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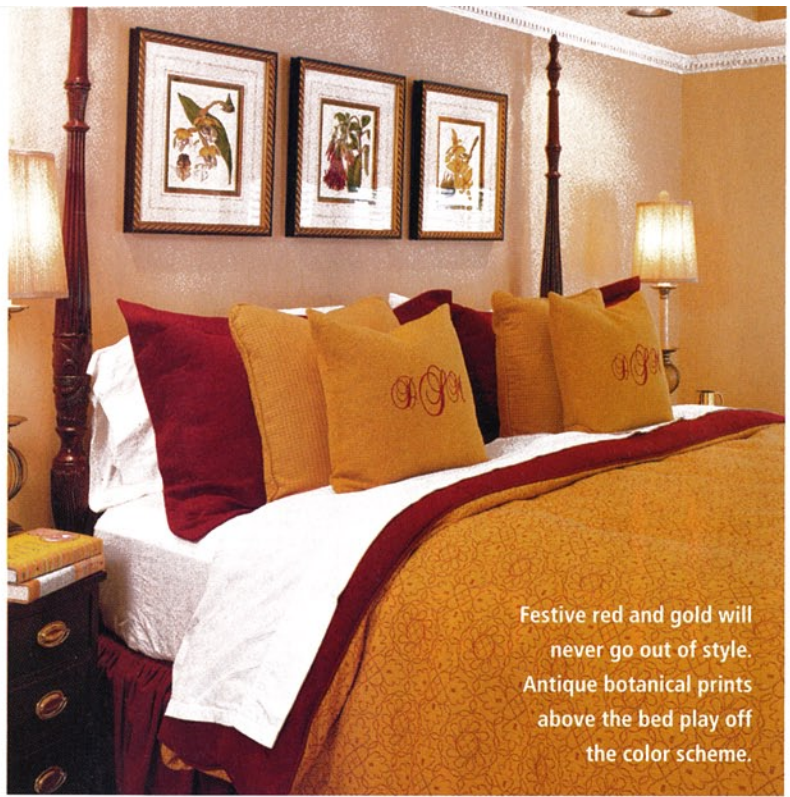


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Festive red and gold will never go out of style. Antique botanical prints above the bed play off the color scheme.

Special Touches for Guest Rooms

Make a space more welcoming with these ideas.
Hint: Start with plush bedding.

Confession: My bedroom is in a sorry state. (And me, a homes editor!) I've been spending all my energy and money on the "public" rooms in my house. When I saw the plush bed of Mary Helen and Donald Swinney in Chatsworth, Georgia, I wanted to dive in and know more. Designer Beverly Baribault shares her tips for making a better bed.

The Plump Bed

I've always wondered how some hotel beds are so supremely comfortable. Beverly shares the secret: down, layering, and quality cotton sheets. She starts with a mattress with a feather down top, and then adds a fitted sheet, a cotton top sheet, a down blanket, another cotton top sheet, and a fluffy down duvet and pillows. "People focus on the thread count of bedding, but what's important is the quality of the cotton," Beverly explains. "A 200-thread-count Egyptian or Italian cotton will feel better than a 600-thread-count of something else."

Custom Touches

Pulling colors from an Asian print fabric on a bedroom chair, Beverly decked out the bed in gold and red with crisp white sheets. The custom duvet cover is gold on one side and red on the other. "With a red bed skirt, Mary Helen can change the look and have a totally red bed," says Beverly. "Custom bedding is a big investment, so I like to give clients an option for a different look."

—ALICE WELSH DOYLE

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Sources:

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