

Suburban

C'est Magnifique!

Defined by inviting elegance and a love of all things French, this eclectic-chic home is an imaginative composition of mix-and-matched treasures

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"The world is but a canvas to the imagination."

— Henry David Thoreau, American author and philosopher, 1817-1862



And more times than not, the same can be said of a home. Imagination and creativity are the powers that fuel good design — design like that of this magnificent home, tucked away on a tree-lined street in a quiet Town and Country neighborhood. At first glance, its classic, albeit breathtaking, brick exterior belies the multifaceted, inventive surprises that wait within.

A history-filled fusion of eclectic and artistic styles, this home's décor has evolved over time, its visionary owners adding new pieces as they encounter them. Rather than opting for the obvious — matching tables and chairs, corresponding bedroom sets and perfectly coordinated fabrics — they use what inspires them. Well-loved furnishings and accessories, some family heirlooms and others new discoveries, span eras and places of origin, from all over the United States to Saint-Tropez. As a result, their home is filled with incredible histories and

captivating stories belonging to a multitude of meaningful items that have lived lives before. The most impressive and inspiring aspect of the homeowners' eclectic medley, however, is not the individual pieces that comprise their collection; it's the beautiful, harmonious way in which their unique, blended style is accomplished.

"If I like it, I'll find a place to make it work," says the homeowner of her flexible approach to interior design. And with her unmistakable gift for effortlessly mixing the mismatched, it's a fabulously functional philosophy to live by.

For instance, the home's sophisticated dining room is awash in vintage glamour, marrying delicate, feminine details reminiscent of Versailles with more rustic overtones, such as antique white-washed oak beams along the soaring ceiling and a stately stone fireplace. Unconstrained by the archetypal rules of space planning

Opposite page: Gracious, European style defines the home, which was designed by architect Dick Busch. A stone archway and an oversized wooden front door create an inviting entrance, while lush green landscaping and colorful blooms by Kelce & Pedley Designs welcome guests with natural beauty. **This page:** Pretty in pink, the long, narrow dining room table is surrounded by a charming collection of mismatched wooden chairs, with two Victorian parlour chairs, upholstered in a sumptuous fuchsia velvet, sitting at each end. A wrought-iron chandelier, found on a family trip to New Orleans, hangs overhead. An ornate gold mirror and a delightful display of sweet treats rest atop an antique sideboard that has been in the homeowner's family for 175 years.

This page: Two antique doors lead from the kitchen to the hearth room. **Opposite page, top:** A distressed copper backsplash, antique white-washed oak ceiling beams and contrasting light and dark knotty alder cabinetry lend the kitchen a French Provençal flavor. **Bottom left:** Resplendent with vintage charm, the master bedroom offers a marvelous mix of styles and colors. The black wrought-iron chandelier adds an unexpected, eye-catching twist, especially when paired with the antique bedside lamps, both of which belonged to the homeowner's grandmother. **Bottom, right:** Dark wood tones and luxe leather chairs lend the wine room, which holds a collection of 400 bottles, a stately, masculine mood.

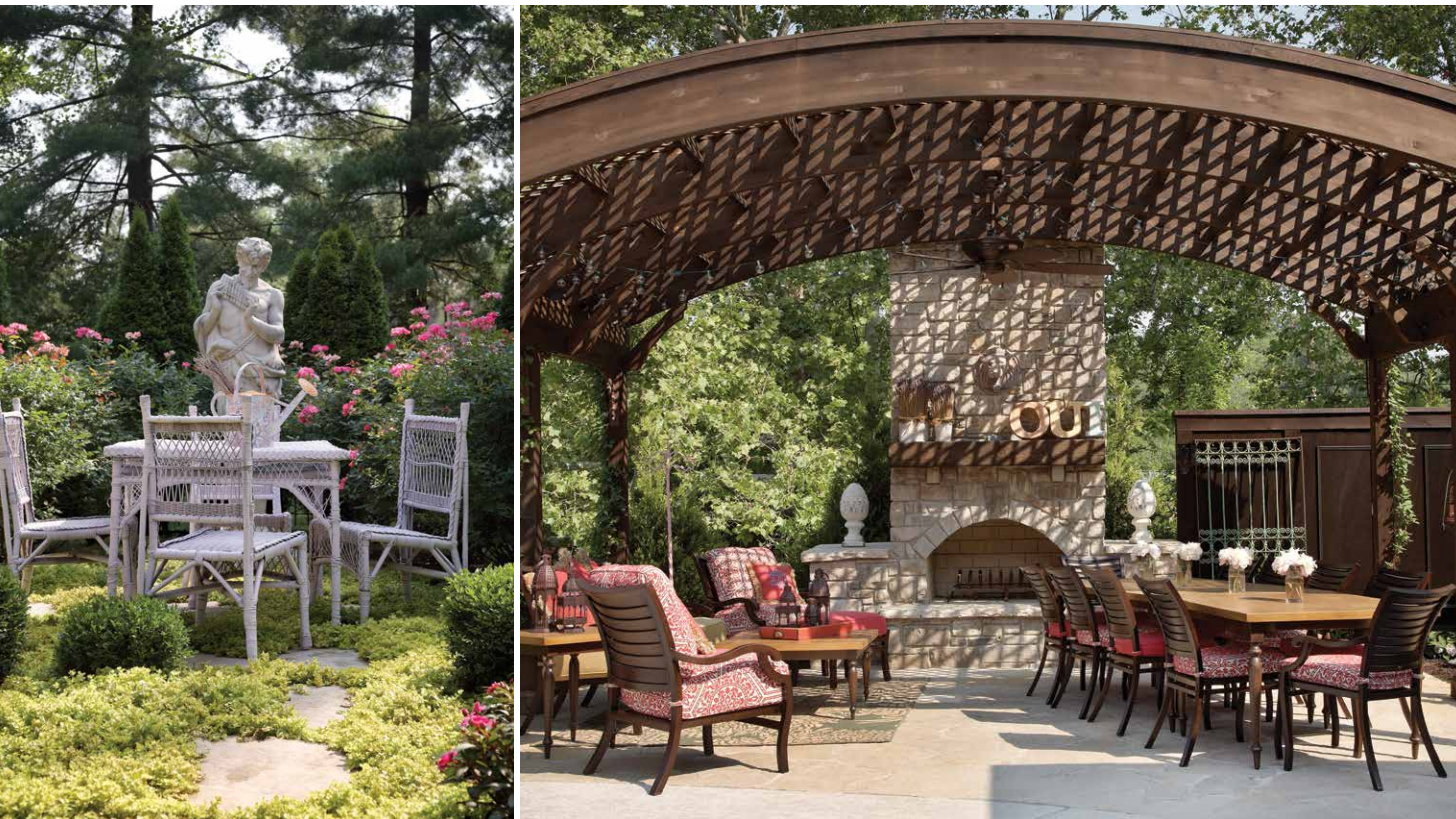


“WE DESIGNED OUR HOUSE FOR ENTERTAINING.”

—homeowner



Below, left: Between the house and pool house sits a small side garden with seating for four. A reclaimed, charismatic statue of the Greek god Pan overlooks the quiet space. **Right:** This entertainment area, with a tall, arched pergola and cozy fireplace, provides the perfect spot to share an alfresco meal throughout spring, summer and fall. **Opposite page:** A natural rock waterfall enhances the resort-like pool by Pool Tron.



and decorating, these homeowners are free to enjoy what makes them happy and forget the rest. And when they built the home, they adopted a similar strategy.

"We wanted our home to have a warm, welcoming feel, so we only built rooms that we would use," says the homeowner of their decision to forgo the traditional breakfast and formal living rooms. Instead, they chose spaces that were tailored to their family's lifestyle, such as a wine tasting room, situated on the second story rather than the lower level like most wine cellars.

"We designed our house for entertaining," she adds. When hosting get-togethers, large or small, the dining room can accommodate up to 24 people during the holidays and other special events.

The kitchen, one view of which transports you to an upscale farmhouse on the French countryside, exists in clever contrast to the more polished, palatial atmosphere of the adjacent dining room. Vintage touches, such as the expansive center island made from an antique painter's counter, tell a quaint, more casual story that harmonizes with the European-inspired stucco walls and distressed, wide-plank pine floors. Decidedly French, yet unique in their own ways, the styles of these neighboring spaces coalesce rather than conflict, offering visual interest and an engaging element of the unexpected.

Through the kitchen, a set of antique doors, rusted to timeworn

perfection, lead to the cozy hearth room. Hints of shabby chic styling and comfortable French Country flair make this room a place where the family can truly relax. Two brick walls feature a stucco treatment, giving them a textural, antiquated appearance in keeping with the authentic French atmosphere.

Windows in the hearth room peer out to a picturesque haven of lush green gardens and an outdoor entertainment oasis. Under an expansive arched pergola, a dining table offers seating for 10 next to a stone fireplace — an idyllic locale for an alfresco meal in late summer or early fall.

The nearby free-form pool beckons guests to take a dip, while the pool house offers cool refuge from the scorching summer sun. With its luxe lodge décor, it also serves as a year-round "getaway" for the family, who enjoy hosting Christmas morning and other important occasions, including graduation and birthday parties, there.

"We use the pool house a lot — especially in the fall and winter," says the homeowner. "We probably use it even more then than during the regular pool season."

With imagination and originality, these innovative owners have designed more than a home. They've created a work of art that can be enjoyed to the fullest every day of the year. And with their eclectic, out-of-the-box style, it just might look a little bit different every day of the year, too. ■



For resources and more photos of this fabulous French-inspired home, visit stloushohomesmag.com.

