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Decorating

Blue & White

Swedish simplicity with fresh country looks

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Romantic tables for two Easter collectibles
Charleston charmer Toile for small rooms





swedish style

Pair the classic lines of the 18th century with today's yearning for fresh, uncluttered decorating, and what do you get?

Swedish style, or *Svensk styl* as it is natively called, evolved as the harshness of Swedish life gave way to the creature comforts of the 18th century. Everyday Swedes, like their counterparts in the rest of Europe, found themselves with a bit of leisure time and a little discretionary income. These ingredients, combined with the sociability that they encourage, historically generate a desire for some of the niceties of life.

French artisans were invited to Sweden's northern climes to mentor local craftsmen in the ways of making the stylish

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Our dining room revolves around the Viktor six-leg table from Swedish Blonde. The chairs and sideboard are hand-me-downs that we painted. Hanging over the sideboard is the Solgården collection plate rack by Lexington Furniture. Our tableware includes Spade's blue-and-white Rochelle pattern and servers from Old World Pewter. The tall crystal candleholders, cake stand, and white ceramic vase are from Orrefors; the goblets are by Dansk. On the floor is a sisal rug from IKEA, and surrounding it all is wallpaper from Eisenhart's Swedish Country collection. We made curtains and chair covers with Waverly fabric. Antique table linens are from Faye D. Foster.

BY CHERYL TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHY BY HOPKINS ASSOCIATES



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furnishings of the Continent. By the mid-1700s, Sweden had developed its own style, predicated largely on the fashion of the court of France's Louis XV. Today we know this new, fresh take on the French style as Gustavian, named for the Swedish kings of the day, Gustav III and Gustav IV.

Ever practical and mindful of the teachings against excess, the Swedes' interpretation of the rococo style is perfect for today. There's some embellishment, but not too much; it includes some color, but not too many at once; and everything is on a very human scale. The obvious Swedish-style icons—white furniture, blue-and-white and red-and-white checks, and decorative painting on the walls—are just the beginning, but there's no mystery here. This is a very straightforward look, and it speaks to a wide audience.

On these pages, we present two vignettes—a dining room and a bedroom—that we created to inspire you. We've tried to “set the stage” with a blue-and-white dining room and a charming red-and-white bedroom. Each room is followed by some wonderful everyday items that are either genuinely Swedish ... or look like they could be.

Our walls were given a whitewashed cabin feeling with Eisenhart's Swedish Country paper. The Rose bed and the Gustav chair are from Swedish Blonde; the nightstand is from the Solgård collection by Lexington Furniture. Above the bed hangs a Carl Larson print, *The Flower Window*, from the American Swedish Institute. We dressed the window with red-and-white gingham tab-top curtains over Irish-Rose-pattern lace from Country Curtains. On the floor, there's a Woodard Weave red-stripe-on-neutral runner. The bed is layered with the Picnic Plaid duvet cover and sham from Pottery Barn atop a white, crachet-trimmed matelassé bedcover and other linens from Foye D. Foster Antiques and Interiors.





The Swedes are passionate about the sun, and they embrace it in their homes. World-renowned Swedish crystal reflects precious rays during "midnight sun" summers.



TOP LEFT: Boda Nova's Line flatware sits atop a stack of Spode's Rochelle china, with Rochelle cups and saucers in the background. TOP RIGHT: Typically Swedish, the oval mirror Rose scone is mounted on our dining room wall, which is covered in paper from Eisenhart's Country Swedish collection. ABOVE LEFT: Modern Swedish design is pleasingly simple in the matte-white Collection teapot by Boda Nova. It sits on a pewter charger plate from Old World Pewter. ABOVE RIGHT: Large-scale spoons sit in a Rochelle serving bowl. They're on top of the ribbon-and-flower pattern blue-and-yellow tablecloth from the Swedish American Institute.



Itinerant painters would travel from farm to farm—sometimes to paint a full mural in a room or to stencil walls with simple motifs. Long, snowbound winters encouraged needlework.



TOP LEFT: We paired crisp linens with some other pretty textiles that could be used either as bedcovers or tablecloths, from Faye Foster Antiques in New Hampshire. TOP RIGHT: The swirl motif on the wall is the same one that decorative painter Wade Scherrer stenciled onto the chair backs. On the wall, we hung the Baby Nellie cabinet from Maine Cottage Furniture, then filled it with Cherise cherry-pattern pottery from Rue de France. The white Guldkroken pitcher is from the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis. Our linens include a variety of vintage pieces from Faye D. Foster Antiques, as well as new red-and-white stripes and plaids from The Linen House. ABOVE LEFT: More crisp antique linens from Easter are joined by Rue de France's Cherise tea set and Anna's Swedish