

# AT HOME™

IN MEMPHIS

## HISTORIC CENTRAL GARDENS

27th Annual  
Home Tour

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Look at  
Fall Fashions

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# CENTRAL GARDENS



## 27th Annual Home and Garden Tour

All historic neighborhoods, as they evolve, naturally develop their own traditions. This year, Midtown's Central Gardens will host its 27th annual home and garden tour. Five houses—two on Kimbrough Place and three on Vance Avenue—will open their gates and doors to visitors, showcasing the homes' architecture, interior decorating, landscaping and updates. Three of those very different houses, built between 1908 and 1935, are featured on the following pages. From John Mummert's elegantly decorated 1,400-square-foot cottage; to Nora and Dan Conaway's ahead-of-its-time home, built by John Kimbrough and updated by Charles Shipp; to Patti and Tom Marsh's chateau-style dwelling, designed for and by the legendary Herbert M. Burnham, these homes all share a spirit of pride in their community and longevity.

# GREAT Bones

Photography: WOODY WOODLIFF

Text: ANNA BOLTON



## Cosmetic updates bring a home's interior into line with its European architecture



(above) The hearth room's focal point, a gigantic fireplace measuring nearly 10 feet wide and more than six feet tall, sports a hand-hewn cypress mantel, two bread ovens and a new porcelain tile surround. Custom built-in cabinetry to the right houses the Marshes' televisions and contains a platform that swings out for easier viewing. (facing page) Terrazzo marble floors, authentic stucco walls and heavy wooden ceiling beams lend old-world flair to the hearth room.

Tom and Patti Marsh were more than 5,000 miles from Memphis as they traveled around Italy earlier this year, but in nearly every place they visited, they encountered bits and pieces of home. "We saw a lot of things during that trip that reminded us of our house," says Patti. "The beams and the fireplaces in Tuscany, and the stone pediments—we saw so many of those in Rome."

Characterized by a steeply pitched terra-cotta roof and large, square chimney, the Marshes' chateau-style home was built by architect Herbert M. Burnham as his own residence after he studied architecture in France. J. Frazer Smith collaborated with Burnham on the Central Gardens home, and the two men incorporated a variety of European accents, including a semi-elliptical arched pediment over the exterior entry, much like the ones Tom and Patti had spotted time after time in Rome.

[below] Pati chose exterior shutters over traditional window treatments and brought in a weathered white screen reminiscent of a gate to give one of three bedrooms a gardenlike atmosphere. The rug is an antique Oushak. Multiple windows offer views of the landscaped backyard and a new Italian-style swimming pool, and guests can step out onto a private deck upstairs for a closer look. (facing page, top) A stately four-poster bed and armoire sporting a carved-leaf motif, as well as an antique Oushak rug, are balanced by the master bedroom's airy neutral walls and a vibrant painting by Memphis artist Paul Edelstein. (bottom) A leather loveseat, antique desk and Tom's collection of maps and globes give the study a handsome, worldly aura.





"We saw a lot of things during that trip [to Rome] that reminded us of our house." —Patti Marsh



When the Marshes purchased the Herbert M. Burnham House in 1998, the interior looked "fairly dated," says designer Jackie Glisson, recruited by the couple to complete a host of cosmetic changes. "It had probably been decorated in the mid to late eighties, so there were your typical pinks, roses, mauves and beige," he says. Still, explains Glisson, "the home has great bones." Preferring to describe the 3,000-square-foot, three-bedroom home as Mediterranean, the designer cites its European-style elements, such as the kitchen's pine floor, dining room's French doors, and hearth room's exposed beams as his inspiration for the final design: a warm, traditional combination of antiques, artwork and faux finishes embracing old-world elements instead of competing with or trying to disguise them.

The hearth room, thought to have once been a meeting place for former Memphis mayor "Boss" Crump and his cronies, is a fine example of Glisson's work and possibly the most handsome space in the house. Heavy stained ceiling beams lead the eye slowly to the room's focal point, a massive fireplace, measuring nearly 10 feet wide and more than six feet tall, with an arched, hand-hewn cypress mantel and two iron-doored bread ovens. Because the Marshes opted to replace the wood-burning interior with gas logs, an existing wood storage opening was unnecessary, so Glisson filled the



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gap with a new tile surround. "One of my favorite accent colors is cobalt blue, and we were able to bring that in with the porcelain tiles, which are blue with a little bit of bronze metallic," he says. Artisan Jay Hester, who specializes in decorative painting, provided additional color by coating the hearth room's walls with an earthy, golden glaze. "The stucco walls were there before, but you really didn't notice them because they were just a plain color," Hester says. "Now their texture is much more visible, and the color gives the room a warm, homey feeling."

Hester also designed and produced a faux limestone finish that begins in the foyer and travels up the handcrafted ornamental-iron banister to the second floor. "You could tell that at one time, the house had a stone wall there—you can see the stones' impressions a bit—so we decided to bring that back," says Hester, who used four different colors atop the existing stone texturing to create the new look.

Completed five years ago, the cosmetic changes made to the Herbert M. Burnham House evoke the European countryside, and the interior of the house now truly corresponds with the exterior. "It was probably one of the best palettes I've ever had to work on because it's so architecturally interesting," says Glisson. "I have never seen anything like it, before or since." ■