

Life at Bella Terra's Greatest Hits



Garden entrance

Thank you for visiting my blog on Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday! I am so grateful to my faithful readers and all the new people who are joining us every week. Your comments and questions make my day. Since many of you are new, I thought it might be fun to share some oldies but goodies. Let's call it Life at Bella Terra's greatest hits!



Here at our home, we have the good fortunate of space where we enjoy everything from gardening to outdoor entertaining. Here are a few areas of interest.

Gardening and Chickens



My blog post Gardening 101 stemmed from the question, "does gardening take a great deal of time"? After the initial garden plan, the actual work to plant, harvest and maintain a garden is minimal and seasonal. And the benefits are enormous! To see this detailed post, click [here](#).



Composting 101

Another popular post is about Composting 101, which is an ideal project to start during COVID. Being home and creating more waste, composting is the answer to having great soil for your garden. If you could recycle 30% of your trash to make rich fertilizer, why not? See that post, [here](#).

Before and Afters



Our home BEFORE

Don't you love to look at other people's homes? I certainly do! And it is a bonus if there are good Before and After pictures. I actually have a file where I keep renovation photos of other projects as inspiration.



After

Our historic home is always going through a constant renovation. However, the initial restoration was the most significant. In an attempt to capture that journey, I am writing The Restoration Chronicles. So far there are 5 chapters and if you haven't read our story, click [here](#) for Chapter 1.

Entertaining



COVID has definitely put a monkey wrench into our socializing and entertaining. We feel blessed to be the stewards of this unique historical property and share it often to host everything from charitable events to proms. The orchard is one of the areas of the property we use for large sit-down meals. For more details about one of our dinners in the orchard, click [here](#).



I long for the day when we can open up our home and our arms and welcome guests again. If you are dreaming of when we can all reconnect, [here](#) is an autumn entertaining post.



Cooking, Baking and Making



The summers do put a cramp in my cooking, as it is almost painful to turn on the oven in the triple-digit heat. However,

the minute there is a touch of autumn in the air, I am back to baking. This past year, I learned how to bake sourdough bread from scratch, using starter that I carried home on a plane from Washington, D.C.



My sourdough starters~Hope and Bubbles

If you need a new project while we are all stuck at home, baking bread using a natural yeast, is so rewarding. I just recently shared more sourdough starter with someone who reached out to me and now I have a new friend. Bake bread. Make friends. Check out my post, Sourdough Starter Basics [here](#).



Of course, there are all sorts of recipes in the files of Bella Terra. But here are a few favorites. Key Lime Pie [post](#)



Farfalle pasta with Lemon Chicken and Herb Salad

Together we made Preserved Lemons (see recipe [here](#)) and then

we used them in some fabulous recipes, like the one above. This delicious chicken pasta salad is ideal for the summer~as it can be eaten warm or cold. Check out the recipe [here](#).

DIY and Home Improvement

I am not much of a crafter, but I do like to tackle projects myself, sometimes moaning along the way.



The most recent is a hand stenciled tile bathroom floor in our pool house. If you missed that post you can see it [here](#).



To see the post on the Mailbox/Exterior Light on Guest Cottage, click [here](#)

We have accomplished quite a few projects this year, and several with your helpful comments. From the great advice on the vintage mailbox above, to helping select a front door color, your feedback is gold! See that post, [here](#).



Organizing

Staying organized is such a challenge, but I am inspired to be better at it when I see others accomplishing these tasks. This year, getting the master closet organized was a big win. To

see the embarrassing before pictures and the fabulous after shots, click [here](#).



Keeping heavily used spaces like the pantry is always a challenge. But it looks so nice when it is neat and tidy. See the improvements [here](#).



Pets



Cooper~loves to sit

For those of you who have pets, you know how important they

are to family life. Our two dogs, two cats and numerous chickens are all part of our daily existence here. The Best Kind of Friend is a blog post about the bond we have with our pets, how they shadow us daily and love us unconditionally. Read it [here](#).



Tippy and Donovan



Sox

Thank you for all your kind words during Sox's recent back injury and Tippy's current failing health. We share in the joy of their presence and the grief of their loss.

Just Getting Through Life



You have provided loving ears to some of my life's challenges as we enter new phases of maturity. It was only a year ago, when I was struggling with empty nesting (see post [*here*](#)). But with the pandemic, nearly everyone is home again! Now, next week I will do a repeat performance as we move our daughter out of the house to start her sophomore year in college. Ah,

the ups and downs!



We have talked about Kindness (see post [here](#)) and how important it is to Smile (see post [here](#)) and how to age well (see post [here](#)). Even though we cannot get together physically, we have such a supportive community right here on this blog. The goal with each and every blog post is to provide you with something interesting and important. And I've learned so much from all of you along the way.



Sharing my painting journey

Again, I cannot express how delighted I am that you have been with me from the beginning and I extend a warm welcome to new readers. In a world that seems to be filled with division and anger, it is my hope that Life at Bella Terra will be a bright spot in your day.

Happy Tuesday, my friends! If you ever want to see more content on any topic~gardening, recipes, home improvement, decorating, seasonal, whatever it is, please let me know! Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary".

This post shared with [Tuesday Turn About #61](#)