

French Flair

Dressed up or
down, classic
European style
enriches rooms
with warmth,
hospitality, and
elegance.

By Jan Soultz Walker. Photographer: Jeff McNamara. Designer: Patricia Bonis. Field Editor: Cynthia Bogart.

Window treatments appear extra luxurious when richly gathered and puddled on the floor around the window seat in Beth Finkelstein's living room.

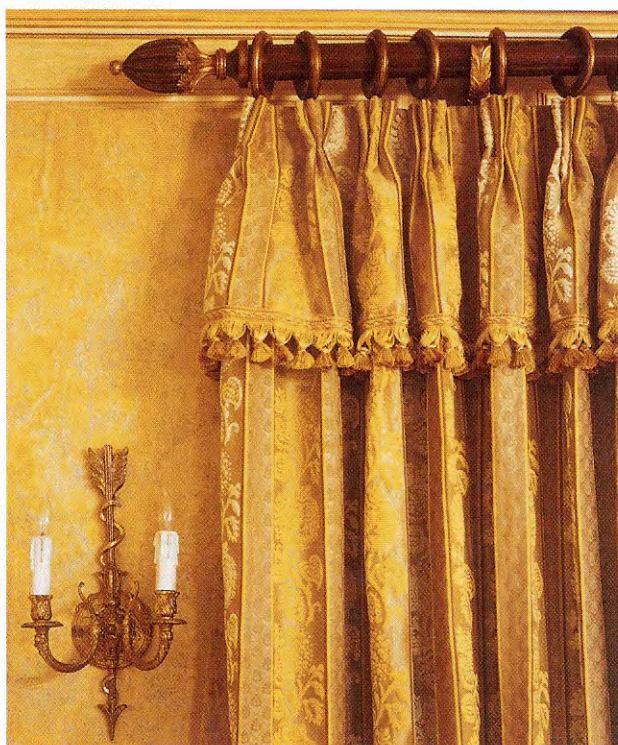






People tell me that our home feels as welcoming and rich as a country French inn.

—homeowner Beth Finkelstein



Above: In the dining room, inset panels of damasklike wallcovering act almost like decorative mats for artwork and sconces. **Right:** An opulent antique mirror and carved buffet establish the setting for gracious sit-down dinners. Originally, the home lacked moldings, so Bonis added them throughout to create old-house character. **Opposite:** A crystal chandelier illuminates the fruitwood dining table, which is encircled by two styles of cane-back chairs to prevent a “board of directors” atmosphere, Bonis says.

with country French motifs, and full, gathered drapery panels. Antiques and reproduction pieces furnish the spaces with flair and a sense of heritage. Antique rugs, chandeliers, and sconces and Beth’s beloved collections lend distinctive character to each room.

By adjusting the mix of furnishings, fabrics, and accessories, Bonis orchestrated a series of rooms that range from formal to casual. In the master bedroom, for example, curvaceous furniture and intricate patterns pair with plush cushions and sink-in-soft bed linens to create a setting that is both elegant and inviting. In the dining and living rooms, gracious antique furnishings,





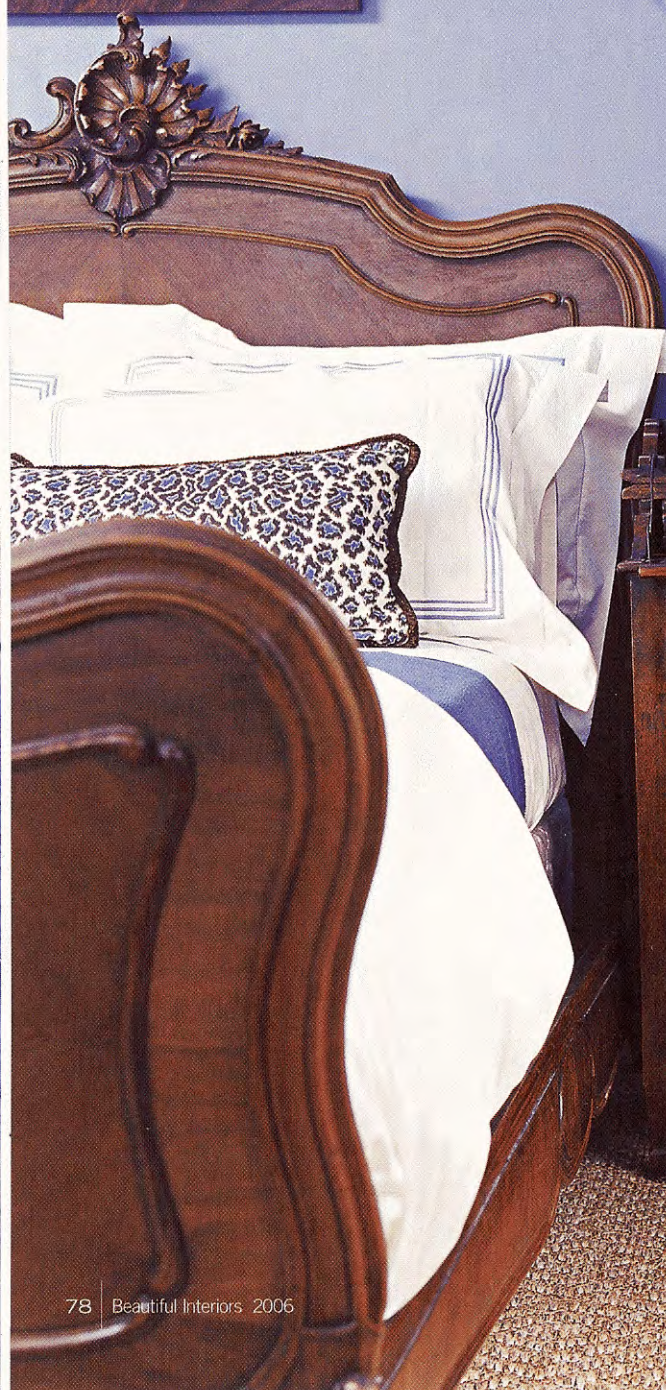
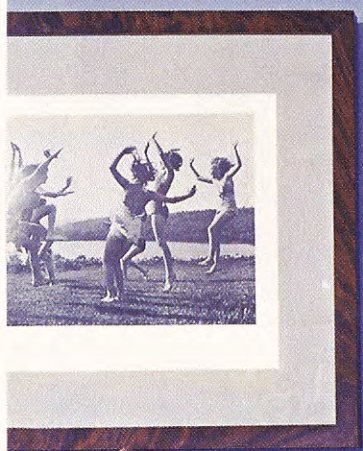
Left: Classic fabrics and graceful lines distinguish the chair and ottoman in Beth's reading corner. **Below:** Pitch-perfect details—the sofa's tufted back and curving arms, the window treatment's fringe trim—suit the room's country French theme.

Right: Because it was the first room completed, the master bedroom's golden tones set the color scheme for much of the rest of the home. Botanical-pattern fabric covers the walls and combines with substantial moldings to set the stage for comfortable elegance.





This photo: French-blue walls and crisp white linens set off the rich walnut antique furnishings in the guest bedroom. **Opposite top:** A small-scale crystal teardrop chandelier adds romance to the room. **Opposite bottom:** A French-style bergère dresses for today in crisp white upholstery. The transferware plates above the chair launched the color scheme for the room. The mix of French blue and cocoa brown on the chintz draperies ties together the room's many elements.





richly burnished wall finishes, and opulent lighting lean toward the formal end of the country French feel. By contrast, the family room relies on predominantly solid fabrics, woven shades, simpler furnishings, and black-and-white accents to convey a more casual air. A guest bedroom takes a playful turn in the very of-the-moment color scheme of cocoa brown and French blue.

Whether casual or formal, all the rooms are designed for everyday living. "These layers allow the homeowners to add to the rooms year after year," Bonis says. The philosophy works, as the Finkelsteins can attest.

"People tell me that our home feels as welcoming and rich as a country French inn," Beth sums up. "The patterns and textures make it all so warm and pretty. It really does transport you." □

Resources on page 108.

When dealing
with a plain
space, bright
color can be
the quickest
way to
give it a lift.

—designer Patricia Bonis

