



ARRIVING HOME

FARMER

\$45.00 U.S.

ISBN-13: 978-1-4236-5413-1
54500



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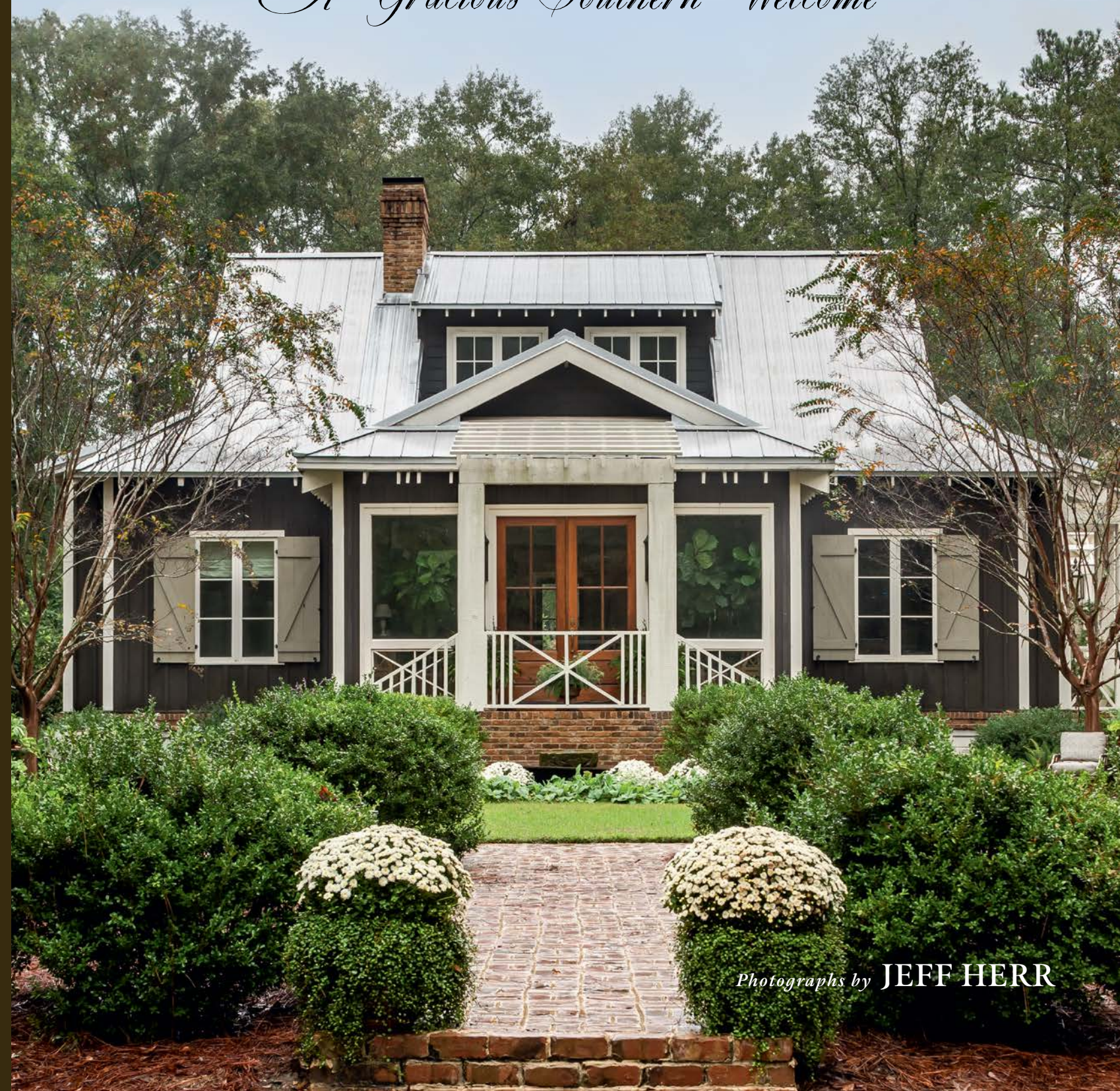


JAMES T. FARMER III

Foreword by DEBORAH ROBERTS

ARRIVING HOME

A Gracious Southern Welcome



Photographs by JEFF HERR



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INTRODUCTION

*... And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.*

—ROBERT ROBINSON, FROM *COME THOU, FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING*, CA 1758

These lyrics, found in the hymn “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing,” ring ever so true. Is there a better feeling than arriving home? Whether a long journey sets us homeward, or perhaps returning from a day’s work, an intangible feeling evokes and, in turn, engages our senses as the approach toward home becomes illuminated by the tangible.

We see our home and visually note the aesthetics and pleasantries of the colors and materials; we feel the doorknob in our palm, warmed by the sun or chilled by the cold; we smell the comforts of fresh laundry or supper on the stove, followed by the taste of said supper. We hear the door creak open and shut softly and have a peace that only arriving home affords.

In the Southern pantheon of homes, there is a gracious plenty of styles, genres and sizes shaping the heritage of our region into a notable neck of the woods of enough merit that our cities and towns are very specific destinations for travelers. People journey to see our homes past and present, eat our food and stroll through our gardens. As tourists, house hunters, astute architectural scholars and history buffs, their insight and curiosity take them to towns like Eufaula, Alabama, for “The Pilgrimage,” a tour of homes and *raison d’être* for towns

like Eufaula, rich in architectural specimens. Savannah, Charleston, St. Francisville, Beaufort and Beaufort (pronounced differently), Thomasville, Madison, Fairhope and Point Clear, Baton Rouge and Shreveport, and the neighborhoods within larger towns and cities too, all represent pearls strung on a southerly strand.

In turn, we Southerners are a “house proud” people. We devote generations of time and dedicate inheritances and annual income to our homes and gardens, and we open them for weddings, parties, family gatherings and community events. It is not a brash type of pride, but a wholesome sense of duty to share and include our friends and family for life’s events in an intimate setting—a true reflection of our hospitality. We set the tone for arriving home not only for ourselves but for our people. I refer to our hallmark sense of hospitality and style as “unapologetic.” We confidently mix heirlooms with contemporary art, set our tables with generations of silver and store-bought finds, serve garden vegetables on fine china, and pluck whatever is blooming in the yard to arrange in julep cups. As college students we wear our Sunday best to football games. As Southerners, our style does not warrant an apology for blending the old with the new, the



A LAKESIDE RETREAT

For clients looking for a nearby weekend getaway from Atlanta, Lake Oconee is the perfect distance. These clients bestowed one of the highest honors a client can give: entrusting their designer with not only their primary home but their second home as well. In these longstanding working relationships, personality, collections, sentiments and style all merge. At the helm with his wonderful architectural plans was Greg Busch. Rhett Bonner and his construction team took Greg's vision and brought it to life, allowing our designs to further develop and for us to confidently furnish the project.

Set among hardwoods and pines, the house is nestled on a quiet shore of the lake, with expansive views of the water. The home had been enjoyed by the family and friends for years, but the incredible view was not truly taken advantage of, nor the floor plan suited for a growing family with grandchildren and cousins being added. Greg took the shell of the house and

A fabulous view of the water from the living room was gained when the back of the house was opened up. An Elizabeth Eakins plaid rug anchors this room and dining room too, which is open to the living room. Mixed upholstery—plaids, velvet and leather—will all wear with time and keep the sitting room comfortable.

opened the back to create a masterful opportunity to take in the water with steel and glass floor-to-ceiling windows. Decking became porches, and more interior square footage and a more adequate flow lent to a very desirable floor plan. With the topography sloping toward the lake, the upper floor boasts the master suite and main living and dining rooms and kitchen, while the terrace level has room to host several families. Whether it's only a couple of folks or twenty, the house lends well to week-ends spent here, Fourth of July parties and holidays too.

A large entryway, which used to have a choppy layout of foyer, stairwell and reading area, is now a welcoming entry and serves as an additional dining space for large parties.

By pushing out the living area into previous deck space, the house and lake become better acquainted. Sofas and chairs are centered on the fireplace, and nearly all take in the view through the spectacular windows. White horizontal paneling clads the walls and is repeated on the ceiling, letting the reclaimed beams' patina stand out.

The dining room, with a breathtaking view to the porch and on to the lake, can seat a crowd at the Italian monastery table. A woven raffia covers the walls, and the ceiling wears a faint icy blue, echoing the Southern tradition of porch ceilings being painted blue.

The new and improved kitchen is an expanded galley style that works beautifully for serving a crowd. Cherry butcher block is the countertop material, while a mix of brass and brushed nickel hardware, lighting and plumbing fixtures creates a nice mix. A vertical beaded paneled wall treatment, Shaker-style paneled cabinets and efficient millwork shores up the simple but noteworthy architecture of the space.

For the master bedroom and adjoining study, a soothing sage green is applied to the vertical, V-groove paneling. Complementary khaki, French blue and white further keep the palette refreshing.

A completely refurbished and rearranged master bath now provides a luxurious element to the master suite. Custom cabinetry serves as vanities, and the blue buffalo check harkens back to the bedroom. Oil paintings of the Dutch Low Country and an antique secretary bring in the antique elements every room needs—even a newly remodeled bathroom.

A chalky white Italian credenza is layered with pottery lamps, creamware, stacked oils and antique fish prints. The textures and layers of whites, creams, chalk and ochre makes for a soothing vignette.





ABOVE: We carried the raffia and creamy tones of the foyer into the living room with antiques and artwork, such as this wall anchored by the white Italian credenza. Charlie West pottery lamps sport Bunny Williams lampshades.

RIGHT: In the entryway, an antique French cherry oval table occupies the center of the room, serving as a "roundabout" of sorts, directing guests to different parts of the house. Antique chests in pine and bleached oak, antique landscapes and a new Chippendale-style railing further fill the space, which is wrapped in a tone-on-tone raffia grass cloth. The new door and its cheery color are complemented by the antique Oushak rug.





LEFT: The living room opens off the entryway and has seating arrangements that entice good old-fashioned conversation. Pottery, artwork and leather-bound books fill the built-in shelves.

ABOVE: A classic brick fireplace, antiques and a chalky Italian credenza add patinas to the room.





PREVIOUS OVERLEAF AND OPPOSITE: In the dining room, a bold pattern of lotuses and lily pads is complemented with a green plaid on the chairs and lampshades. The handmade iron light fixture was inspired by marsh grasses.

ABOVE: The sideboard is an antique French enfilade with a wonderful verdigris patina.



ABOVE: Linen white cabinetry in the kitchen includes open shelving, where displays of majolica and pottery add blended color.

RIGHT: An antique French draper's table serves as the kitchen island. Tribal runners ground the space.





ABOVE AND OPPOSITE: For the master bedroom, a soothing sage green is applied to the vertical, V-groove paneling. Complementary khaki, French blue and white further keep the palette refreshing. A leopard-print fabric emboldens the bamboo stool, which serves a cheery role holding bedtime reading selections.





OPPOSITE: A custom vanity brings luxury to the master bath, while symmetrical placement of accessories balances the space on both sides of the oval window.

ABOVE LEFT: A tone-on-tone British wallpaper from Lewis and Wood softly complements the marble field tile and border. The bleached-finished secretary with a fretwork façade stores bath salts, towels and an assortment of objet d'art.

ABOVE RIGHT: A soaker tub provides a place of respite after a long day on the lake. Oil paintings and a chandelier add to the feeling of luxury.





LEFT: The lower terrace level of the home has a large living area for watching sports or movies or playing games.

ABOVE: Additional bedrooms provide a warm and cozy space for family and friends.





PREVIOUS OVERLEAF AND ABOVE: The lower terrace proper is a combination of areas suited for napping, conversation and outdoor dining. White wicker, outdoor fabrics in fun patterns, rattan and potted plants make this the perfect destination. A hybrid of indoors and out, this deeply shaded porch serves as the midway point between the house and lake.

OPPOSITE: A dining porch complete with a grill and large table and chairs becomes a favorite perch to dine alfresco and take in the view. Mixes of wicker, rattan, wood and metal can be seen. The ceiling is a pickled cypress and the floor is "porch blue," in a fun flip-flop of Southern style.





SOHO FARMHOUSE

In New York City, “SoHo” and “NoHo” refer to southern and northern placement of Houston Street. In my county of the same name as the street, we refer to the southern and northern ends of the county as “SoHo” and “NoHo”—tongue in cheek, of course. And for the record, it is “House-ton” here as well as in the Big Apple.

For clients just north of Atlanta, the idea of a farmhouse and weekend getaway in “SoHo” was appealing. Here again, I’m referring to my home county in Georgia. Hunting, fishing and family gatherings set amidst longleaf pines, live oaks and pecan orchards became a reality as they built their lodge and began spending more time in this bucolic locale. My firm was tapped to help design and furnish this home, with respect to the history of the land and Southern hunting traditions but comfortable for everyday

A statement wall of brown-and-white English transferware is arranged with Black Forest mounts and pottery lamps and supported by a lowboy console. Views into the living room and dining room can be seen from the foyer.

use, wear and tear. Pine paneling, a mural-clad dining room, wool plaids, leather and English antiques have stood the test of time for Southern hunting farms, and I channeled that tradition for this project.

The foyer is a nod to the Fall Line—a geographic anomaly in our region, a watershed diverting rivers to the Gulf or Atlantic, respectively. Here palmettos begin to skirt pine trees and Spanish moss starts to drape the oaks. Palmetto and ferns are seen on the grass cloth in the foyer, which is finished with a pine-paneled ceiling, English brandy boards and hunt paintings. To correlate with the living room and dining room seen from here, I used handsome neutral hues of tobacco, raffia and mahogany.

The living room is divided up into two main seating areas and adjoins an additional pine-paneled parlor. I told my clients that I wanted this room to be dressed in “khakis and white shirt—suitable dress for any occasion but easily dressed up with a blazer and tie or relaxed with loafers.” White horizontal paneling above the honey-toned pine wainscoting allows the artwork and accessories to shine. The pine woodwork is carried throughout the room and into the parlor too—adding continuity and handsome architecture reminiscent of South Georgia plantations. I love using complementary colors in varying degrees, such as deep orange and celadon green as opposed to primary red and green. It gives that sense of *je ne sais quois* to a room’s palette.

For the parlor adjoining the living room, the walls are fully paneled in pine, as is the ceiling. With this

warm backdrop, fabrics and furniture in shades of jade and forest green mix with darker wood antiques.

In the kitchen, I wanted to invoke the pine woodlands seen just beyond the lake. Pine needle-green cabinets and the knotty pine island mimic the woodwork in other rooms. The breakfast area includes an antique wood banquette that is sometimes called into service.

The dining room was my opportunity to pay homage to muraled dining rooms seen in England and reinterpreted in American colonies. Southern hunting plantations took inspiration from British hunting lodges and the result is a hybrid of both genres. Scenic papers give these rooms a story to tell. Formulaic furniture placements are noted, and the walls begin to inject personality and pizzazz. For the seating, a set of “sheep bone,” or “mutton leg,” chairs are a weightier choice compared to, traditional dining chairs. A couple other complementary textures of note are the card-stock shades on a crystal chandelier as opposed to silk, and the sisal and wool rug as opposed to a more formal Persian rug. This further exemplifies the code of Southern style by mixing the high and the low, the common and the rare and the fine with the everyday—unapologetically.

This home has many bedrooms for the ever-expanding family. Suites with coordinating florals and plaid anchor either end of the house as well as the upper floor.

An Italian pier mirror reflects set above an English brandy board reflects hunt paintings across the way. A palmetto and fern wallpaper warms the entire entryway.







PREVIOUS OVERLEAF: The pine coffered ceiling seen in the living room is a classic canopy for Southern homes. Mossy green velvet and wool plaid sofas anchor the seating, while brass study lamps and overhead brass fixtures illuminate the room along with tea caddies turned into lamps. An antique painted leather screen serves as centerpiece of the back wall is flanked by antique prints of ducks and geese. A bronze sculpture of a hunting dog with his prize, contemporary lamps, and a mix of celadon and imari-style planters accessorize the back table.

ABOVE: A field trial canvas by Tennessee artist Emily York Ozier is left unframed above the mantel, lending a more casual element to the room.

RIGHT: The parlor, across from the living room, is warmed with wood paneling. Schumacher "Lotus Garden" is seen on the window, chairs and pillows.





ABOVE: Furniture in shades of jade and forest green complement the colors across the hall and further keep the parlor cozy.

OPPOSITE: A secretary, with mahogany and yew wood accents, displays part of the owner's collection of porcelain. Blue-and-white temple jars, plates and platters are the classic complement to pine paneling.





OPPOSITE: A wet bar serves as the connecting corridor between the kitchen and dining room. Its elliptical fretwork cabinets dress up the space between the more formal dining room and casual kitchen. Georgia marble, painted paneling and brass fixtures and fittings harmonize in this space.

ABOVE LEFT: Pine needle-green cabinets and the knotty pine island tie the kitchen to other rooms in the home. Honed Georgia marble serves as the perimeter countertops and backsplash. Copper lanterns light the island, and a vintage tribal runner spreads across the oak floor.

ABOVE RIGHT: In the breakfast room portion of the kitchen, horizontal boards are painted white, in keeping with other walls in the house, setting off pops of green from oyster plates, gingham curtains and artwork. An amber-hued heart pine table, a linear brass light fixture, a sisal rug and English oak chairs with rush bottoms create a suite of neutral tones.



OPPOSITE: Scenic wallpaper by Paul Montgomery depicts the Low Country, where pines and palms meet with wetlands and fields. Using darker wood pieces for the table and sideboard, colorful opportunities arose from the paper's palette. A rich green trims out the crown, while a misty greige caps the ceiling as a fog does on a pond. Rosy apricot velvet by Nancy Corzine covers mutton-leg side chairs and pulls out the sunset hues in the paper, while deep gray-green wool clads the end chairs completed with chunky nailheads.

ABOVE: Local gardener and "flower lady" Mary Royal supplied the dahlias, which I arranged in a white vessel. Mandarin ducks in a brilliant green add more color and whimsy to the room.

LEFT: Peacock blue glazed lamps with leafy silk shades frame the simple, rounded corners of a Louis Philippe mirror while lighting a collection of silver, a blue-and-white charger and antique Chinese vases.



A tableau of brown and green, the master bedroom with Jacobean-style tester is lightened with Brandon Godwin-designed fabrics depicting Georgia bobwhite quail and longleaf pine boughs.





PREVIOUS OVERLEAF: Amber and tobacco serve as the colorways for a twin guest room. Jute in each bedroom is a soothing floor covering layered atop the dark, stained oak floors. A tribal Persian runner further adds to the layered look.

OPPOSITE: A Thibaut print depicting herons and grasses in a deep chocolate glaze is set against the aqua arrowroot wall covering. A "rice carved" mahogany bed is skirted in a caramel check.

ABOVE: Another play on blue and brown is punctuated with yellow pottery lamps. Mahogany and oak furniture contrast with watery blue woven sisal on the wall.