curtains in Old World Weavers toile. ABOVE: Custom cabinets in butler's pantry in reclaimed Swedish pine with 16th-c. French terra-cotta tiles as countertop. Iron 18th-c. candelabra, 19th-c. sconces and 18th-c. cherubs. OPPOSITE: One piece of 4-inch-thick limestone with butcher block inset atop island. Wolf range. French 19th-c. shop sign. Antique iron chandelier. Stools in Jane Shelton check. Curtains in Old World Weavers toile. Antique ceiling beams. All antique mantels and stone flooring in house from Chateau Domingue.

Cabinetry made out of antique reclaimed pine from Chateau Domingue.





ABOVE: Bed linens in Cowtan & Tout linen and Rogers & Goffigon wool. Bas argenté 17th-c. panel over bed. Nancy Corzine velvet on stool and antique wing chair. French 19th-c. chandelier. Drapes and 18th-c. Gustavian bench in Rose Tarlow-Melrose House linen. Antique Japanese rug on seagrass carpet. BELOW: Antique limestone mantel. Iron 19th-c. garden table. Régence carved overdoor on mirror. Gustavian daybed in Bergamo linen. Curtains in Rogers & Goffigon linen. Waterworks tub and faucets. OPPOSITE: In master sitting area, antique wing chair and custom chair in Nancy Corzine velvet. Pillows in Rogers & Goffigon cashmere. French mirror and limestone mantel, both 19th c. Bookcases adapted from antique pine doors.



*"To offset the seriousness of the antiques
by using slipcovers and gathered skirts...."*

