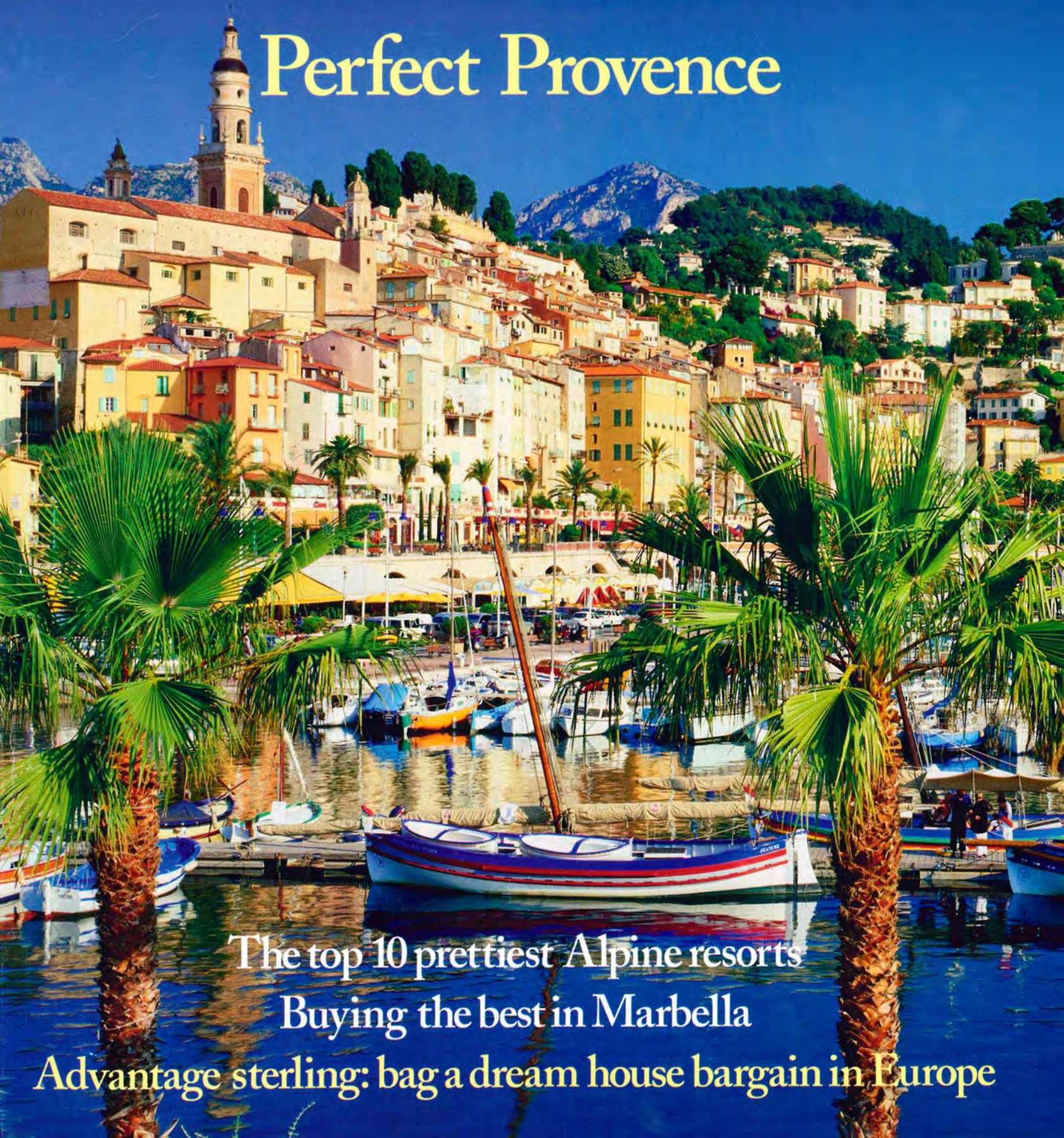


COUNTRY LIFE[®] INTERNATIONAL

SPRING 2015

Perfect Provence



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Rustic luxe

Capture the charm of the French countryside with tactile fabrics and understated decor, says Rachel Ogden

How to get the look

RELECTIVE of its surrounding scenic landscape, the natural simplicity of French country-style decorating is one that's hard to resist. Stripped-back, unencumbered by the pomp of its Baroque cousin, the look combines the relaxed warmth of Provence with the subtle chic of the northern regions. The real beauty of this style, however, is that it can be evolved as much or as little as you wish. Opt for a traditional water-colour palette of pale ochres, greyish blues and greens on the walls offset with a rich accent shade and layers of polished walnut furniture or update it with delicately distressed paint finishes on furniture and unbleached linen.

Start by structuring the design around versatile statement pieces, such as sideboards, dressers and armoires and, in the bedroom, simple iron or metal bedframes in black or white can be echoed overhead by matching light fittings. The classic choice for floors is terracotta *tomettes*, which radiate earthy red, brown and orange tones, but reclaimed and encaustic tiles are an inspired alternative.

Textiles are another area in which brighter tones and pattern can be introduced. Bold motifs prints work well when opting for *matelassé* fabric, which has a handcrafted, quilted appearance and excellent durability, meaning it can be used throughout for coordinating curtains, cushions and throws. Picturesque *toile de Jouy* can be overwhelming in abundance, but, added sparingly, will create a more luxurious finish.

Accessories should be kept to a minimum. Displays of favourite earthenware and pottery are ideal. Arranged on open shelving, on a dresser or even mounted on the wall, pieces in deep green, red, umber or amber glazes will help to accentuate the quintessential French country feel.

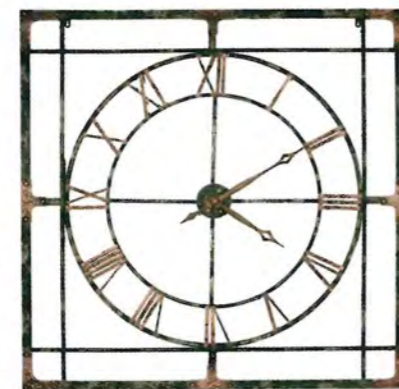


Get inspiration from original paintings such as this one of Le Tremlay, Bazoches-sur-Guyonne. **Original oil painting** on canvas, 48in by 38in, £1,600, Make The Most Of (01244 345954; www.makethemostof.co.uk)



Bastille chandelier in a rust finish, £2,610, shown with 7in Empire lampshades, £27 each, Vaughan (020-7349 4600; www.vaughandesigns.com)

Valbonne toile de Jouy in ivory-red (149504) and ivory-green (149506), £373 per m, C&C Milano (020-7751 4554, www.ccc-milano.com)



Handmade aged square metal clock, £295, I. & J. L. Brown (020-7736 4141; www.ijlbrown.com)



Handmade earthenware Gauthier platter 40cm (16in), £155, Divertimenti (0330 3330351; www.divertimenti.co.uk)



RLH Collection farmhouse sideboard, £3,225, Ralph Lauren Home (020-7535 4600; www.ralphlaurenhome.com)



FOR SALE £2.95m This stylish five-bedroom house just outside St Rémy comes with a fully equipped one-bedroom caravan 'annexe' and a large swimming pool. £2.95m through Knight Frank (020-7861 5034)



Hogarth vitrine in aged antique white with dark-wood interior and glass windows, £2,700, Nicholas Haslam (020-7730 8623; www.nicholashaslam.com)



Reclaimed terracotta hexagon tiles (15cm by 17cm (6in by 6½in)), £129.60 per sq m, Fired Earth (0845 366 0400; www.firedearth.com)

Red ochre and ochre emulsion, from £38 for 2.5 litres, Edward Bulmer Pots of Paint (01544 388535; http://potsofpaint.com)

Juniper Bed, from £1,375, And So To Bed (0808 144 4343; www.andstobed.co.uk)



Picardy washed and tumbled matelassé fabric in madder red and pond, £81 per m, Lewis & Wood (01453 878517; www.lewisandwood.co.uk)



Poire 1796 taper diffuser from the Abbaye range, £22, Illumens Candles (01787 282012; www.illumens-candles.co.uk)

