

SPECIAL ISSUE

AT HOME

AN OPRAH
MAGAZINE



**OPRAH GOES
ANTIQUING**

**WATCH NAT
GET ROMANTIC**
(Mr. Makeover
Makes
Woman Swoon

**WHAT YOUR
HOUSE SAYS
ABOUT YOU**

**54 BEDROOM
YOU'LL WANT
TO WAKE UP IN**

**DIAN
SAWYER'S
KITCHEN
CONFESSION**

Inspiration!

HOW TO MAKE YOUR HOME A PARADISE



Display until Dec 31

FALL 2000

DISHING FOR COMPLIMENTS

A majolica collector's tableware looks luscious enough to eat. Suzanne Slesin feasts her eyes.

Long before she ever imagined she'd cowrite a definitive guide to majolica, Joan Stacke Graham went to an antiques show and fell head-over-heels in love with the exuberantly colorful Victorian-era pottery. In the beginning, she limited each purchase to a maximum of \$100. Eventually, her desires became more expensive and her appetite, insatiable. Now, 25 years later, the shelves and kitchen cabinets of her one-bedroom Manhattan apartment overflow with jewel-colored oyster dishes, chunky cheese bells, elegant pitchers, and flamboyant fish plates.

Although many of her 1,000-plus pieces are of museum quality, Graham has tucked leaf-and-vine pitchers and candlesticks in among her books and displays a cherry blossom-covered teapot and plates on the antique dressing table in her bedroom. She'll also happily set the table for a seafood dinner party with a trawler's trove of lobster- and shell-encrusted dishes. "Majolica is part of my life—it's not under glass," says Graham, who's apt to use her 17 priceless majolica garden seats as extra chairs. "I don't treat it as rare but as part of my environment."

It was Graham's "please touch" attitude that led her to consult Irwin Weiner, a New York-based interior designer, for help in arranging her ever-growing collection when she moved from a much roomier apartment a few years ago, after the death of her husband. "Instead of trying to create a period space," Weiner says, "I decided to use a more low-key but strong-lined contemporary cabinetry. For the walls and shelves, I used an ochre typical of the majolica glaze."

While the popularity—and prices—of handmade antique majolica have surged, the pottery's decorative appeal has created a demand for whimsical modern imitations. So whatever your budget or cooking skills, you can always dazzle your guests with a mouthwatering seafood platter.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB HIEMSTRA
STYLING BY TODD MOORE



GONE FISHING
Who needs flowers when you can have an extraordinary English Minton majolica lobster tureen as your centerpiece? "It's wonderful for me to be able to set such an exciting table," says Joan Stacke Graham of her array of antique fish dishes, sardine boxes, and oyster plates.

ASIAN TWIST

"My majolica is like wallpaper; it's so enveloping," says Graham, who adorned the antique fake-bamboo dressing table in her bedroom with an assortment of fan- and cherry blossom-covered pieces that reflect the popularity of Japan at the end of the 19th century. For details see Shop Guide.



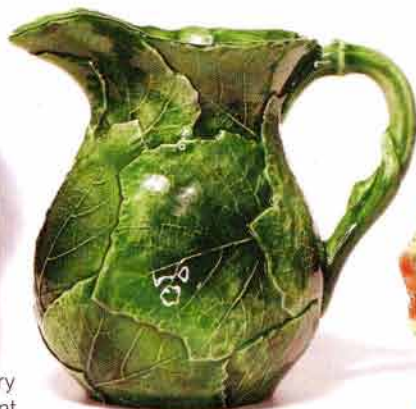
IMITATION MAJOLICA: A Sincere Form of Flattery

They don't have the age or the high prices, but these reproductions are as whimsical as their Victorian ancestors.



OYSTER PLATE

Serve a half-dozen Malpeques and a savory sauce on this opalescent oyster plate, \$40; wolfcybergifts.com.



LEAF PITCHER

The Italian white-clay pitcher looks like it's wrapped in leaves, \$92; www.vietri.com.



SALAD PLATES

These Portuguese dishes are, from top, \$25, \$15, and \$33; william-wayne.com.



LOBSTER CENTERPIECE

Made by hand in Portugal, this decorative ceramic platter is sure to liven up any table, \$50; www.sadek.com.

MELON TUREEN

Modeled on a Victorian original, the handpainted covered bowl is from Italy, \$360; mottahedeh.com.

