

MILL STREET

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APRIL 25, 2001

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Overall Picture

By Bill Mead
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Health rules seem made to be broken

I know you have looked to me for authoritative advice about health but I have to warn you that your confidence has been woefully misplaced. I have just been hit with a double whammy that wipes out whatever credibility I might have had at one time. I now realize I have been too eager to pass on rules about eating that seemed right only because they were unappealing.

First, the best minds in the field of nutrition recently announced that high fiber diets don't seem to offer any discernible health benefits other than promoting regularity in some cases. This is a sharp turnabout from what we have been told for decades, that if we could choke down the sort of stuff commonly fed to livestock it would reduce our risk of cancer and I don't know what all. This latest flipflop didn't exactly say that we might as well wolf down Krispy Kreme doughnuts in place of celery but that's how I read it.

Right on the heels of the high fiber retraction came another shocking revelation from the nation's most-prestigious diet gurus. It now appears that there is no scientific underpinning for the long-held belief that each of us should drink eight glasses of water every day. I can't tell you how pleased I was to hear that. When you drink that much water and also take diuretics, as I do, your daily schedule has to be planned around access to comfort stations. As a result of this welcome news, I have quit taking on water like the Titanic which enables me to pass up many of the fire hydrants I once frequented.

Now that I have been forced to undergo triple coronary bypass surgery, you have a right to question anything I say about healthy diets. Listening to me on this topic makes about as much sense as attending a Bill Clinton lecture on how to treat ladies. But since I'm a journalist, you shouldn't expect me to know what I'm talking about. Guys in my profession actually get paid for making the most dubious pronouncements sound like something God told Moses.

Every researcher who depends on grants feels compelled to maintain a high media profile in order to pry more dollars loose. People who write books about nutrition can't wait to call press conferences where reporters swallow whatever they believe will make titillating headlines. That's why we feel it necessary to adjust our menus every time we open a newspaper.

Apart from purposeful misinformation, we are hit with notions, such as the one about water-drinking, that come out of nowhere. This month's stories debunking the idea quote several honest-to-gosh experts saying they have been unable to uncover any source for the common belief that we must water-log ourselves to keep the doctor away. My best guess is that it grew out of our collective reliance on common sense, the kind that tells us the world is flat.

So that you won't think I have consistently misled you concerning healthful eating, let me remind you that about a year ago I reported on a much-ballyhooed diet summit conference sponsored by no less a powerhouse than the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This massing of the nation's most-popular nutritionists produced wildly differing opinions, punctuated by charges from everybody that everybody else was poisoning the public with their flawed counsel. I'm convinced this circus was a diabolical ploy by USDA to bolster its view that our best bet at the dinner table is simply to eat a modest amount of nearly everything, avoiding excess alcohol consumption.

I'll drink to that — but spare me the eight glasses.

RENOVATING OUR HOME

Local home featured in national magazine

by Chelley Kitzmiller
Contributing Writer

These days it seems there is at least one decorating magazine for every style and taste. The featured homes are picture perfect with colorful fruits and vegetables on kitchen countertops looking as though the cook just took a break. Dining room tables are uniquely set with florist-shop flowers and fancy-folded napkins, and bedrooms look too perfect to be slept in.

Are the rooms sets or are they real? And if they are real, who owns the homes and how does the magazine find them?

That's a question I had asked myself many times but just never bothered to find out. Besides, what was the point? I'm just an average gal, with an average house that is by no means architecturally significant.

Three years ago, my husband and I renovated our kitchen, dining room and turned the bedroom behind the dining room into a state-of-the-art office. Once that was finished we looked toward revamping the upstairs — three odd-sized rooms whose original purpose was a mystery since there was no bathroom. We decided to turn the entire upstairs into a master suite — all the rage in newer homes.

We redecorated the larger of the three upstairs rooms and made it the bedroom, turned the small center room into an exercise room and plumbed the third room for a bathroom. The result is stunning — a master suite to rival anything I've seen in a magazine.

Last spring I sat down with a copy of *Country Sampler Decorating Ideas* Magazine and thumbed through the pages. I bought the magazine because the cover featured a house decorated in "camp" style, which has similarities to my Old West decorating scheme.

Many times over the years I've asked myself how the magazine powers-that-be find the homes they feature within their pages. Since for the moment I had nothing better to do, I turned to the editorial page near the front of the magazine and called. I asked for the editor, Michael R. Morris.

After describing my home to him, he suggested I send him pictures of my rooms and descriptions. I am not a good photographer and told him so but he said not to worry, send them anyway. And so I did. Next thing I knew, he called me back and said he would like to feature my new kitchen and upstairs bathroom. I then asked if he would also like to see a couple of my friend's homes.

The answer to that question is in the April issue of *Country Sampler Decorating Ideas* Magazine, featuring Elaine and Jack Palance's Cummings Valley ranch home. Elaine, an interior designer by trade, owns and operates Cielo Ranch Designs, which specializes in fabricating fabulous, one-of-a-kind bedroom ensembles. Her staff is an international grouping of incredibly talented Tehachapi residents headed up by Elena Stibor of Germany.

Last year, one of Elaine's bed ensembles was featured in the first Bakersfield Showcase Home. Currently her designs are on display at Hayward's of Santa Barbara and Moseley Designs of Bakersfield. Elaine makes house calls to clients all over Southern California.

In her own home, Elaine needed an animal and child-friendly atmosphere without sacrificing the casual elegance she enjoys. Mexican pavers throughout the downstairs helped her create that goal. Textiles of varying textures and patterns are used throughout.

Lyndee and Scott Richmond's home is scheduled to appear in the October issue of *Country Sampler Decorating Ideas*, which will be available in stores September 1. When the Richmonds bought the home, it was a nightmare, much too small for the family of six and badly in need of repair. Rising like a Phoenix out of the rubble, the home today is testimony to good planning and a vivid imagination.

This month *Country Sampler's Kitchen and Bath Ideas* (May issue), features my kitchen and bathroom. My love

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Previously just an empty and difficult space, this dormer is reborn as an elegant bathing area. The vintage-style tub looks out over the pasture where two resident burros graze. Local artist, Rebecca Paris, resurfaced the wall to look like old adobe, complete with exposed brick. Unique western-look woodworking by Tehachapi cabinet makers, Mike McClowsky and Margaret Miller (Against The Grain), enclose the tub and frame the window.

Photo credit: Maurice Victoria; Stylist credit: Carol Schalla

of the Old West has also become my decorating theme. I have cowboy and Indian style furniture, textiles, pictures and memorabilia throughout the house. When it came to decorating my new kitchen, I knew I wanted to use the enamelware I'd collected and I wanted to incorporate lots of color. I was really hungry for color after years of earthtones.

The upstairs bathroom was my biggest challenge. I wanted the look of Old Tucson, circa 1870, which is the same time period of my last three books. I turned to friend, Elaine Palance, to help fulfill that dream. Now, when I step into my bathroom, via a swinging bat-wing door, I step back into time.

The *Country Sampler* group of magazines is based in suburban Chicago. The magazine showcases all styles of country decor. Dennis Morgan, senior art director, one of the four who came out for the main shoot, had this to say, "We were won over by the Tehachapi hospitality. The Kitzmillers, Palances and Richmonds really went out of their way to help the shoots go smoothly. We were pleased with how the shoots turned out and we think our readers will be pleased too."

The magazine bills itself as "The Magazine That Shows You How" and caters to the average homeowner who wants to tackle some of their own decorating projects. Within the pages of my story there will be a "how-to" article on creating an adobe-look wall and setting artifacts into brick to create a warm, tumble-down effect.

A "Resource Guide" in the back of the magazine gives detailed information for purchasing materials, appliances, paints, etc. pictured in the various photographic layouts.

The magazine's editor, Mike Morris, said, "We love receiving photos of our readers' homes. In fact, we've featured a lot of our readers' home in our magazines. We don't do 'showhome' type magazines. Most of the locations we feature are average, everyday homeowners decorating on a budget — just like me and you."

Country Sampler isn't the only magazine looking for homes to feature. If you would like to show off your home, gather magazines that feature decorating styles similar to yours then take pictures of your house and query them.



Paint and stencils by Rebecca Paris.

Photo credit: Maurice Victoria; Stylist: Carol Schalla

A sampling of magazines which accept homeowners' queries include:

Country Sampler Decorating Ideas and *Country Sampler Decorating Ideas*

Kitchen and Bath Ideas — Mike Morris, Editor, 707 Kautz Rd., St. Charles, IL 60174, E-mail: morris@samplermag.com. Mail queries and E-mail queries accepted.

Victoria Magazine, Cynthia Searight, Creative Director, 224 W. 57th Street, Ny, NY 10019. Mail queries only.

Victorian Homes — Erika Kotite, Editor, 265 S. Anita Drive, Suite 120, Orange, CA 92868-3310. Features homes between 1850-1905. Gardens, too. Mail queries accepted.

Romantic Homes — Rebecca Itner, Associate Editor, 265 S. Anita Drive, Suite 120, Orange, CA 92868-3310. Mail queries accepted.

Mary Engelbreit Home Companion — Editorial Department, 6358 Del Mar Blvd., Ste. 450, St. Louis, MO 63130-4719. Looking for unique, eclectic, quirky and funky.



This newly renovated kitchen, drawn by local designer Tim Cahoon, is a gourmet cook's dream, with handy pull-out drawers for small appliances, a large tiled island and prep sink, easy-clean ceramic tile floors and stainless steel appliances. The see-thru fireplace is testimony to Chelley's love of the Old West and to her determination to do things differently. Pieces of blue bottles, vintage tins and cowboy memorabilia were set between bricks to give the structure the illusion of age and disrepair. Above the stove top is a hand-painted tile reproduction of an original Tehachapi pear crate label.

Photo credit: Maurice Victoria; Stylist credit: Carol Schalla