

building bloom

A sweet cottage and a barn-style garage get hitched and live beautifully ever after.

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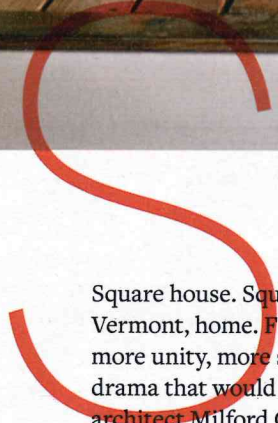


Flower-packed garden borders surround Tessa Milnes' restyled Cape Cod cottage and garage to create decorative chemistry.



FOLIAGE AT YOUR FEET

Soften the edges of a deck with an inset filled with polka-dot plants (*Hypoestes*).



Square house. Square garage. Square lawn. Tessa Milnes felt boxed in at her Stowe, Vermont, home. Flowing, cottage-style borders softened the hard edges, but “I wanted more unity, more style,” Tessa says. What was lacking, she decided, was architectural drama that would marry the detached garage with the house. So she hired local architect Milford Cushman to create a solution. He was instantly inspired by Tessa’s meandering borders and how their informal spring-to-fall displays pull people into the front yard. “Tessa is a gifted gardener,” Cushman says. “She has a great eye.”

After the architectural uplift, Tessa filled in the blanks with additional perennials, creating one seamless garden around the property. For continuity, Tessa repeats clusters of her favorite cottage-style blooms—coneflower, *Rudbeckia*, *Monarda*, and peony. Charming buildings plus romantic blooms equals love at first sight.

Ho-hum Cape Cod becomes storybook cottage, *above*, with carefree perennials and garden-theme architecture. Long-blooming perennials, such as daylily, coneflower, hydrangea, Shasta daisy, and coreopsis, create an airy buffer in front of the porch, *above left*, giving Tessa and English setter Finney a secluded place to hang out.



GARDEN-INSPIRED

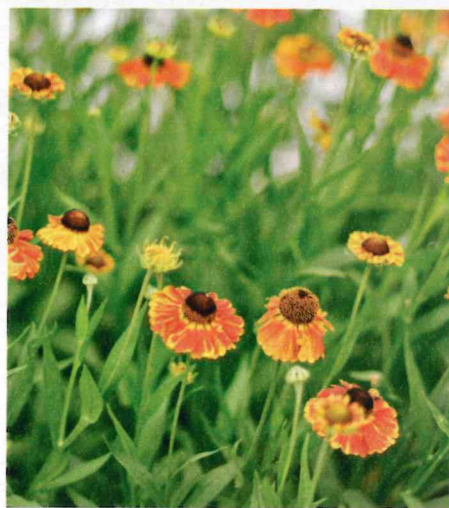
Crisscross lattice and graceful arches mimic classic arbor styles, visually connecting buildings and blooms.

AT HOME WITH Tessa Milnes of Stowe, Vermont.

PERSONAL STYLE Lush, informal, and colorful. "My parents grew up in England, and I've always loved the cottage style."

FAVORITE FEATURE Curved garden beds. "I like round things. I don't think gardens should be square."

BEST DECISION Hiring an architect to visually and thematically connect the house and garage to the gardens. "I can see flowers from just about every angle."



Ivy geranium, *top*, and *Helenium Mardi Gras*, *above*, add a flirty flounce of color around the porch. Slate pavers guide foot (and paw) traffic to the porch, *below*.

