

FRENCH & COUNTRY

SUMMER NEWSLETTER



Summer 2007

www.frenchandcountry.com.au

French and Country, Hopewood Country Estate, Centennial Road NSW 2756,



contents DECEMBER

Hello from French & Country.

Where has the year gone?! Apologies for the absence of the winter/spring edition of the French & Country newsletter, but the past few months have been wonderfully frantic both personally and professionally. Closing the Paddington Store in order to relocate to Hopewood as well as the sale of our house and the relocation of our family has been a great period of change for us. We have all taken to the Southern Highlands so quickly and easily we feel we are very much in the right place.

As with all old houses, it has been a real case of getting to know each other. Every creak and every leak are slowly revealing themselves, and we have embarked on a process of making this wonderful property our home. Six weeks with a fantastic crew of gardeners working their way through the 11 acres of gardens, and a team of tradespeople who are working their way through Hopewood House to make it a welcoming, functioning home to our family and friends.

We are presenting some unique ideas to council which incorporate Open Garden Scheme days, special antique events and market days, functions in The Pavilion, self catered accommodation in our 1880's guest cottage and the Hopewood Store, a little cottage to be home to French & Country homewares. The website will communicate the progress of these ideas and future events so if you would like to stay informed please register to receive future newsletters.

Wishing you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Best regards,

Suzie Anderson

3 Summer Entertaining - add polish to your summer parties with accessories and ideas from French & Country

4 Discussing latest summer trends with Suzie Anderson. Refresh your favourite rooms with gorgeous pieces from the French & Country summer catalogue.

6 How to create elegant summer atmosphere in the French Style with ideas from abroad.

16 At Home at Hopewood. Exciting plans are afoot for a series of exceptional events in 2008 at Hopewood - the new home of French and Country.



SUMMER ENTERTAINING

Be inspired for summer entertaining with these stunning new accessories for the dining room and your alfresco setting.



Q What tricks and trends did you see on your European travels that inspired new summer entertaining ideas?

A I saw a great use of glassware used on the dining table and side tables incorporating candles and greenery. Same shaped hurricanes or vases in clusters en masse would be used to create living art. This added greenery indoor.

Colour usage that appealed was whites, off-whites, faded greys and greens grounded with black. Tables were casually set with weathered rattan placemats rather than more formal tablecloths and contrasted with crisp white plates, white urns, white jugs, decanters, wicker jugs which added a freshness. Life was also added to the table with a lot of silverware. Dig out the silverware usually reserved for more formal occasions and use it liberally ... alternatively pewter, which requires a lot less maintenance. Use old trophies or silver punch bowls as ice buckets, smaller tankards as vases with fresh cut white roses or hydrangeas. Let the light and freshness of summer come through the glow of silver and the crispness of white crockery. I also love the use of clean white charger plates topped with smaller delicate vintage/antique dinner plates, particularly Spode in duo tones e.g. blue/white, taupe/white, black/white.





*"Let the light and freshness of summer
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Q What item/items can most change the look of your home to give it instant summer atmosphere?

A To add an instant summery feel consider refreshing your linen. A fresh coloured, lighter weight quilt and linen sheets replacing

the heavier doonas and blankets of winter. White or stone coloured fluffy towels, fragrant spring/summer flowers of gardenias, freesias or magnolias in the bathroom. Oversized silver hurricane lamps burning white, cream, taupe or grey naturally fragrant or natural beeswax pillar candles. Try room sprays in crisp summer fragrances of Gardenia, Lime, Orange Blossom and Jasmine. Accessorise with collections of coral/shells/driftwood and other natural, preferably vintage (not mass manufactured) maritime pieces on side or hall tables or along a fireplace mantle. I also think a huge spring clean, de-cluttering of those blankets, piles of books and other cocooning items you enjoy over winter and organise them in a series of washed wicker baskets.



Even the family pet will be happy with a summer makeover.

Baskets and bird feeders are detailed on our site along with these featured items.

Clear out fireplaces and fill a wicker basket with bunches of hydrangeas. New covers on outdoor cushions is a quick and easy way to inspire more outside entertaining. There are more and more beautiful outdoor, weather resistant fabrics on the market. *Warwick Fabrics* have a wonderful new range of sophisticated plains, stripes and florals designed for the outdoors. *Sunbrella* also has an extensive range of plain outdoor canvas fabrics in a wide range of colours and stripes that are water and UV resistant. Add some contrast piping to the edge of the cushions or sunbed covers and you will achieve a unique, custom tailored look. If you wish your cushions to remain outdoors over summer it may be worth replacing the cushion inserts with reticulated foam. This foam can be ordered through The Foam Booth in Surry Hills or Willoughby in NSW. It allows water to filtrate through the foam core rather than soaking it up and in turn disintegrating the cushions inner.



Q What influences do you find you adapt to your Australian home when you return from your travels in France?

A I enjoy the detail and beauty that the French typically incorporate into their daily lives. I am always impressed after time spent there with friends, that they live with the feeling that today is the best day of your life so take time to enjoy every minute. This is evident in the way they dress, entertain and dine. This influence encourages me to use beautiful things every day rather than saving for those 'special occasions'. Spending a few minutes extra on setting the table for dinner makes such a difference to the enjoyment of a meal. Whether it be some freshly cut flowers, a lit candle, some linen napkins, fine crockery or drinking wine from crystal glasses, beautiful music and ambient lighting. I am also trying to eradicate my bower bird habits and just have pieces in the house that we find either beautiful to look at, have a meaning or purpose rather than just having them taking up shelf space and collecting dust even though we have no attachment to them. The recent house move was helpful in that respect, but I do find the French Style encourages this sense of simplicity and beauty. The pieces don't have to be expensive or highly precious just pleasing when you see them each day. Also, it's fun to put to use some of those treasures you keep stored away but never see. It could be a beautiful pair of vintage leather binoculars that are rarely used but find a new purpose as a paper weight on your desk or useful to hold down a pile of paper napkins on the outside table! Why not!?!





"I enjoy the detail and beauty that the French typically incorporate into their daily lives."



Q What are the components required to get a truly elegant French look that is not contrived or over the top?

A Over the past couple of years my decorating style has had a greater influence from other parts of Europe such as Belgium and Hol-

land as I enjoy the pared down, restrained style of decorating found there. I like to combine some decorative original antique French pieces with other more streamlined, almost contemporary pieces that have simpler construction. These form a complementary base that can carry an ornate gilt mirror, a pair of brass and crystal table chandeliers or a collection of time worn books and due to their minimalist style, don't compete with the more decorative, detailed antique piece. Combining both contemporary pieces and original French antiques creates a less contrived look which I think suits the more casual, Australian lifestyle. I would also prefer to have one original piece of French furniture, with original patina, than a room of lesser quality highly contrived, over worked copies of ornate French style. As they say, less is more! Beautiful soft furnishings such as a *Fortuny* cushion on a sofa or chair, or a generous linen curtain in a muted tone also add a richness and elegance to your interior.



Q Which websites do you recommend customers visit to get ideas for French decorating?

A Some of my favourite websites are not necessarily French websites but they imbue a style and colour palate that

is restrained and elegant and I look at them time and time again for pleasure. Here are a few of them:

www.cotebastide.com

www.rlhome.com

www.catherinememmi.com

www.the-hempel.co.uk

www.victoriahagan.com



Q Describe the colourways that appeal to you this coming summer season.

A White, Clay, Grey, Taupe, Celadon Green, Umber, Pewter, Silver, Mauve, Licorice, Black, Muted Gold.



Q What stock do you have to decorate for Christmas this year?

A I'm just unpacking some lovely glassware for t-light candles, sweet white doves, miniature chandeliers,

eucalyptus and hydrangea wreaths, silver, red and copper berry garlands, and some beautiful Christmas tree ornaments from Jette Frolich of Norway. Another highlight for Christmas, New Year and summer entertaining are the oversized cathedral candles in chalk or chocolate. They make such a statement on a side table, inside the fireplace or on the mantlepiece.







Q Do you have a checklist of items for summer entertaining?

A Yes, so often we spend a lot of time thinking about what food and drinks we are going to serve over Christmas and New Year but we spend

little time on the table settings and plate ware.

Here's a brief check list of plate ware and serving ware that could be useful this season:

Table cloth, table runner and or placemats

Napkins

Cutlery

Charger plates, dinner plates, sideplates, dessert bowls, salad bowls, platters, olive, dip and condiment bowls

Tiered cake plates

Glass food domes

Butter dishes

Bread baskets

Food covers

Olive Oil dipping plates

Vinaigrette decanters

Icebuckets

Water/Wine/Beer/Champagne/Cocktail/Liqueur glasses

Wine decanters

Coasters

Napkin rings

Napkin holders

Salt & Pepper dishes/shakers

Water jugs

Candle holders

Candles

Candle snuffers

Placecards

Placecard holders

Bottle openers

Bottle stoppers

Carving knife

Carving Fork

Salad Servers

Serving Spoons

Nut crackers

Christmas Crackers

Cocktail shakers



Hopewood



Following our move into Hopewood in September, we are in the process of extensive renovations and restoration of the gardens in readiness for our re-opening of the gardens and grounds in 2008. Next year Hopewood will play host to a series of special events that will bring new life to the property and provide a stunning setting for our French and Country furniture and giftware. We will contact you when we are ready to announce full details and in the meantime we hope you will continue to follow our progress on the website. In the meantime, if you would like me to source any special homeware items for you, please call me.



Built in 1884 by Ben Marshall Osborne as his family home, Hopewood remains a landmark building. His wife Lucy Osborne (nee Throsby) was an accomplished gardener and installed a formal garden in the form of a large parterre and created the long driveway and circular carriage-way. These spectacular features

have endured and give the house its stately grace to this day. The gardens are enhanced by the large trees, which were in place before the house was built. Many of the formal gardens were installed by the second owner Lebbeus Hordern who purchased the property in 1912.

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