



THE ARCHITECT designed the new porch deep enough to accommodate plenty of seating. Broad steps, a brick walk, and gabled entry create a warm welcome. Only the large bay window and simple gabled rooflines survived the renovation.

1 Add curb appeal

JIM WILSON HAD A DREAM: He wanted to own a charming cottage on a tree-lined street in a friendly neighborhood. Although the drab brown exterior of the Swiss chalet he purchased in Colorado Springs, Colorado, didn't exude charm, he figured two out of three wasn't bad.

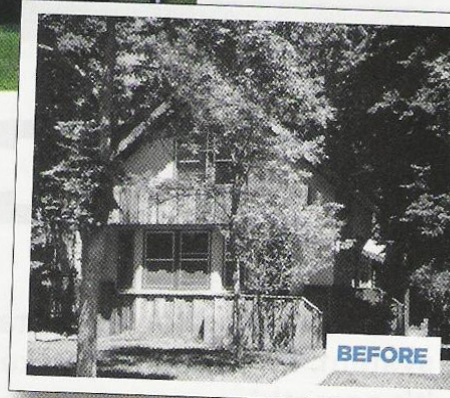
"I loved the street, and I loved the neighborhood," he says. "This house just needed a front porch to make it feel welcoming." After poring over magazines and books, Jim contacted Seattle-based architect Carol Sundstrom to add some cottage charm.

Before they began, the design had to pass muster with the area's historic preservation board. Built mostly in the 1880s and '90s, the Old North End community "did not require that the plan be an exact match with the other Victorian homes," Carol says. "They just wanted it to fit within the fabric of the neighborhood."

She and Jim chose a design in the spirit of the Stick style (featuring exposed "stickwork") because of its similar vernacular and lack of fussy architectural details. The decorative truss at the apex of the gable, curved beams, and slender columns create an open and airy feel. In addition, replacing the dark siding with cedar shingles brightened up the exterior. "We also stained the beaded-board ceiling and door with the same tone to unify the various woods and create warmth," Carol says.

The cottage's finishing touch was the permeable paving strips Jim chose for the driveway. The system of block pavers with small openings that allow grass to grow through not only eliminates the typical concrete eyesore but also is eco-friendly. "I didn't want a house where I could just drive my car into a garage, close it, and disappear from my neighbors," he says. "I wanted to maintain interaction."

His new porch fills the bill. "There's something magnetic about this porch," Jim says. "Friends walking down the street often just sit down and visit." >



Take it from Carol:
Make choices that boost cottage character

- **Showcase your entry** with architectural elements that add curb appeal. Wide steps and a gabled roof create a welcoming focal point.
- **Use low-maintenance materials** with a classic look. Carol chose ipe wood for the porch floor because of its durability, rot resistance, and dark brown hue.
- **Choose opaque stains** instead of paint for cedar shingles. "Because shingles absorb the stain, you won't have the prep work that paint requires," she says.

"I wanted to be able to say hello to my neighbors"