

Story by Susan Hodara | Photography by John O'Donnell

a thing or twos

FOR TWO'S COMPANY OWNER BOBBIE GOTTLIEB, CHANGING SEASONS ARE A GREAT EXCUSE TO SWAP ACCESSORIES IN HER RYE HOME.

FOR MOST OF US, DECORATING once is more than enough. Once we've selected the final accessory, we're happy to pronounce ourselves finished and call it a home. Not so for Bobbie Gottlieb, founder and CEO of Two's Company, Inc., a mega-company that designs and distributes decorative accessories and giftwares.

To celebrate the glorious view of the Long Island Sound outside her window, Gottlieb changes her entire interior décor twice a year. "In the spring and summer, the upholstery is white and the floors are bare or covered with woven mats," she says. "During the fall and winter, I try to make it cozier with rugs and floral upholstery in crimsons and yellows. It gets grayer outside, so we bring more color inside."

Gottlieb travels the world hunting down the array of gift items and decorative accessories that comprise the offerings of her Elmsford-based company, which was launched in 1969 "with ten-thousand dollars and a big dream," she says. "I was living in a split-level in New Rochelle, trying to figure out how to send three sons to college."

Many of her company's selections—from shells to bells, ceramics to silver—adorn the four-bedroom 1950s home on Rye's Manursing Island, where she's lived for 18 years with her second husband, Alan Marcus. "Anything can serve as inspiration for what we sell," Gottlieb says. On a recent morning, she shared some of what inspires her personally.



time will tell

Leaning against an outside wall in the courtyard entryway is the face of a giant clock about five feet in diameter. Although its metal hands have long since stopped turning, the clock, discovered in a flea market in Lyons, France, harks back to a different age. Says Gottlieb: "It probably once hung on the side of a building there."



brazilian blues

An arrangement of Brazilian mariposa butterflies from the 19th century graces the dining room. Gottlieb found the luminescent piece last spring at an antiques shop in Paris and carried them with her back to New York. "Can you imagine me getting through all that security?" she muses.

let me sea

The centerpiece on Gottlieb's dining-room table is actually a grouping of exotic shells, candles, starfish, and blue-and-white porcelain (sold by Two's Company) artfully assembled on a woven wicker tray. "It works in any environment, from a contemporary loft to the most traditional, formal home," Gottlieb says, "but it's especially wonderful near the water."



hub cap

Eleven hats hanging on the beam between Gottlieb's foyer and living room are among the pieces she changes in September and April to complement the seasons. "In summertime, there's a rice-paddy coolie hat from Asia, a Venetian gondolier cap, a safari hat, and an oversized pink sun hat," Gottlieb says. "During the winter, we have a fez from Turkey, a gendarme cap from France, a hat from Scotland, and other cold-weather headwear."



and so it rose

A three-foot-wide blue compass rose, hand-painted on the antique wood floor, indicates the home's north, south, east, and west. "When you come in, there's so much focus on what's outside," Gottlieb says. "I thought it was important to know which direction you're facing."



bud in your eye

This spherical glass vase has a circular opening on its side, perfect for the solitary bloom. "I love bunches of flowers," Gottlieb says, "but I also appreciate the simplicity of a single blossom. When it's on its own, every part of it becomes important."



photo finish

The oldest of Gottlieb's eight grandchildren presented her with this photo book after she took him on a trip to Italy. Shortly after their return, the resourceful young man compiled his photographs, added text, and self-published this book.



secret sounds

This living-room display includes a bell from Nepal, one from Bhutan, and another from Thailand, all made with metals chosen for their resonance. "People who've made bells for a long time won't tell you what they use," she says. "They keep it a secret."

