

Wellness, Arett's 75th and JZ finds inspiration

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COMING UP THIS WEEK:

- Grow Your Own Wellness From Madness to Mastery
- Wellness-Adjacent
- Home Show Inspiration
- Pots, Plants & Birds
- The Rationale for Cloud Dancer
- Arett Celebrates 75

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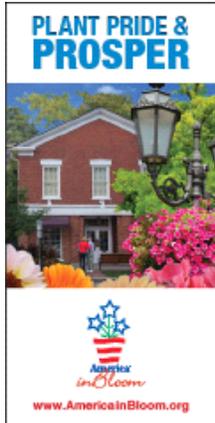
[EXPLORE THE BENEFITS](#)



Grow Your Own Wellness Garden

Yesterday's e-newsletter from Armstrong Garden Centers encouraged readers to "Grow Your Own Wellness Garden." And it had me asking, are we selling wellness collections?





Armstrong's e-newsletter got my attention—and likely that of many other readers, too.

So, I asked my “friend” Chet (aka ChatGPT) about the size of the U.S. wellness market, and the answer was, “Depending on how it’s defined, Americans spend anywhere from roughly \$500 billion to over \$2 trillion annually on wellness, with the broader ‘wellness economy’ doubling over the past decade.” Chet went on to explain that gardening has “quietly become one of the most accessible, low-cost, high-impact wellness behaviors—delivering mental, physical, social and even financial benefits in a single activity.”

Low-cost and high-impact, I agree. Are we ensuring it’s accessible by making the components of a “wellness garden” easy to identify, purchase and grow or use?

I’m pretty sure [Garden Media Group’s 2018 Garden Trends Report](#) nailed how important wellness in all its forms—physical, mental, climatic, to name a few—would be, not just in the gardening sphere but also in society at large. “Discover plants that support your health and wellness, from soothing herbs for tea to antioxidant-rich berries,” Armstrong’s message read. “Growing a garden calms the mind and nourishes the soul, while also providing fresh flavors, natural remedies, and a relaxing home retreat.”

Who couldn’t use a relaxing home retreat right about now? And a calming hobby? It’s just fine to merchandize the berries with the tea herbs, or the lavenders with some comfortable patio furniture.

Who out there is creating wellness collections and signing them as such?

From March Madness to March Mastery

Speaking of wellness, when it comes to your personal energy, March can hit you hard. The “new car smell” of the new year has worn off, the pressures of the oncoming spring season, taxes, ordering, staffing and then personal and worldwide stressors ... whew, it can be a lot.

I spotted an article that will share with you three ways to transform this March “madness” to March “mastery.” If you’re looking for ways to meet the season with renewed energy—for yourself, your team and your organization—you’ll find it [HERE](#). One of the tips is interesting: “Eat the frog first.”



Bringing Cottagecore Indoors

In my mind, the “cottagecore” trend is wellness-adjacent. Perhaps it’s the airy garden aesthetic, the plumes of lavender and chamomile and the whole natural vibe of the trend that makes me think that. While often associated with gardens, cottagecore is the latest trend to make its way into interiors in the UK, according to a press release I received from [Traditional Beams](#). And what do I say about European trends? That we should anticipate their arrival in the U.S.



If you aren't familiar with the cottagecore trend, it refers to a vibe that romanticizes simple, rural and sustainable living. Think cozy and pastoral. I tend to think summery, too.

How can you help your customers bring this pastoral cottagecore look inside the home? Traditional Beams and their consulting interior expert [Katie Malik](#) have some suggestions:



- Don't mix materials. Pick one material you love and build a room's look around it. Like wooden furniture, for example, then everything around it can be simple.
- Add character with timber. Of course a company like Traditional Beams would suggest that, but exposed timbers do add that rustic feel that is key to cottagecore.
- Incorporate "soft layering." Incorporate textures such as a textured throw, a simple wool rug, cushions in neutral tones for example.
- Swap out harsh lighting for low lighting. Low-level light is warm and gentle, and just the thing for a cottagecore vibe.
- Add vintage touches. But don't overdo it. Add a favorite tag sale find here and there—a vintage poster or maybe some old ceramics—to create a lived-in look.
- And a plant-related cottagecore tip from me: Use those old ceramics as vases or deco pots for houseplants or dried flowers, which are *very* cottagecore.

Designer Katie adds this: "Ultimately, cottagecore is about slowing down and being more intentional with your space. Sustainable mindset is really at the heart of what makes cottagecore feel so authentic and meaningful. You're not just decorating, you're creating a home that reflects a gentler, more thoughtful way of living."

THE SEASON IS HERE!

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MasterTag

Finding Inspiration at the Home Show

Colleague Jen Zurko spent a day last week immersed in inspiration and wanted to share some of what she saw with you. Read on and have some of that inspiration rub off on you.

Every March, Chicago's McCormick Place hosts The Inspired Home Show, which the event organizers (the International Housewares Association) boast is "the world's leading home and housewares show." It's worth sitting in traffic and heading into the best city in the world to see how the housewares and décor industry incorporates our products into theirs.

Yes, there's a lot of cookware, stemware, cutlery and kitchen gadgets featured at this show. (And more things to drink out of than you can shake a straw at.) But there were also some interesting finds this year—a couple I think our IGC friends would find especially interesting.



The Kingstone booth didn't have anything related to horticulture, but I loved the way they featured some of their cutlery in their booth. Look at this and think cut flower stems instead of spoons and forks. A retailer that offers cut flowers or has a florist area could do this to draw attention to it.



Grant Howard had lovely glass canisters and serving ware with sunflowers.





Blue Sky had cactus plant mugs and a slew of pet-related products, including bowls and dishes—for you *and* your pet!





Kay Dee Designs has cute aprons, dishtowels and potholders for pet and garden lovers.



I stopped at Tag's booth because I saw a little figurine of a cat stretching and thought, "Hey, I just saw those at Wallace's Garden Center last week!" Steve Johnson, who helps Tag with their marketing, told me that they know Wallace's well and sell to many garden centers around the country. They not only had figurines, but trinket dishes inspired by flowers, plants and pets.



Dried Flowers, Pots and Shimmying Plants

Jen Zurko continues with more items from the Inspired Home Show.



Conimar Group had complete table settings with flowers, including more sunflowers.



I LOVED these bowls and cups from Widgeteer, which have real dried flowers molded inside the plastic.





Brazil-based company Floridis makes planters and containers from high-density polyethylene, so they not only last a long time, but they're UV resistant so they don't fade. The Verdy series features four sizes of containers shaped like a wine glass that have a stone texture. They're also really lightweight. They're currently selling them at some big box stores and retailers like Wayfair.



Prepara's Salad Pod is a genius way to pack an on-the-go salad. You just put your salad in the Pod and when you're ready to eat it, you open the top, pour in your dressing, close it and shake it for even dressing distribution. No leaking! The best part is it also serves as your bowl, too—just put it on its side and open the hatch. They also have the Harvest Pod for grain and protein bowls or warm dishes. They sell them individually or in bundles and have self-standing endcap POP.



The one booth where I actually saw real plants was where the company called Hello Tomorrow (cute name!) was showing their new brand of motion-sensor pots and vases. Called Plantpetz, the interior shell of the container will make the plant inside of it move in response to motion or ambient sound with the help of a sensor that you place in the soil. You can pet or talk to your plant and it'll start to spin and wiggle. The pot also serves as a Bluetooth speaker, so you and your plant can dance together to your favorite tunes. And you can record a message to make a really unique personal gift.

Plantpetz comes in 4- and 6-in. containers (that include drip trays for drainage) and a cut flower vase in four different colors. Hello Tomorrow's Jeffrey Jones said that he and the team that created Plantpetz worked on developing the Furby in the late 1990s (fellow Gen Xers know what I'm talking about) and other robotics. And I was surprised at how inexpensive they were, considering they also have Bluetooth: \$99 for the 4 in. and the vase, and \$149 for the 6 in. (retail). Movement would be even *more* tempting for my cat to eat my plants, but it's a cool concept! Catch how it works in [these videos on the Plant Petz website](#).





Tactacam has been making motion sensor cameras for security systems and hunting bluffs for a few years and now they have a line of birdfeeders called **Feathersnap**. The motion sensor camera takes still photos and videos of any birds that stop by the feeder to dine. You control the camera with an app that comes with the purchase of the birdfeeder, with the option to subscribe for more features, including a bird ID program, info on migration patterns and the ability to join the “Nestwork”—a social community where you can share photos of your winged friends and chat with other bird lovers. There are also games and a learning platform for kids. And you only have to charge the camera once when you first take it out of the box—solar panels on the roof will keep the camera charged the rest of the time. Feathersnap has two different types of feeders: one for seed and one for hummingbirds.

Thanks for the great finds, JZ! I love that Salad Pod.



The Rationale for Cloud Dancer

Jen also attended a talk from Pantone’s Executive Director while at the Inspired Home Show. Here’s what Leatrice Eiseman had to say.

As in previous years, Executive Director of the Pantone Color Institute Leatrice “Lee” Eiseman gave a talk about color trends. This year, her presentation theme was “Sense-Abilities—The Most Directional Color & Design Trends.” I think of her as the Anna Wintour of color trends and really enjoy her talks.

Lee started her session with: “It’s not just the trend, but what’s behind it.” She tied in color trends with the five senses (sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing) and it can be argued that many of the recent Pantone Colors of the Year cover multiple senses.

Lee said she saw Peach Fuzz, the 2024 Color of the Year, used in what she calls “integration in memorable and unexpected ways”—in a variety of textures in clothing and apparel, for instance

as a cozy fleece peach blanket. Last year's Mocha Mousse was "a color you could literally taste," said Lee.



And the Color of the Year for 2026, Cloud Dancer, is "something to quiet all the white noise. It's a hushed whisper in a noisy world."



As with Mocha Mousse, there were a lot of, ahem, opinions ... about the choice of Cloud Dancer. Some people told Lee that "white is not a color." But she bristles at that.

"White evokes a presence. It's a clean slate—especially with what's going on around us."

Lee said white is the best color for contrast, and 95% of consumers say color is the number one reason they buy a product, so "presentation and color is key."

She showed many examples of white used in multiple ways, from clothing to housewares. White is classic and timeless, and can be used anytime, anywhere, with anything.

She waved off not wearing white after Labor Day as "an old concept." And that we should pay attention to what fashion designers are creating—which right now is a lot of flowy white clothing.

"Fashion always points the finger on where we are going," said Lee.

And in home décor, white is "a stable, dependable choice" in quilting and porcelain, linens and marble, which "expresses purity."

Lee also talked about something a bit closer to home: foliage and greenery. Not everyone has easy access to nature, so they're always looking for it in home décor, even if it's a floral pattern

on a dish or leaves on wallpaper.

“The key to bringing it all together is color,” she said.

Arett Celebrates 75

Look who's turning 75! **Arett Sales** will be celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. The company began as a small storefront operation in New Rochelle, New York, and is now a national distributor with a recognized retailer-first service philosophy. Expanding from the Northeast to the Mid-Atlantic, Arett finally expanded all the way to the West Coast in 2024-25 to serve retailers nationwide.

Today Arett Sales is a fourth-generation, family-owned business rooted in family values and long-standing relationships. They continue to invest in logistics, infrastructure, digital tools and programming to remain competitive.

So, what does a 75th anniversary celebration for Arett Sales look like? Well, they will have a series of initiatives throughout the year to recognize their partnerships and to create additional value for customers. Some of what they have planned include:

- Anniversary-themed sales events and limited-time promotional campaigns
- Expanded closeout opportunities and pallet programs
- Dedicated 75th Anniversary features across monthly deal emails and digital marketing platforms
- Retailer and vendor storytelling initiatives celebrating long-standing partnerships
- A commemorative 75th Anniversary Yearbook Edition (digital and limited print), featuring historical photography, partner milestones, and “Then vs. Now” product evolution content (oh, that’s always fun!)

Share your story of Arett! Whether you've worked with Arett for decades or just recently joined their network, they welcome you to share your story by completing a brief **questionnaire**, which takes less than five minutes.

Also on tap is a celebration during their annual Open House, scheduled for September 16-17 at the Atlantic City Convention Center. The event will feature:

- More than 300 manufacturers
- Thousands of new products
- Exclusive show-only specials
- Pallet programs and enhanced closeout discounts
- Networking events and vendor meet-and-greets
- Anniversary-themed exhibits celebrating 75 years of growth

For more information about Arett's Open House 2026, find it **HERE**.

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, etc., drop me a line if you'd like at ewells@ballpublishing.com.



Ellen Wells
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