

Country Sampler

BOHO

inspiring individuality


style™

ROOMS
WITH
personal
FLAIR

MEET
"CUPCAKE WARS"
MOTHER-DAUGHTER
SUGAR ARTISTS
pg. 90

HACIENDA CHIC • FAR-FROM-HOME RETREATS •
ADVENTURE ON THE ROAD • LIVING IN THE TREETOPS

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Large comfortable seating pieces upholstered in natural linen get a jolt of spontaneity from handwoven and embroidered throw cushions Katherine Huycke bought on a trip to Morocco. The drapes are taffeta, and each panel is stitched from different fabrics and linings. OPPOSITE: The room's stone walls are enlivened with a light coat of cement tinted a soothing shade. On the coffee table, Katherine brings together pewter candlesticks, an enameled pitcher, and a carved wooden camel brought back from her travels. All are easily movable for an impromptu display of the morning's sketches or laying out maps for planning an afternoon's journey.

Vibrant VIBES



An artful home reflects its owner's love of both intense colors and a good challenge.



If you've read Frances Mayes' book or seen the film *Under the Tuscan Sun*, you know buying a "fixer-upper" villa in a foreign land can be a long, difficult process filled with frustrating intercultural misunderstandings.

For Katherine Huycke, an Irish-born Canadian artist, the prospect of rescuing an abandoned property in the south of France and making it her second home was an adventure she was willing to tackle.

In 2003, Katherine walked past a shop in the village of Uzès in Provence and noticed an intriguing "for sale" sign.

"I was visiting my sister-in-law, who lives in a nearby village," Katherine says. "The property that caught my eye was a stone structure that had once housed animals and farm machinery."

The building had been abandoned for the last seven years,

during which time it had been vandalized and sustained extensive water damage. What appealed to Katherine, however, was its location at the intersection of three converging roads, with a two-minute walk to a bakery and other shops. The market town was also easily accessible to a train station and a major airport.

"The building had excellent visibility, and I thought it would lend itself to being used as both a home and art gallery," she says. "What it didn't have was plumbing or electricity!" Undeterred, Katherine made an offer. Six months later, she was back in France and ready to start renovating "La Grange."

Having already restored several homes, Katherine was familiar with demolishing walls, laying floors and tiling. She used that experience to do much of the required work herself. Her real estate agent helped her find skilled tradespeople when needed.



LEFT: Built from scratch by Katherine and her helpers, the kitchen blends an antique workbench and harvest table with a modern abstract mosaic work. Resplendent with a yellow, blue and green palette worthy of Van Gogh, the space accommodates multiple cooks and large gatherings. ABOVE: The kitchen's colors surge into the entryway with a bold accent wall and multicolor painted tiles on the stair risers. BELOW LEFT: "The ceramic backsplash is composed of broken pieces because I did not have the correct tool to cut the tile," Katherine explains. "It portrays the local landscape and the village of Pont du Gard. BELOW RIGHT: A porcelain chandelier handpainted with tiny flowers hangs from one of the building's original log beams. Katherine treated it to a sassy makeover with painted shades and bright ribbons.





“My son spent a month helping me open walls to create doorways and build cement partitions to create rooms,” she explains. “I divided the space so I could comfortably entertain family and friends and host creative workshops.” The first floor now features a large open kitchen with an eating area, an adjoining dining room that doubles as gallery space, and two bedrooms with private baths. On the second floor, there are two bedrooms with a shared bath, and a salon that functions as a gathering space opening onto a balcony and a walled garden. The top floor offers a bedroom and bath with a tiled terrace.

“My decorating choices sprang from wanting to inspire my guests to consider using a colorful palette in their own homes. It energizes the spirit,” Katherine explains. “I had a wonderful time shopping for household items at *brocante* [secondhand shops] and *vide greniers* [garage sales].

Katherine spends four or five months each year at the house. While there, she frequently shares her villa with various groups of visiting artists.

“I love taking them out to discover the historic sites or paint in the French countryside. We always stop to enjoy a traditional lunch,” she says. After a few carafes of wine, lots of chat, and a walk around the charming village of Uzès, they return to the artful villa for a relaxing dinner.

“It’s as wonderful an experience for me as it is for them,” she says. “I love watching their amazement when I tell the story about how I built this place from almost nothing. Sharing my getaway with other artists helps me justify keeping a home in the south of France.” 🌸

EDITOR’S NOTE: To find out more about visiting La Grange, go to www.lagrangefrance.com.



ABOVE LEFT: A watercolor mural inspired by a paisley duvet cover jazzes up the third-floor bedroom. A trompe l'oeil "hallway" painted on the bathroom door makes the space appear larger. ABOVE: Katherine emblazoned the sleeping niche with the psychedelic swirls and motifs of a gypsy shawl. FAR LEFT: French passementerie tassels add a finishing flourish to curtain tiebacks. LEFT: A plain pale-wood chest goes global with handpainted wooden knobs.

VIBRANT VIBES *steal the look*

▲ ABSTRACT SHOWER CURTAIN
Artist Audrey Chenal of Girly Trend loves color. Her extra-long shower curtains feature watercolor prints on the exterior with a pure white reverse side.
www.zazzle.com

▼ COURTNEY LINEN TRACK ARM SOFA - HANDY LIVING
Bring comfort into your home with this Courtney Linen Track Arm Sofa from Handy Living. Featuring track arms with a button-tufted back and tapered legs, this living room sofa will elevate the look of your space while giving you a place to relax and unwind.
www.target.com



◀ EASTER CARROT VASE
Whimsically shaped and realistically sculpted, this handpainted ceramic vase brings a fresh feel to the kitchen counter or table all year round.
www.amazon.com

▼ STUDIO 350 LAMPS
Striking gold flowers on a shiny blue shade hover above a mesmerizing green glass orb on this elegant table lamp.
www.overstock.com



▼ GLASS-TOP COFFEE TABLE
It's so '70s, and that's a good thing! The black lacquered faux-bamboo base supports a thick rectangular glass slab for a tropical touch.
www.1stdibs.com

▲ VINTAGE KILIM RUG
A geometric symphony of colors and shapes, this tribal rug was woven in Afyon, Turkey, on the Aegean coast. It features tidy warp thread fringes on both short ends.
www.kilim.com



TOP: The walled terrace's bistro table set provides a romantic spot to start the day or watch the sunset over the hills. ABOVE AND OPPOSITE: A balcony sitting area balances neutral stone walls, black bamboo furniture and billowing cream drapes against brilliant blue vases and riotous accent pillows. The look is positively audacious. A tribal rug atop the russet concrete floor reverberates with excitement.

"I hope seeing my decor
inspires others to be bold.
Living with *joyful color*
is energizing."





MY BOHO *style*

ACCESSORIZING WITH PANACHE STARTS WITH COLOR BUT RELIES ON DIVERSE ART AND OBJECTS.

1. ART IS EVERYWHERE

Or at least it should be. "Art isn't only painting or prints. Your home is a large canvas for expressing your creativity," Katherine Huycke says. "Give inexpensive furniture a custom look, or paint on the walls or floors." In the bathroom, she created a cool and tranquil look to contrast the home's generally hot colors.

2. START SMALL

Even if you haven't held a paintbrush since elementary school art class, try painting a few cabinet knobs or embellishing a lamp shade. Add color to one wall in a room or tile a freeform mosaic backsplash.

3. BE A COLLECTOR

Visit art shows, browse flea markets or bring back vacation mementos that are idiosyncratic. Black bamboo recalls one of Katherine's favorite public gardens, an impressive bamboo arboretum called La Bamboueraie in Cévennes, France. "It's OK to mix works of many styles and genres," she says. "Just for fun, add a few of your own creations and see if anyone notices."

4. BORROW A COLOR SCHEME

Let a gypsy shawl, a hippie wallpaper pattern, a Marimekko fabric or a favorite painting provide inspiration for your decor. Katherine's kitchen colors were inspired by an oil painting hanging above the server.

Like the rest of the decor, the second-floor bathroom's concept began with a color. Shades of lavender cover the walls with a rich heliotrope purple used on the log-pole beams. A lovely claw-foot tub pairs a traditional temperament with avant-garde angled mirrors, glass shards, and a ceramic bowl depicting Adam and Eve. Overall, the feeling is relaxing and cool.