

ESSENCE

OUR 45TH ANNIVERSARY!

45
LEGENDS
WE ♥
OUR FAVE
BEAUTY
TREATS OF
ALL TIME

TAKE
YOUR
CAREER
FROM
0 TO
100!
p. 71

TIPS TO
PROTECT
YOUR
FERTILITY

*Ageless
Beauties*
ON FINDING
JOY IN THE
JOURNEY

NEW NOVEL!

TONI
MORRISON'S
GOD HELP
THE
CHILD

THE GAME CHANGERS

HOW ISSA, MARA,
DEBBIE, SHONDA
& AVA ARE TELLING
OUR STORIES &
CRUSHING IT!

\$3.99US \$4.99CAN 05>

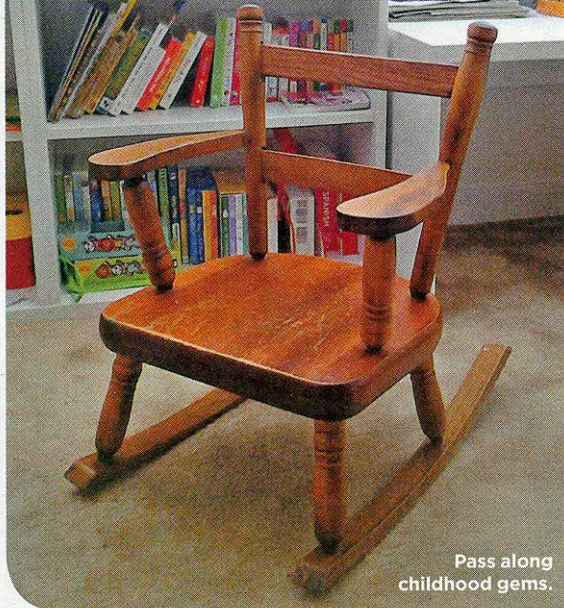


0 92567 10360 7

VISIT ESSENCE.COM
MAY 2015



Turn your snapshots into wallpaper.



Pass along childhood gems.

Far too often our closets, attics and basements become homes for handed-down tokens we're saving for our children. News flash: Your next, best home decor piece may be hiding among the lot. "Preserving and displaying family heirlooms is priceless," says Atlanta-based interior designer Dayka Robinson. "These are things we always want around us." See how you can secure family treasures for generations to come.

Create an exhibit of love.

Gather paper mementos—Grandma's recipe cards, Dad's handwritten letters—to design a gallery of memories. "Have them beautifully matted," Robinson recommends. "Get monochromatic frames or have them professionally framed. It can be as detailed as you'd like."

Give old photos a new home.

Your favorite family pics and wedding portraits can be art. "Wemontage.com turns family photos into wallpaper," says HGTV host and interior designer Tiffany Brooks. Photographic wallpaper works well in a nursery or on an accent wall. And consider incorporating vintage prints into useful items. "Take old yearbook pages, copy and add them into coasters."

Make something out of nothing.

A drawer filled with the aged knick-knacks of your elders can become more. "Send your heirloom pieces like jewelry, zippers and fabrics to a mixed-media collage artist to make an original work of art," suggests designer Robin Wilson of Robin Wilson Home. Her top artist

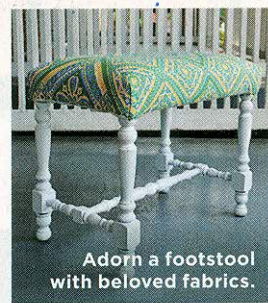
GREAT IDEAS



Make art with mementos like this 2007 piece, titled "Mrs. Bivens."



Matting + frame = art



Adorn a footstool with beloved fabrics.

“Preserving and displaying family heirlooms is priceless.” —INTERIOR DESIGNER DAYKA ROBINSON

pick is Pat Goodman (patgoodman.net), whose piece is pictured in the bottom left photo.

Put fashion forward.

Fish out one of your mother's throw-back swimsuits or dresses. "You know, the one that's so beautiful that you don't want to do anything else with it but frame it?" asks Brooks. "Put it in a shadow box frame to hang in a dressing room or guest room."

Meet your unusual end table.

Grandma's timeworn sewing machine doesn't have to be in working condition to work wonders in your living room. "Clean it up, repaint it and use it as a side table or a sculpture," says Brooks. "They're just so structurally beautiful."

Remix furniture and fabrics.

An inherited quilt can give furniture an instant update. "Use it as a headboard or hang it behind the bed," recommends Robinson. Also consider giving your

favorite furniture a face-lift. "Reupholster a chair with new fabric and your family quilt," suggests Washington, D.C., upholsterer Nicole Crowder. (See her stool above on the bottom right.) If you don't have a family quilt, get one made using family reunion T-shirts, baby clothes or other heirloom fabrics.

Pass on your baby keepsakes.

"Remember your baby blanket?" asks Brooks. "Go to a thrift shop or on Craigslist and find a footstool. Use the blanket to re-cover the cushion and put it in your child's nursery." Crowder advises shopping around for estimates for the best price and quality. "Heirlooms can be small or large. My favorite is a gift from my grandfather—a wood mini rocking chair," recalls Wilson. "My mother saved it and sent it to me for my daughter. The wood has scars from my childhood, and I cannot wait to see the nicks she'll add."

Charli Penn (@ManWifeDog) is the relationships editor for ESSENCE.com.