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PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Tria Giovan*
WRITTEN BY *Jean Nayar*

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Opening pages: A Dallas family had long been smitten with the way of life in the South of France. When they found a nineteenth-century farmhouse, complete with a barn and stables, they decided to make it a home of their own. In a room they call *L'Orangerie*, they positioned much of their existing French antique furnishings, interspersing them, though, with contemporary artworks, such as a pair of paintings flanking the fireplace by Ryan Mrozowski. This page: The kitchen backsplashes are composed of nineteenth-century Dutch blue and white tiles. The original flooring is terracotta. Opposite: A corner of *L'Orangerie* is defined by a tapestry by the late Danish painter Bjørn Wiinblad.





Interior designer Cathy Kincaid and her clients are unafraid of color, as evidenced in one of the home's sitting rooms. A decidedly pink vintage sofa is accented with blue and white pillows, along with a contemporary artwork whose yellow and white hues are echoed in a pair of ceramic lamps. The six-legged coffee table is covered with an antique textile. The striped rug is an antique dhurrie. As Kincaid says, "Mixed patterns live happily together when a thread of color runs throughout."



An elaborately made-up bed in a guest room becomes a kind of work of art, with chartreuse pillows, a blue and white Indienne quilt, a peaked custom headboard, and a well-coordinated layering of linens and shams. The chair is an antique. Indian baluster lamps are set on nightstands.

THE FIRST TIME a globetrotting Texan couple saw the home known as *Mas de Baraquet* in Provence some twenty years ago, they were smitten. “It was stunning,” says the wife. “We loved it!” She’d been traveling through the region with her husband, a passionate Francophile who works in finance, when by chance the friends who then owned the home invited them to visit. “It sits on one hundred and fifty acres in the village of Paradou, adjacent to a reserve with sweeping views of plane trees and sunflower fields—it’s like Shangri-La,” she says.

About fifteen years later, while the couple was on a family holiday with their three teenage children, their friends told them they planned to put their French country home on the market. “We weren’t looking to buy a home in Provence at the time,” says the wife, “but we told them, ‘No, no, no—hold off until we see it again.’” After a return trip to view the home, they made the decision to purchase it. “We knew it was a sure thing and that it was meant to be,” she says. “I’d never seen a home there I liked more.”

Before its previous owners had shepherded the home into its current incarnation as a spacious manor, it was a crumbling nineteenth-century farmhouse/barn and stables. Over several years, they collaborated with the masterful French design team of Dominique and Bruno Lafourcade to renovate and transform it with newly constructed interiors and extensions. Upon its completion, the home stood as the definition of Provençal style. Indeed, the interiors were so well maintained that, after nearly twenty years of use, the husband was ready to occupy it as a summer home just as it was with all its furnishings and accoutrements still in place. But the wife saw the need for a refresh. “I told him that I looked better twenty-five years ago, too, but it was time for a change,” she explains.

They enlisted Dallas-based interior designer Cathy Kincaid, who has worked with them on several of their homes in Texas, the Hamptons, and Manhattan to help them refashion the interiors and make the dwellings their own. Deftly navigating a middle path between the husband’s wish to preserve many of the French country antique furnishings and accents and the wife’s desire to make the atmosphere more “youthful,” the designer started by removing all the heavy carpets and *toile de Jouy* curtains and upholstery.

“I wanted to avoid French Provincial clichés and opted instead for a more Mediterranean look with casual Indienne prints and cotton dhurries in lighter, fresher colors,” Kincaid says. She also culled the furnishings and accents, retaining only the best. “We kept maybe eighty percent of the furniture but reupholstered one hundred percent of everything,” says the owner.

To ease the process of working, in part, from afar, Kincaid selected fabrics, wallpapers, and rugs at the U.S. showrooms of international suppliers and had them delivered through branches in London or Paris. She also worked with European upholsterers and curtain makers, allowing the refurbishment work to take place closer to the home. “My clients love layers, they love color, they love accessories, they love art, they’re very exuberant, not minimal at all,” notes Kincaid. As such, they also started fresh on the walls of every room, repainting or wallpapering each in soft, appealing colors or subtle patterns, while leaving the terracotta tile floors throughout intact.

With the update of finishes and furnishings complete, the designer and her clients turned their attention toward adding a personal stamp with layers of new art and accents. Paradou is tiny but well known, thanks to fans of the south of France like the writer Peter Mayle and lovers of French cuisine like Patricia Wells and Julia Child who have sung its praises in their books. It’s also near some of the region’s finest markets and antiques shops, where the designer searched for many of the home’s missing pieces. “We were in the middle of some of the best antiques shopping in the world, so why not use it!” Kincaid says. Among the treasures they found in Paris, as well as in Provençal villages like Tarascon and L’Isle sur la Sorgue, were a duo of fanciful mid-century sconces that now flank the fireplace in the home’s cheery solarium/orangerie.

“I love a mashup of things,” says the wife, who notes she also wanted to mix in contemporary elements and a Texas twist for a little zing. Since the owners are serious art collectors, the modern edge emerges mostly in the form of contemporary and twentieth-century art and objects by artists like Texas painter David Bates or legendary Danish ceramicist Bjørn Wiinblad. “Touches like these make the home sophisticated without taking itself too seriously,” says Kincaid. “Cathy just gets us. Our homes are pretty yet cozy and livable, not intimidating or precious,” says her client. “We love a welcoming home.” ■

This page: A blue hibiscus pattern is used for the window draperies, shams, and curtains on the iron canopy frame in the master bedroom. The rustic, whitewashed ceiling beams are left distressed. Opposite: The master bath features locally sourced tiles; a port window brings in a warm, natural light.





Opposite: A mirror in one of the guest bathrooms is framed with a decorative motif, making it both a work of art and a practical item. Comfortable chairs are positioned in the home's bathrooms to encourage moments of rest prior to a bath. This page: A guest bed is partially tucked into a recess.

Room Additions



“When mixing patterns, blend large and small scales.”
—Cathy Kincaid



Upon completion of the project, designer Cathy Kincaid said, “The owners wanted a home where you wouldn’t be afraid to have a good time.” Clockwise from top: Teacups hang on hooks beneath a shelf that holds vintage hotel cookie jars; an upstairs seating area, with access to an outdoor deck; spare dishes and linens are stored in a cabinet whose glass front is covered with a gingham curtain; a hand-tied curtain in the master bedroom; curtains in the living room are hand-embroidered; a water trough that is original to the house; the clients’ collection of antique walking sticks.

