

Naturalist's living room

Neutral finishes and furnishings put the focus on an array of accents gathered from the land. Here's how to display tokens from far-flung explorations for a cohesive and cozy look in your den. By GILLIAN BARTH • Photograph by JOHN GRUEN

Every adventurer needs a welcoming place to come home to. Case in point: this light-filled living room decorated with heirlooms and keepsakes from the homeowners' journeys. To create it, designer Carol-Ann Speros started with an unfussy foundation of white slipcovered sofas, dove-gray walls, and a sand-hued sisal mat. She then layered on sentimental treasures, such as a beachcomber's bounty of coral; the couple's collection of polished stone bookends, eggs, and orbs; a vintage cowhide rug from Wyoming; and lush landscape paintings that were handed down from a relative. For help creating an affordable nature- and travel-inspired living area like this, read on.



traditional backdrop

A warm-toned Georgian-style mantel grounds this room full of discoveries. You can get the effect by dressing up a stock unit with a rich stain and a rosette. Mantel, \$599; homedepot.com. Stain, \$12; minwax.com. Rosette, \$25; osbornewood.com



earthy rugs

Layer a silky skin over woven sisal to play up the different textures. Cowhide, \$199; ikea.com. Sisal, \$185; overstock.com

PHOTOS: (STAIN AND ROSETTE, RUGS, "FRAMED LANDSCAPE," JARS AND CORAL, FERN, COFFEE TABLE AND BOOK, STONES) WENDELL T. WEBB; (BOOKENDS) MICHAEL CHIN/ TIME INC. DIGITAL STUDIO



framed landscape

Scour secondhand shops for an oil painting of pastoral scenes to evoke the spirit of 19th-century naturalists. We found this one for \$50 at online antiques emporium Ruby Lane (rubylane.com).



spool chair

The homeowners' upholstered wood-frame chairs are pricey repos of heirlooms from the 1800s. This nearly identical perch costs half as much and is just as stunning. \$809; hickoryfurniture.com



agate bookends

A rugged stone that's been split and shined, this geode pair is perfect for steady field journals. \$43; thegemshop.com



specimen jars

Showcase finds from the beach or streambed in vintage blue Ball jars with screw-on zinc lids, \$35 for a set of three; antiquemystique.com. Faux coral, \$25; zgallerie.com



botanical touch

Pretty plants, like this Boston fern, in a rustic wire-frame urn, bring the outdoors in. Urn, \$22; save-on-crafts.com



coffee-table display

A book of zoological illustrations offers an escape for armchair travelers. Use a horn-handled magnifier to mark pages. Table, \$29; walmart.com. Curiosities book, \$40; amazon.com. Magnifier, \$25; zgallerie.com



polished stones

Adorn shelves with natural wonders, such as these carved onyx baubles. Sphere, \$40; phoenixorion.com. Eggs, \$6 each; amnhshop.com

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