

THE COASTAL GRANDMOTHER LIFESTYLE

BY KIMBERLY SUTA



PHOTO COURTESY WATERSTONE FAUCETS AT FERGUSON BATH, KITCHEN & LIGHTING GALLERY



PHOTO COURTESY OF DELTA AT FERGUSON BATH, KITCHEN & LIGHTING GALLERY

ONE OF THE LATEST STYLE TRENDS TO SURFACE FROM TIKTOK IS “COASTAL GRANDMOTHER,” ALTHOUGH THE LOOK AND LIFESTYLE WERE ORIGINALLY INSPIRED BY NANCY MEYERS MOVIES LIKE *SOMETHING’S GOT TO GIVE* AND *IT’S COMPLICATED*. THINK OF A BEIGE TURTLE NECK-CLAD DIANE KEATON BEING ROMANCED BY A DEBONAIR JACK NICHOLSON — SOPHISTICATED YET RELAXED — AND YOU’RE GETTING IN RANGE.

Martha Stewart described the aesthetic as “Grand Millennial style’s elegant aunt” and claims to have been loving this look for years. So, what is it really? It’s casual, it’s beachy and cozy, yet fashionable. Imagine a capsule wardrobe with an often-neutral color palette or blues and greens mixed with cable knits and linen. It’s a lifestyle built on enjoying simple but finer things in life: nice bedding, fresh flowers, bottles of wine in the afternoon, gourmet dinners made from farmstand finds.

According to Austin designer, Claire Zinnecker of Claire Zinnecker Design, who has a flair for clean, affordable design, “You can be a Coastal Grandmother without being on the coast or being a grandmother. My own interpretation of the Coastal Grandmother trend is ‘comfort meets style.’ You don’t have to be frumpy to be comfortable. Think hats, oversized button ups and neutrals. We don’t care to conform to men’s style of beauty but choose to be chic with a curated ‘thrown together’ look. Mixing and matching is easy with Coastal Grandmother pieces — tex-

tures, cozy, soft, warmth. Quality not quantity. Sometimes I call it my ‘stick of butter’ look.”

This makes sense, as when reading about Coastal Grandmother, you might also spot references to Ina Garten recipes, so sticks of butter are joyfully encouraged, making this trend even more appealing. Now, the challenge is how to translate this lifestyle trend into a design motif that you can easily bring to life in your own home.

“Think layers and textures, such as linens, knits, natural woods, plaster — the beach meets wabi-sabi,” explained Claire — wabi-sabi being the Japanese philosophy on the acceptance of imperfection and life’s transient nature. It’s also been called an elevated farmhouse style, but a bit more modern and minimalist than crafty kitschy.

“Focus on light, neutral color schemes and textured layers. Fill that antique vase with some fresh cut flowers, lay down a woven rug, add some pillows and turn on some French music!” suggested Claire. You might add a plate of fresh-baked scones with homemade raspberry jam, mimo-

sas and some blue and white linen napkins to the breakfast nook, but that’s only necessary if you have guests or a photo shoot.

One of the key aspects of this emerging trend is sustainability and repurposing — a hot topic in this current climate. Consider meshing heirloom pieces with simple yet beautiful and one-of-a-kind found or vintage objects, created pieces and local artwork that speak to you.

Working with a neutral palette can give you a lot of room to play and adapt. Starting with a white wall, for example, gives you an optimal canvas for building layers and textures in a space. Dare to add a dash of color here and there. Besides blue, carefully integrated greens or even black have been recommended by experts.

Next, consider adding classic-looking window coverings and seating made from either linen or cotton. Then you can introduce some natural elements with interesting textures and lines, like a white oak coffee table with a live edge, hand-woven rugs and well-crafted



PHOTO COURTESY OF SIGNATURE HARDWARE AT FERGUSON BATH, KITCHEN & LIGHTING GALLERY

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baskets filled with dried flowers, dog-eared books or even seashells (if you must) you have collected on treasured explorations. Just be careful not to overdo it as quality over quantity wins the day. In truth, the beauty of this aesthetic is that once you’re ready for something new, the neutral palette allows you to transform without a lot of effort.

If you are wondering how Coastal Grandmother differs from the Grand Millennial style, Claire offers some superb insight. “The Grand Millennial style is more French country sophistication, such as heavy patterns, rich colors, ruf-

fles and more ornate furniture,” she said. This past trend is associated with florals, chintz and pastel palettes that are fun and vibrate while Coastal Grandmother highlights a less complex, monochrome look that still celebrates timeless elegance.

Lean towards simplicity to be safe, but keep in mind that Coastal Grandmother is more about a feeling than anything else — the way you feel in your environment. It’s a rejuvenating, light, airy, calm yet blissful vibe. It’s the feeling of coming home and being home and never wanting to leave. ♦