



Creating
instant chic
is easier than
you think!

Band of Shells

"I approach whatever I do with a designer's eye and that means making everything look chic and stylish," says Chris. "Shells are a terrific example of instant chic because they can create stunning still-lives in any room—the result—eye-catching style in an instant!"

Compose your shell collection on an interior windowsill to create a serene counterpoint to a lush garden outdoors. A monochromatic arrangement of shells in varying sizes along the sill provides a sculptural focal point against riotous greenery outside. Choose shells in shapes to echo the curved tendrils and stems of outdoor plants.

Lend a jaunty note of color to the arrangement with a cluster of red flowers. Old medicine bottles, juice glasses or chemistry beakers make perfect vases for single blooms or mini-bouquets. Play with combinations until the composition of your arrangement is thoroughly pleasing to the eye.

From the Seashore

by Maryjane H. Fromm
Photograph by John Vaughan



The primal nature of shells makes them ideal decorative elements in any setting.

Bounty of the Sea

Introduce tactile treasures with shell-encrusted boxes, votives and frames displayed on a simple tray. A popular collectible dating from Victorian times, shell art can be crafted by contemporary beachcombers of all ages. Using epoxy, apply shells in mosaiclike designs to home accents, such as picture frames and boxes, or press them into gROUT.

Balance a series of scallop shells on a window frame to add punctuation marks of pattern over the folds and curves of a soft shade. Play off the colors of these natural elements in the fabric of the shade and walls to heighten the effect.

Use a mix of shells and man-made elements to create an arrangement that captures the capricious look of a beachscape on a shelf. Spherical and star shapes add a touch of whimsy amid a cluster of vintage beakers that shimmer like sea glass.

White in all its nuances, tinged with touches of ecru, sienna and peach, evokes serenity, as exemplified by this artful assemblage of framed shells and a starfish. For a more variegated display, fill a vitrine table or a shadowbox with an accumulation of shells, colorful ocean-hued sea glass, and bits of driftwood.



Unpack seashore souvenirs and mound, scatter or showcase them in bowls or baskets, at place settings or on tabletops or shelves.



Shellscapes

Conch shells and crystals atop an antique chest pit craggy surfaces against smooth ones and balance light against dark in an engaging display. Experiment with elements of contrasting hues to create unlikely combinations that intrigue the eye.

Instill a bathroom with a day-at-the-beach ambience by pairing a basket of oversize towels next to another filled with shells. Tuck some vintage postcards featuring bathing beauties or dashing lifeguards into the basket for a touch of nostalgia.

Fill a creamware compote with bits of coral and shells to serve as an unexpected centerpiece. Enrich the tablescape by scattering individual specimens about the table as if tossed by an errant wave. **CM**



Where to Find Shells

Landlocked? You can still find shells easily. Estate sales are often good sources for bags of shells gathered on vacations long ago. Some craft stores carry selections of shells either individually or in bulk packages. And several dealers offer shells online. Buy from only reputable dealers, and never buy endangered species. Here are some sources to try:

- www.seashellscapell.com
- www.seashellshop.com
- www.seashellcity.com
- www.ebay.com