

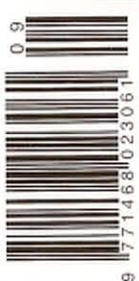
THE ENGLISH HOME

BRIGHT AND BREEZY
Relaxed looks for summertime living

Hideaway
homes
for perfect
escapes

BEAUTIFUL
BATHROOMS
EN-SUITES
& MORE

Coastal style
Decorating inspired by sea and shore



WONDERFUL WAYS WITH CHECKS, STRIPES AND SPOTS



Working on her cottage became José's way of relaxing



Left The enlarged sitting room overlooks the tiny internal courtyard. **Above** The multi-functional Rosières range cooker gives significance to this cottage-sized kitchen. By keeping the walls free of cupboards, José has made the room appear more spacious. The walls are clad to dado height with reeded panelling from Scumble Goosie which has been painted in Old White by Farrow & Ball.

José has a natural ability to fuse French and English style

here I am, 20 years later, still doing it!" Today, this is the only occasional teaching she does, because her design skills have taken her on an unexpected detour.

José's natural ability to fuse French and English style caught the eye of Scumble Goosie – a company known for its French and Gustavian style, ready-to-paint and painted furniture. "I'd asked them to adapt some of their pieces to my own specifications," explains José. "They were impressed with how my ideas enhanced their furniture, and invited me to join them." Now the managing director, José is taking the furniture towards the look of the late-18th and early-19th centuries, introducing new shapes and subtle colours.

Working on her cottage became José's way of relaxing and she has loved doing it,

especially deciding how to combine the structured elegance of the classic French interior with those elements of English style that she's grown to love. "I like the eclecticism of English style – it doesn't matter if a piece of furniture is slightly distressed or if your plates don't match."

When she took possession of the cottage it had no discernable style at all, and so, starting at the front door, José began a major re-design of the space. "I had to have a hall with breathing space," she declares. "That meant creating an inner lobby. Some people would classify this as wasted space, but it gives a sense that the house is bigger than it actually is. It also carries the eye forward to the sitting room, and the garden beyond." José could afford more space in the



Above The walls of the master bedroom are painted in Farrow & Ball's Strong White, and the floorboards have been sanded and painted with a grey tint that José mixed. **Right** Cushions in a check from Sandberg and a toile from Busby & Busby adorn the ottoman. **Opposite** In the second bedroom, the Agnes bed and corona are from Scumble Goozie and have been dressed with a check fabric by Barbara Coupe.



Furniture is carefully placed in the French manner

hall because she also planned to extend the house at the back to create an enlarged sitting room. An architect was engaged to draw up the plans and gain permissions and then José's chosen builders, George Thomas and Ian Homer of Cherwell Construction Ltd, carried out the work.

Few building projects proceed without a drama and it was the sitting room extension that provided it here: "There was a terrible moment when I came in and saw a flat roof being put on. The architect said I couldn't have a pitched roof as it would conceal the windows above, but I found a solution at Marston & Langer, who made me a roof lantern. The room is now suffused with glorious light."

As part of the extension, José also insisted on creating a tiny internal

courtyard into which doors open from the kitchen. "The builders couldn't understand how I could sacrifice room space when there's a garden at the back," says José, "but the courtyard carries the element of visual surprise that I want in a house."

The bathroom, evicted from the ground floor, was re-sited upstairs in one half of the third bedroom, with the other half being used to enlarge the landing and house a spiral staircase up to the loft conversion, where José has created a visitors' suite, complete with en suite.

José has an instinctive understanding of where space can be gained and how it should be allocated and while she puts more furniture into rooms than most people would consider possible, or even appropriate, she places it in the —

ELEMENTS OF STYLE

A soft, elegant palette maintains a feeling of calm. By Victoria Harrison



PICTURE PERFECT...

Keep things light and airy with this pretty painted mirror. Small oval mirror with bow carving, £300, Gustavian.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Choose untreated furniture for a chance to add a personal touch. Scumble Goosie's Gustavian-inspired pieces are made from solid hardwood and can be bought fully finished or ready to paint – which is a great cost-cutting alternative. The company suggests using a coat of primer followed by two coats of water-based eggshell and one coat of antiquing glaze, finished off with two coats of water-based varnish.

EFFORTLESSLY ELEGANT... Mantle mirror, from £334; Emma bookcase, from £819; Rosen chair, from £150; large column lamp, from £56; Empire writing desk, from £295. All Scumble Goosie.



SIT BACK...

Dine in style with this classic Gustavian chair, £395 for a pair, An Angel at My Table.



COLOURFUL CUSHIONS...

Add a splash of cheer with these lovely cushions. From £39, Nordic Style.

"I have to have indirect lights, a generous number of tables and somewhere cosy to curl up"

BATHING BEAUTY...

This freestanding roll-top bath has timeless charm. £895, Fired Earth.



JOSÉ'S FAVOURITE SHOP

Jonathan Fyson

"This is an antiques shop I adore to visit. It has an irresistible aura of quality and authenticity. There are often little gilded French sofas and exquisite pieces of early 19th-century furniture, as well as prints, glassware and ceramics."

Jonathan Fyson 60-62 High Street, Burford, Oxfordshire OX18 4QF. Tel 01993 823274



PRETTY DETAILING...

Rococo bedside cabinet, £660, Gustavian.