



Country Cards

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Cherie Langlois

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Photo by Cherie Langlois I'm not fond of these shorter, soggier, colder, darker days, but I can think of one good thing about them: they give me the perfect excuse to stay inside where it's warm, dry and lamplit, and get crafty.

The relentless approach of the holidays also plays a part in spurring this renewed interest, nudging me to break out my knitting or rughooking, put "clean/organize craft closet" on my to-do list, and start making inexpensive country greeting cards.

I guess I'm a bit old-fashioned, in this age of e-mail correspondence, but I still love giving and receiving real cards with real handwriting that you can hold in your two hands, prop on the piano, and then stash in a "Sentimental Stuff" box to keep forever.

I know there are lots of creative ways to make cards, but since I often make them at the last minute (as in, "OMG, it's [fill in the blank]'s birthday tomorrow!") and photography is a passion of mine, I tend to gravitate toward extremely quick and easy photo cards (I also create cards from pen and ink drawings, but that takes a loooong time).

All you need is: a digital camera photo software/printer (or make copies at the store) photo paper acid-free glue stick or double-sided tape blank 5x7 greeting cards/envelopes made from acid-free cardstock. I usually buy sets of Strathmore's Blank Watercolor Greeting Cards.

Photo by Cherie Langlois 1. Shoot your photos and print them out. Today's advanced digital cameras practically take good pictures by themselves.

And living here in the country, we're surrounded by beautiful, interesting subjects to photograph at any time of year: family, animals, wildlife, gardens, barns, rural landscapes, you name it.

A few tips: when composing your pictures, think vertical as well as horizontal and ensure there's no clutter in your background. Use your photo software to play with color, eliminate red-eye, etc. I usually print out photos in a 4 x 6 size for cards.

2. Glue or tape your photo to the front of the blank card. If using glue, place a book on top and let dry a minute before proceeding. OK, I just discovered the existence of photo greeting cards that print directly from your computer, so you could even skip this step.

3. Think up a funny, poignant, romantic, silly, festive or other sentiment to write in your card. You'd think this would be the easy part for me, being a writer, but it's actually the hardest!

What craft are you up to now?

~ Cherie

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