

# Better Homes and Gardens

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**Michelle Obama**

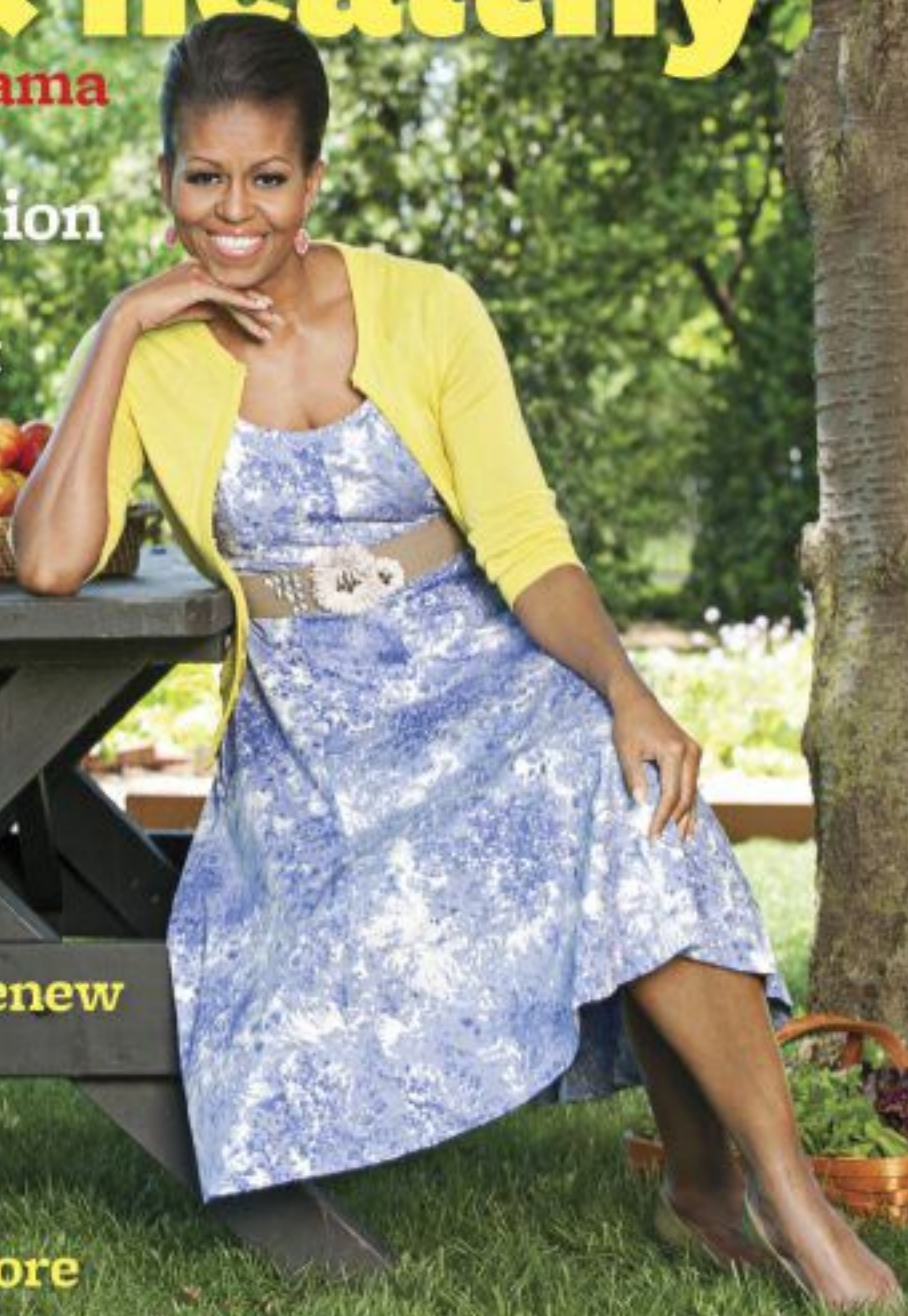
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## Tailored Fit

Thoughtful furniture placement helps a designer carve her home's open floor plan into snug, functional spaces.

BY SARAH EGGE | PHOTOS HELEN NORMAN  
PRODUCED BY KILEEN DETMERS

Arlene Critzos wanted a kitsch-free "coastal clean" look for her dining area. Rattan side chairs and seashell trim on slipcovers help her achieve it.



A bound sisal carpet defines the living area, this photo. Its angled corners subtly direct traffic flow.

The cottage-style home below, charms with its ladder-style balusters and tin roof.



Designer Arlene Critzos wanted the same things for her home that most of her clients crave: a cozy spot to relax, hangout space for the kids, and an inviting area to host friends for dinner or drinks. "My house has to absorb life," she says.

The wide-open living and dining area of her Bethany Beach, Delaware, home was up to the task. The challenge: how to divvy the space into versatile furniture groupings that connect to one another yet don't interfere with people walking through to adjoining rooms. "I probably did about eight space plans," Arlene says. An L-shape pairing of a sofa and settee, teamed with a large ottoman, won out over a sectional. The grouping offers TV-lounging comfort minus the bulk. In the dining area, Arlene placed the table diagonally instead of parallel to the windows. "Angling the table into the room links it with the living area and makes the dining space feel freer," she says.

The space-smart designer even eked out bonus areas. A drop-leaf table behind the sofa pulls duty as a desk, buffet, or bar. Next to French doors to the porch, a pair of wing chairs make a cozy spot that's near the action, yet tucked away. "Pull a couple of dining chairs over, and you have a whole new grouping," Arlene says. "It's all about flexibility." ■

## resources

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Interior designer—Arlene CRITZOS, Interior Concepts, Inc.; 2150 Riva Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401; 410/234-7366. Builder—Cottage Construction; 303/539-0390; cottagelife@jacks.com. Architect—Jeff STOJBER, AIA & Nick MROSOBOWSKI, AIA; Stoiber + Assoc.; 303/988-8700; jstoiber@stoiberandassociates.com; nrosovski@stoiberandassociates.com. Table, etagère—Hickory Chair; hickorychair.com. Slipcovered chairs, sofa and ottoman—Lee Ind.; 800/993-7190; leeinstruments.com. Woven dining chairs—Pottery Barn; 800/922-5501; potterybarn.com. Chandelier—Jones Lighting; joneslighting.com. Draperies—Pindler & Pindler, Inc. (To The Trade); 805/521-9090; pindler.com. Drapery rod—Final Co.; thefinalcompany.com. Upholstery on ottoman, antique rug, lamp on sofa table—Interior Concepts, Inc.; 2150 Riva Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401; 410/234-7366. Sofa table—Hennredon Furniture Ind., Inc.; 800/444-3682; hennredon.com. Woven chairs near porch door—Palcoc; 303/534-7730; #877; palcoc.com. Table between chairs—Blue Ocean Traders; blueoceantraders.com.