

Colorful,

CASUAL

Rustic

MAKE UP THE FRENCH COUNTRY STYLE

Emily P. Smith



Imagine strolling across the Place Garibaldi in Nice, France and heading into the Old Towne. There you find a rustic “auberge” off the beaten path, hidden away in this metropolis. This inn looks like it has stood the test of time, a piece of the French countryside like a retreat on the Riviera. Now imagine walking into the colorful, casual and rustic retreat every time you walk into your kitchen. That provincial appeal of the south of France is what has made French Country design and décor one of the most popular styles the world over!

Like the Pissaladière is pleasing to the palette, the French Country style is equally as pleasing to the eye when cooked up in a kitchen. French culture revolves around preparing foods and sharing meals which is why the kitchen is the true heart of French Country design. Because kitchens in Provence are working kitchens, they typically have lots of counter space. Traditionally these countertops would be a lava stone, but a natural stone like granite, marble or quartz can mimic the rural earthy feel. A neutral stone can mimic the feel of old pottery that is so essential to French Country cooking. Wood is another huge part of the French Country style; kitchen cabinets can be naturally dark stained wood or rubbed and painted. Glossy white and cream are common cabinet colors found in the interpretation of the French décor because they represent the airy, naturally lit feel of these traditional kitchens. Painted furniture is also a popular component of this style.

Celadon greens and cornflower blues are popular accent colors and can be incorporated into

the cabinetry, the tile or the fabrics. Tile is a very integral part of the French Country design and is often said to be the best way to incorporate this style into a kitchen. Stone tiles, glazed tiles, crackled tiles and subway tiles are all desirable for this décor. Advanced Kitchens, a design/build remodeling company in Marietta, took a typical white and brass Atlanta kitchen on a permanent holiday to Provence. Stone-like subway tiles adorn the prominent backsplash functioning sensibly over the gas range. The creamy perimeter cabinets give the space a relaxing warmth while the green island brings cheer and color to the room.

As in a traditional French Country kitchen pots are hung within easy reach of a busy cook and fine china is displayed and available to all friends and family joining in the meal. Stacked baskets hold the day's produce, herbs and bread ready for preparation and serving. Light colored floors like the wood used in this kitchen are another popular aspect of French Country design, although stone and tile are often more popular choices in this genre. A harvest table, used as a work space and for family gatherings, is a staple in French country homes. Furniture typically features clean lines and is usually large and solid in stature, although simple graceful curves are also indicative of French Country furniture. Country French design and décor can work for anyone, on any budget. Keep these tips in mind to turn relaxing in your kitchen into a daily vacation in southern France.

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