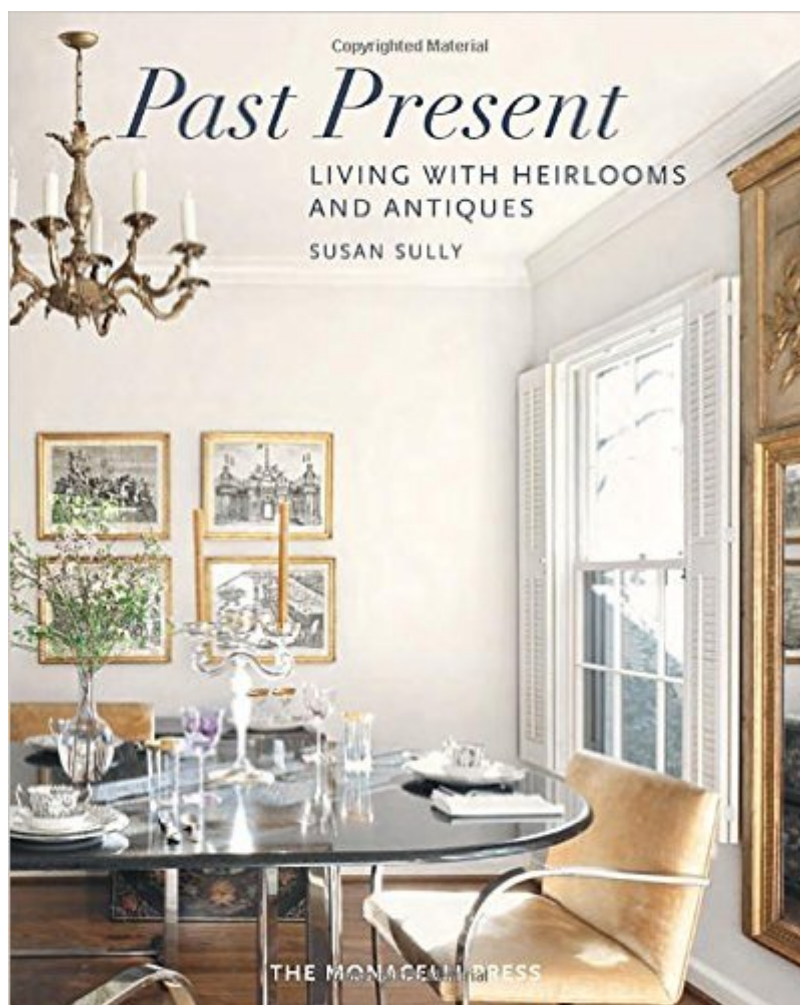


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Past Present: Living With Heirlooms And Antiques



Synopsis

Antiques add the touch of time and the human hand. Every dented baby cup, mended tablecloth, perfectly or imperfectly preserved piece of silver or porcelain tells a story that began long ago and hasn't ended yet. There are no rules about living with them, except to take what's old and keep it young by making it part of daily life. The past meets the present in perfect style in this guide to incorporating heirlooms and antiques into stylish and contemporary contexts. Featuring interiors decorated by collectors, antiques dealers, and well-known design professionals, author Susan Sully demonstrates ways to create tradition-inspired interiors that aren't fussy or stiff and breathe new life into old things by changing finishes and upholstery or combining objects in surprising juxtapositions. Sully also explains how to display collections creatively, to set inviting tables, arrange interesting tabletop compositions, and successfully mix and match objects from varied styles, periods, and degrees of formality. Ranging from a converted 1915 fire station to a French neoclassical-style mansion, the selected homes reveal the beauty and relevance of antiques in every setting, from casual to elegant, rustic to refined.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The author categorizes people as either collector, curator or inheritor and I suppose that method of organization is as valid as any. But, the true value of the book may be lost in the sometimes distracting clutter of viewing other people's things and their various decorating styles. The how or why the items are in their possession is only of passing interest, but displaying possessions

in an eye-pleasing way, while not brain surgery, still can befuddle otherwise competent people. The book is about ideas, but sometimes it can be difficult to see past a style or the items being grouped if these specifics hold no appeal or interest. If not a collector of books, clocks, porcelain figures or plates, etc. or with a post-modern or industrial style, it may be a struggle to relate to the ideas presented in the book. This is a common problem and why real estate agents stage houses to create an inoffensive generic look, and dread showing empty homes. Everyone cannot see past the current owner's cow salt and pepper shaker collection and envision themselves in the space. And, if empty, a blank slate can appear just as daunting with questions like where to position a couch far from obvious. So, whether the book is enjoyable and useful will depend upon, not necessarily on the reader's decorating style or specific collections, but rather expectations about what the book can do for them. It is not a step-by-step guide but rather a starting point for engaging the imagination. It excels at reflecting how objects we love can be incorporated into the space we inhabit instead of being boxed away. I have few inherited pieces, my main issues revolve around books and unplanned collections -- like the copper bowls that I admire and regularly find estate and garage sales. I saw a magazine photograph of a wall of plates and realized that instead of keeping my growing collection of bowls hidden in a kitchen cabinet where they were not being enjoyed, they could be displayed in a similar fashion. Their half-sphere shape, unifying color and the variety of sizes added an unexpected architectural element to the space. So, the result looks quite different than the quaint plates in the magazine, but that picture served as the genesis of the idea. This book operates in a similar way, igniting creativity, but if seeking a blueprint to follow, the book may disappoint. It is all about expectations. This sturdy hardback book is constructed with a good weight glossy paper and attractive dust jacket. The photography and book design are smartly stark. There are already so many images saturating the pictures themselves, that keeping the page layout simple is wise. Every time I pick up the book and page through it I see something else. There is too much contained within the pages to absorb it all in one sitting, indicative of its value as an on-going resource.

4 1/2 stars A lot of love and care went into this book. Looking through the pages can be an inspiration especially if you have a large house. I liked how the author combined objects although many of them displayed looked more 'look but don't touch' and not really functional. I had hoped for more ideas for small areas and tiny knick knacks that people generally collect. Suggestion for smaller displays. Although I think many people will find generalizations from the combinations the author has pulled together and how she made them work. By color, shape or patterns. This book is

more of a joy to explore- the perfect coffee table book. Most people won't have as many interesting(or expensive) items to display let alone the variety to mix and match. And even with the author's keen eye some collections looked a bit jumbled and cluttered looking. Overall, this is a gorgeously lush book. It would be a nice gift for a new homeowner, interior designer, real estate agent (staging a home) or someone who has a lot of beautiful items but needs a little extra help to make it cohesive. At the very least it can be appreciated for its beauty.

The focus of this book is on people who have family heirlooms and collections they made while living their own lives, and showing how they display their pieces ranging from small objects to books to furniture and artwork. This book tells a bit about the owners of homes including the type of house they live in and how their collections don't always necessarily match exactly with the house's architecture and/or the surrounding land, and how they made it work. The photos are of the interiors of the home only (I longed to see the yards and exterior of the home). The photography is fantastic and inspiring. The pages are thick and at about an inch thick it could serve as a coffee table book. The book is divided into five parts: Antique Meets Modern, Living Color, A Personal Eye, Country Life, and The Collected House. Each part has four sections which are a story about one home photos of that home and its design and collections. It is inevitable when looking at a book on home decor that a reader may think, "That's not my style" or "I can't afford that". This is not a book intended to dictate that you copy this or that. The author knows and understands that people are unique and that collectors surround themselves with that appeals uniquely to them, and the reader should know that too. In reading this I found it intriguing to see what appeals to some and how they displayed and decorated their homes so as to have their prized possessions out and in view instead of packed in boxes and stored away. I was inspired by this book and surprised by some of what I saw, such as wall to wall built in bookcases in a kitchen and I was delighted to see books (lots of books!) throughout the book. The homes featured seem to be childless as no evidence of children's rooms or toys or anything else child related was shown and some of the displays would be at risk if children or clumsy teens were present. Since my kids are older teens now and the empty nest is not far off this book got me thinking about some changes that are ready to be made as we shift from a durable childsafe home to one that is more reflective of the adult couple who owns and occupies it. I want to dig through my boxes of inherited items and collected antiques to rediscover them. I want to free my antique books from their plastic totes in my closets and find a way to have everything out to be admired and enjoyed. My story and my life are different than the people featured in the book and that's okay. I rate this 5 stars = I Love It.

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