

PRESS RELEASE

Pretty in Provencal

Anton Odendaal from leading furniture and décor retailer, Rochester, offers us an overview on his top tips for achieving Provencal elegance in your home this summer.

12 November 2014, Johannesburg: Provencal décor originates in the south of France and epitomises the idea of French country living and warm Mediterranean summers. It is the perfect fusion of comfort, functionality and sophisticated elegance - making it an ideal rustic-inspired style for our South African climes and a great addition to any local home.

Says Anton Odendaal from leading furniture and décor retailer, Rochester: "Provencal décor is both elegant and comfortable – offering the perfect balance between vintage European elegance and warm rustic farmhouse comfort. Its organic undertones, timeless appeal and pastoral charm make it a very accessible style that is perfect for any family home. What's more is that you do not need to be a professional interior decorator to achieve a successful Provencal-inspired composition in your home – it can be easily replicated by keeping a few key aspects in mind."

Pale palette

A warm neutral colour palette is key when trying to achieve this rustic French style. "Provencal décor uses a lot of naturally-inspired tones to achieve a warm and homely feel. Think of a collection of farm-inspired tones, that have been found in the natural countryside setting - from cloud-inspired whites, to sandy beiges, sunshine and butter yellows, pale blues and mossy rock taupes," suggests Anton. Whites, greys, blues, taupes and yellows are often used for upholstery and furniture, while browns, coffees and terracottas are more practically used for the walls and floors.

"Apart from the predominantly pale, neutral tones mentioned prior, bolder blues and reds are also a French favourite – inspired by the French flag. These bold tones offer a stylish contrast with the more bland neutrals, as well as adding a modern flair that if successfully achieved, can make the entire composition pop," says Anton. A good way to incorporate deep blues and reds is through furniture, such as the rustic dining suite from Rochester's Provence collection, which not only comes in a variety of neutral shades of stone and cream, but it is also available in a lively taupe and a bold red for a more playful and audacious flair.

Farmhouse chic

What makes Provencal décor so distinct is its interesting fusion of rustic and classic elegance, which results in a style that is both comfortable and easy to live in, but remains aesthetically pleasing and very chic. "Like our rainbow nation, Provencal décor is an amalgamation of contrasting elements – from organically rustic, to comfortably lived-in, and elegantly chic. It's this conglomeration of different aspects that makes this style so appealing for us South Africans, as it lends itself well to our warmer climate, as well as blending in with the cultural melting pot that we all live in," says Anton. Provencal homes boast a warm, inviting and lived in ambience – so when channelling the rustic farmhouse look, think above all, of natural inspiration and enjoying the space in question.

Subtle elegance

Essentially a transitional style, Provencal décor is a mix of where you live, how you live, a love of comfort, a passion for nature – all set on an underlying foundation of old world European elegance. This is the charm of this particular style – you can achieve it by mixing the old with the new, incorporating indigenous elements with European ones, and feeling at home and comfortable in the space in question. The trick to getting the mix of elements just right, is to always focus on how to achieve it in a timelessly elegant manner, and adding the odd bit of old world glamour to the mix, says Anton: “Incorporating an old fashioned armoire into your living area will immediately up the elegance stakes, or why not add a crystal chandelier for some shimmering grandeur?”

Touch wood

When it comes to furniture, organic materials, such as wood, are favoured when trying to achieve this style. Wood adds a warm and homely feel to any space and it is available in many forms – from dark polish, to natural, distressed and solid painted finishes, all which complement the Provencal aesthetic. Painted wooden furniture that is inspired by the wooden shutters of Mediterranean homes remains very popular and is often paired with other wooden finishes. Don’t be scared to mix different types of wooden furniture, as this contributes to the rustic feel of the space. “ Just ensure you keep it tasteful and don’t go over the top – chose a couple of statement pieces and keep everything else simple,” adds Anton.

ENDS

Released on behalf of Rochester (www.rochester.co.za) by The Line Communications (www.theline.co.za, ant@theline.co.za).