RUSTIC RANCH

Skulls, cactus and recycled treasures rule at Mojave Rock Ranch
HOME TOUR

UPSCALE RUSTIC

TRAVEL, TREASURES AND RECYCLED DISCARDS COMBINE TO CREATE A CHIC DESERT RETREAT.

BY STEPHANIE SCHULTE

It takes a special eye and talent to take an ordinary home and transform it into something truly special. This is the story of how one couple did just that.

Tory and Dee Dee Williams are the proud owners of the home featured in this issue. They decided to up the ante and create a chic desert retreat that would be both functional and stylish.

The couple worked with a team of designers to create a space that would reflect their love of nature and their desire for comfort. They used a mix of materials and textures to create a unique and inviting atmosphere.

The home is surrounded by beautiful landscaping, with cacti and succulents adding to the desert aesthetic. The interior is decorated with rustic elements, such as wooden furniture and handcrafted sculptures.

Tory and Dee Dee are keen travelers, and their love for different cultures and styles is reflected in their home. They have incorporated elements from around the world, creating a truly unique space.

The couple say they are proud of what they have achieved, and they hope that their home will inspire others to create their own chic desert retreat.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF MOJAVE ROCK RANCH
The duo started journeying together nearly two decades ago in Hollywood. Their natural love of gardening and creating stylish spaces caught the eye of many who passed their home.

One day they decided to take their passion and create a bona fide business.

Dreese had a degree in garden architecture from a university in the Netherlands, while Williams studied environmental design in college. Both went to work in the landscape industry and quickly began taking on clients and transforming gardens into rustic wonderlands.

When they aren’t traveling or working with clients, Dreese and Williams split their time between the ranch in Joshua Tree and their Mediterranean villa in Palm Springs.

Williams took time out from designing a home in Malibu to explain how anyone can create their signature look.

Q. What is the first step someone should take when planning an upscale rustic space in their garden or home?
A. This may sound old-fashioned, but we suggest people tear sheets from magazines or bookmark books with visuals that they like. People will start to see a pattern of a look they want to achieve. So, if they are at Lowe’s or Home Depot, they aren’t fumbling to explain their ideas. Visuals help everyone.

Q. Does this style work indoors or outdoors?
A. Both. We often design with rockwork or bottlework. You can carry the same materials throughout and achieve great continuity.

Books to help you create this look

- “Under the Spell of Succulents” by Jeff Moore. Published by Jeff Moore. $29.95 at chuckeversonbookseller.com.

Groupings of like elements - glass bottles, antlers and birdhouses, for example - lend order to the wild array of decor materials. Native statues are among the many treasures found at the desert getaway.
ty. It’s a lot of work in the beginning, but when it’s complete, it’s done forever.

Q. There seems to be a lot of re-purposing. What household objects can be used?
A. Many people have dishes handed down to them from relatives that aren’t being used. You can add the plates to a wall or create beautiful kitchen counters or a backsplash. Look in your garage or attic and there will be things that will likely get thrown out that can be used. It’s the ultimate in recycling.

Q. What else?
A. Maybe a cool old wheelbarrow can be filled with succulents. This is Rustic Chic 101 and a great starting point for beginners. The wheelbarrow planter can be placed in a courtyard or the balcony of a condominium, if space is limited.

Q. Say you’re just redoing a small patio. What can you do with a limited budget?
A. The less money someone has to spend on materials, the more creative it forces someone to be. Look at what is around you and allow yourself to go for it. It sounds bad if you are broke, but it’s actually really amazing for the creative process.

Q. How do you keep from crossing the line from funky to junky?
A. This is a hard one. I tend to go more junky myself, overdoing it in some way. It takes a lot of material to make a high impact, especially in the desert with huge wide-open spaces. Create focal points instead of having heaps of items. We even tell people every single inch of your yard doesn’t have to be a shining star. It’s nice for the eye to have a break and go onto the next area.

Q. Name three must-have items.
A. A high-impact and really cool thing is a galvanized metal stock tank. Something a cattle rancher would have. They are beautiful and come in all shapes and sizes. You can fill them with succulents and/or rocks and it will look fantastic. You can also make it into a goldfish or turtle pond.

Q. And two more?
A. Rusty tools can be put on a dining room wall or cover a whole wall outside. Execution is key. Use something as a planter that you wouldn’t think to use as a planter, such as old metal containers like 55-gallon drums or colorful enamelware. These look really cool.

Q. Why is glass so prevalent in your work?
A. Because it is so primitive and colorful. Glass is also an amazing insulator. It takes a lot of labor to create with it, but it’s low in cost. And at night, glass is beautiful with the lights coming through. Put the word out to your friends and local businesses that you need bottles, and there is your collection.