

THE 48-HOUR SHE-SHED MAKEOVER!

# Country Living

JUNE 2018

## the How-to Issue!

Clever, Creative Ways to Make Your Home the Happiest House on the Block  
(ice cream sandwiches included!)



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A HAPPY HOME IS A *colorful* HOME

# Looking Lively

Layered with thoughtful pops of color, casual natural texture, and a very merry menagerie (95 animals and counting!), this South Florida home is, fittingly, a true lesson in warmth.

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*add color with*  
**PAINT**

The vibrant green shade seen throughout the property (on trim both indoors and out) was inspired by homeowner Gany Lalo's trip to Mykonos, Greece. "When I travel, I take lots of pictures, and when I get home, I head straight for the paint store, and we eyeball it," she says. For a similar shade, try Aqua Quartz by Valspar.

BLUE  
STALLION  
FARM

**CREATURE COMFORT**  
Lucky the English mastiff soaks up the Florida sun.



## Happy Homeowners

### Who Lives Here

Gany Lalo, husband Jimmie, and children Benjamin, Misha, Hanna, and Shana

### Happiest House Memory

"The entire family witnessed the birth of our horse, Rocky," says Gany. "I was a neurotic mess for three or four days, but it was spectacular."

### Happiest Room

"Everything happens in the kitchen. Everyone, including the dogs, crams in around the kitchen table. You really have to know how to maneuver!"

### Happiest Tradition

"We love eating dinner outside and hanging out by the fire pit. It's the best."

**S**even years ago, Gany Lalo had a decidedly vibrant vision. "I saw my family on a big piece of land. There was a house that offered a way of life that very much included animals," she says. "I could see a chicken, and she was walking through a kitchen."

So Gany, the CEO of Invicta Watch Group, and her husband, Jimmie, set out to make that dream a reality. They traded Florida beach views for 10 acres on the eastern edge of the Everglades that afforded plenty of room for their four children—Benjamin (age 20), Shana (age 19), Hanna (age 15), Misha (age 12)—as well as animals galore, including the family's eight beloved horses. "That's really who we are—horses are our thing," says Gany. Jimmie is a horse trainer, and she and Shana and Misha compete in dressage.

Inspired by both the love for horses and tons of color, Gany immediately christened the property Blue Stallion Farm. But the name was more wishful thinking than reality. The land hadn't been used as a working farm in more than

12 years, and everything was decidedly drab, from the four-bedroom Spanish Colonial ranch to the dilapidated barn. But Gany was undeterred. "I knew I could figure out how to work with what we had to create whatever kind of home we wanted," she says.

Before focusing her efforts on the house, Gany opted to get the barn up to snuff for the equine members of the family. "We did so much work on the stables—everything from modifying stalls, building out feed rooms and tack rooms to restaining and painting," Gany says. They also added paddocks and a riding arena to show and school the horses.

But because she knew how many hours the family was going to spend out there every day—up to four and five hours a day on the weekends—she added some extra-special touches to make the barn more friendly for two-legged living. "It was important to me that it become a place where people actually wanted to hang out," says Gany. "We created a sitting room at the entrance with accent lighting and punchy, fun furniture." She also furnished the stables with a long picnic table with bright orange accents for a casual dining space beneath ceiling beams wrapped in twinkle lights. "We keep the lights on until after night check," she says. "It just all looks so pretty."



## add color with FLORALS

The beautiful arched porch—once coated in a not-so-breezy shade of red—is now the perfect airy setting for floral finery both fleeting (like the ranunculus and aster blooms in a crusty green watering can) and forever (like the bright embroidered tablecloth made in Israel; [gingerhome.co.il](http://gingerhome.co.il)).

### CREATURE COMFORT

Gertrude the Buff Orpington is ready for afternoon tea.



**CREATURE COMFORT**  
Melman the mini Appaloosa hunts for a snack.

*add color with*  
**APPLIANCES**

To offset the kitchen's darker wood cabinetry, terra-cotta tiles, and concrete sink (*nativetrails.net*), Gany selected retro-inspired appliances—both a refrigerator and dishwasher—in Jadite green (*bigchill.com*). Other colorful touches include cobalt blue shelf brackets, a red vintage ruler stool, and, quite often, the day's bounty of produce from the garden.

*add color with*  
**RUGS**

While South Florida heat makes tile floors a must, Gany likes to layer on a variety of colorful rugs ranging from kilim and Oushak to rag and dhurrie, including this find in navy, pink, yellow, and coral (*caitlinwilson.com*). Its vibrant colors are echoed on the open shelving in the form of vases, bowls, typewriters, and luggage.



*add color with*  
**BEDDING**

A charming vintage Grandmother's Flower Garden quilt (*thedestinationmarket.etsy.com*) brings a little levity to the Indonesian bed. "I used to be on constant lookout for bed coverlets at antiques markets," says Gany. "Now I have a huge collection of suzanis, kanthas, caftans, crochets, patchworks, and chenilles."

With the horses settled in fresh digs, Gany began devising bright ideas to right all the wrongs in the 3,000-square-foot family rancher. Her first priority: Let the light in. "It was so dark," says Gany. "The color scheme, all the heavily carved doors and cabinetry, and even interior shutters—everything seemed like it was designed to repel any trace of natural light." Gany's solution? Resurfacing every single grain of wood in the house. She restained all the interior doors, all the cabinets in the kitchen and bathrooms, and built-in bookcases in much lighter hues. Once the woodwork was in order, she painted the majority of the walls a custom white and then chose a variety of hues ranging from a deep blue to rust orange for bold accent walls. "I like to mix it up—things are always changing around here," says Gany.





**CREATURE COMFORTS**  
Zanzibar, a Dutch Warmblood, oversees table setup.

**CREATURE COMFORTS**  
Rocky, a 5-year-old Arabian, was the first foal born on the farm.

*add color with*  
**FURNITURE**  
Gany ordered a beer garden set (*beergarden furniture.net* for similar) for fun, casual dining in the stables. "When we need extra room, the whole thing folds up flat," she says. "It was originally green but we repainted it a bright orange."

**"I love all color — I don't really have a specific favorite, and I don't have a formal approach to using it. It's just a feeling. I'm drawn to bright things that speak to me and feel authentic to the way we live."**

—GANY LALO

"But the white really works as a base for all the color and texture that I'm constantly bringing in. In any given room, you might find wood, terra-cotta, copper, and concrete."

While Gany says she doesn't have any sort of master plan as to which colors go where, her main pops at the moment are blues and greens, inspired by the lush Florida surroundings. The shades also mesh nicely with the home's original terra-cotta floors, as well as the porcelain wood-like tiled floors she added in the living room. "We like the way the floors look with our bright palette, retro furniture, and kind of global style," she says. "Of course, it doesn't hurt that they're also extremely animal friendly!"

Because at the end of the day, creature comforts are the number one priority here at Blue Stallion Farm. In addition to the stable full of horses, the family has adopted a lot of animals. Thanks to the 10 acres, a dreamy barn, and chicken coops that look like guest cottages—"We call them the chicken condos," says Gany—there are plenty of wide-open and otherwise spaces for all of them to roam.

add color with  
**NATURE**

Fresh vegetables, including tomatoes, kale, and broccoli, flowering blue potato bushes, and banyan trees provide plenty of shade (and shades!) around the chicken condos. For another vibrant kick, Gany painted galvanized planters a neon-like lime green.



But, true to Gany's dream, the house is far from off-limits. Humans happily share elbow room with seven dogs (ranging in size and breed from English mastiff and French and English bulldogs to Chihuahua, dachshund, and a cocker spaniel-poodle mix), Melman the mini Appaloosa (often found hanging out by the kitchen pantry), and more than 80 chickens, including Gertrude, a Buff Orpington who is always underfoot in the kitchen, just as Gany had envisioned.

"I live life on a playground," she says. "Executive me gets dressed up for work on the weekdays, but the real me is here at the farm, barefoot in jeans and a T-shirt. I can't believe I get to call this place home."



add color with  
**UPHOLSTERY**

On the barn patio, furniture in peppy fabrics make for lively seating. The tropical patterned chair ([anthropologie.com](http://anthropologie.com)) complements a leather sofa, transformed with paint. (Really!) "We just used a paintbrush and it has lasted about four years now!" says Gany. Striped pillows ([dearkeaton.com](http://dearkeaton.com)) and an indigo rag rug ([annieselke.com](http://annieselke.com)) add extra zest.