

French LESSONS

The French are masters of effortless style. Here's how you can add some quintessentially French touches to your home with a few statement pieces, beautiful linen and a soft palette



LAZY LOUNGING

Not even the finest linen should be too precious for an outdoor living area. Natural materials such as rattan, raw wood, metal and unhone travertine create a neutral backdrop where French linen scatters enhance the relaxed mood. A dog is a typically Parisian accessory, so if you don't have any four-legged friends place a quirky sculpture on your patio. **TIP:** For an authentic look, opt for natural rather than man-made textiles as they complement other natural textures best and age beautifully.

Coffee table, dog sculpture and Paris book boxes from Block & Chisel Interiors. **Planters** from Biggie Best. **Bird sculpture** from L'Orangerie. **Notebooks** from Mitat. Duck egg **napkins** from Mr Price Home. Printed **napkin** from Mitat. **Cushions** on sofa on the right, from left: Usez, colour Sea Mist, from Hertex Fabrics; red motif from Makietie; Angelo, colour Noir, from Hertex Fabrics. **Cushions** on sofa on the left, from left: Usez, colour Sea Mist, from Hertex Fabrics; chicken motif from Makietie; Denmark, colour Lindt, from Hertex Fabrics.

TEXT AND STYLING MARIAN VAN WYK PHOTOGRAPHS GREG COX

ALL SET

Add French flair to your kitchen displays and table settings with an assortment of porcelain and ceramics. For a fresh look, stick to a white palette and mix vintage china with earthenware and clear glass. Combine functional pieces such as enamel jugs and storage containers with pretty terrines, stemmed bowls and glass domes with delicate details. A French linen ribbon, subtle lettering and a hint of rusted metal add to the charm. **TIP:** As well as being decorative, your display pieces can be used to store utensils or for flower arrangements. ▷

Decor by Lizette Sevenster of Renaissance Décor. Paris rabbit **place mats** and **doilies** from Mitat. Stack of **napery**: duck egg runner (second from top) from Fondant Textiles; rest from Makietie. Tabletop items: **bowl** and plain **jugs** from Block & Chisel Interiors; **jug with words** and **utensil holder** from Biggie Best; **terraine** from Artefact; **juicer** from House & Interiors. **Cake stand**, stylist's own.



◀ PURE AND SIMPLE

Gorgeous textured linens and cottons in crisp white and muted colours like duck egg and mushroom are the staples of a French scheme. An armoire with decorative moulding or intricate carving is another must-have for an authentic look.

TIP: You don't have to break your budget on imports. Local design companies such as Fondant Textiles, Makietie and Mitat produce stylish original table linen without the carbon footprint of imports. ▷

Decor by Lizette Sevenster of Renaissance Décor. **Paint technique** on armoire by Elise Lourens. **Chandelier** from Candelabra. Dining **chairs** upholstered in Greyton, colour Pastille, from Hertex Fabrics. On the table:

runner from Makietie; **cake stand** from Artefect; **napkins** from Fondant Textiles; **butter dish** from L'Orangerie.



▶ DETAIL ORIENTATED

French furniture is all about the detail – curves, turned wood, carving and paint techniques – and a 'less is more' approach allows these details to shine. The same goes for accessorising: limit displays to a few favourite pieces, but keep things interesting by juxtaposing old and new, shiny and rustic, animal sculptures and classic crystal pieces. Think battered metal and glass, silver and ceramic.

TIPS: A paint technique and new upholstery can transform junk shop furniture into desirable French pieces. Taxidermy is characteristic of French decor displays, but if this is not your cup of tea, opt for sculptures of birds, dogs or horses.

Antique **ticking cushion** from Artefect. **Vintage books** from L'Orangerie. **Metal jug** from Biggie Best. Studio W **teacup** from Woolworths. All other decor and furniture from Farriers. Shot on location at Farriers.





▲ SWEET DREAMS

French bedroom furniture can be as flamboyant as you like, with opulent chandeliers and oversized ornate mirrors. Rather than using conventional bedside cabinets, consider chests of drawers or vintage metal café tables.

TIPS: For the French, decor rules are made to be broken, so place your bed in front of the window where natural light will highlight the intricate carvings of the head- and footboards. If you're decorating on a budget, scour junk shops for iron trellises that would make a pretty wall-mounted headboard.

Tsar and Tsarina **pillowcases** and vintage **pumps** from Mitat. **Dresses** from Smitten Home & Life. All other decor and **furniture** from Farriers. Shot on location at Farriers.

▲ LEGWORK

A vintage bath and an ornate vanity set the scene for a French bathroom where fine craftsmanship is seen in the intricate legs of the bath, vanity, side table and chair. The French are also masters of repurposing: a chair can be used instead of a towel stand, while a side table keeps soap and cosmetics handy.

TIP: Combine sheer curtains and painted wooden shutters for beautiful dappled light. **GH**

Decor by Christine Bence Interiors.

Paint technique on the vanity by Lemon & Lilac Paint Techniques.

SOURCES

Artefact 021 762 6793 **Biggie Best** 021 534 8662 **Block & Chisel Interiors** blockandchisel.co.za **Candelabra** 021 939 1001
Christine Bence Interiors 082 773 4975 **Elise Lourens** 083 763 4083 **Farriers** 021 761 2212 **Fondant Textiles** fondanttextiles.com
Hertex Fabrics hertex.co.za **House & Interiors** 021 683 1468 **Lemon & Lilac Paint Techniques** lemonlilac.co.za
L'Orangerie 021 674 4284 or 021 761 8355 **Makietie** makietie.com **Mitat** mitat.co.za **Mr Price Home** mrpricehome.com
Renaissance Décor 083 414 1777 **Smitten Home & Life** smittengifts.co.za **Woolworths** 0860 100 987