



PET PROJECT Architect Pete Vallas, bottom, and his pooch, Daisy Mae, spend afternoons on the back porch addition, *this photo*, that he designed.



Made in the Shade

With its French doors thrown open, a breezy Southern patio unites house and garden.

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outdoors

IN THE GARDEN



There's no place like a covered porch. That's a mantra in the South—and was the motivation for Pete Vallas and Mark Davis, who added one to the back of their cottage in Mobile, Alabama. "I wouldn't be exaggerating if I said I'd be claustrophobic without a proper porch," says Pete, an architect who designed the 12x24-foot addition. "When we moved in, the yard seemed so tiny that I wondered if we even had room for a porch. But it's an interesting fact that the more you squeeze into a garden, the bigger the garden seems."

Pete designed the porch as an extra living space—a room where he, Mark, and friends could enjoy fresh air and coveted shade. He wanted the



MAKING ROOM Undeterred by the small backyard of their English-style house, above, Pete and Mark built on a back porch and found that it added more living space than it subtracted. To integrate the porch with house and garden, Pete painted the wicker chairs, top, the same brown as the home's window trim.

outdoors

IN THE GARDEN



TROPICAL PUNCH

Potted citrus trees encircle a small gravel seating area with tropical greenery, *left*. Chunks of recycled concrete are stacked to form a wall around the informal niche.

SUMMER BREEZE

Bright outdoor fabrics add color to the otherwise neutral palette, *below*. “We love the blue because it echoes the pool color,” says Pete. Ceiling fans stir a cooling breeze.

“There’s no real division between inside and out. The porch gives us the sense that our house is alive.” **MARK DAVIS**

porch to feel as spacious as it was gracious, so he opened it right to the garden, with no railings or screens to enclose it.

When the French doors along the back of the house are open, the porch seems even roomier. “We keep the doors open all year, except for winter,” says Mark. “Neighbors come through the front door and head right on out through the open back ones. They know they can usually find us out here.”

That the porch, with its lack of barriers, fosters such gregariousness is a pleasant, but unsurprising, result for the one who designed it. “That’s what a porch is supposed to do,” says Pete. 🏡

For buying information see page 253.

