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*Quietly refined antiques, white linen, and  
light-filled rooms reinvent a home by the lake*

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In a corner of the living room, a custom wing chair in Rogers & Goffigon linen flanks eighteenth-century Provençal window shutters repurposed as cabinet doors. A white linen shade tops an Italian floor lamp. A shelf in the niche serves as a practical surface for firewood and a place to display candlesticks. The pillow is covered in vintage textile.

18th c. Antique Shutters from Chateau Domingue

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There are many ways to enjoy the beauty of nature while inside the home. Designer Shannon Bowers knew exactly what to do when a couple, longtime clients of hers, decided to move forward with a total remodel of their 1970s home to take better advantage of its wooded lakeside setting.

"This is a family that travels to Big Bend every spring break," says Bowers. "They love to be outside. They wanted to feel closer to nature. Now, when you step inside the front door, it looks like a vacation home, but it is their primary residence."

Years ago, when the family of five moved into the home, Bowers recalls, "They did a soft remodel, just changing a few things. They wanted to live there for a while, see how they used the spaces, and then decide how the home should be remodeled." It was the original brick fireplace, which was blocking views of the lake from the living and kitchen areas, that prompted the owners to request a full-scale renovation. The fireplace was removed, French doors were installed, and all of the home's windows were replaced. The rooms became airy, light-filled spaces that minimize indoor-outdoor boundaries.

"There is a lot of glass across the back of the house, and the interior and the exterior are now complementary," says Bowers. The owners also were pleased to be able to see their children more easily as they paddle around the lake in canoes and kayaks.

Bowers knew the redesign would need to reflect the stronger connection to the world beyond the windows. The homeowner requested that the palette be dominated by "white, white, white." So Bowers had almost the entire home painted a pristine white, and she looked to nature to provide the rest of the color scheme: the green, gray, and brown tones of the mature oaks outside.

She was also aware of the couple's desire to entertain at home frequently. This factor influenced the selection and arrangement of furnishings. "These are very warm, hospitable people. They wanted their home to feel relaxed and livable for their family and guests, including the children's friends. With all of that in mind, we chose an array of fine but unpretentious European antiques — French, Swedish, Italian, Spanish —

with wonderful patinas and natural finishes burnished by the centuries."

For fabrics throughout the interior, Bowers relied almost entirely on linen in varying shades of white. "The linen really softens the spaces," she says. "One of the beautiful aspects of using so much white is its brightness and purity. Here, white adds a sense of lightness."

Art, accessories, and other objects deepen nature's primal presence throughout the rooms. In the library, a large oil painting depicts a serene French landscape, and a collection of glazed earthenware pottery fills white bookcases. Small logs are neatly stacked in a living room niche. In the kitchen, reclaimed wood beams provide open shelving. Nearby, an antique stone sink from France's Dordogne region injects another earthy texture.

The most prominent antique may be the former fireplace's replacement: an early-nineteenth-century, hand-carved limestone trumeau cheminée from a convent in northern France. "It has very simple, graceful lines, and it's precisely the right scale for this home," says Bowers.

The living room is ready for socializing. "When we have a party," says the wife, "we don't have to bring in tables. It was a very conscious decision to put a long Spanish worktable there. What we love to do most is to all sit and eat together. We use that as our formal dining area."

Both spouses enjoy cooking in the remodeled kitchen. "We can have a party for fifty people, and my husband doesn't bat an eye about preparing the meal," she says. "Music is playing loudly. Wine is flowing. I get to set the table and make it pretty." When they sold a previous home, they kept the antique kitchen island, a reminder of parties past, and it exudes a strong presence in the current kitchen.

Sometimes, the party moves outdoors. "We'll build a big campfire and cook out there," adds the wife. "Everyone's on and off the canoes, kayaks, paddleboards. It's crazy, but it's fun. It's what we wanted. I'm so pleased that we created what we wanted with Shannon's help. She walked us through every step of the way." ■





19th c. Trumeau  
Cheminee from  
Chateau Domingue

19th c. Swedish Table  
from Chateau Domingue

Opening pages: Teak Adirondack chairs foster a vacation feeling at a Texas home. These pages: A nineteenth-century trumeau cheminee dominates the living room. The Swedish coffee table, round metal Arras table, and Spanish worktable are nineteenth century. Seating includes an antique high-back chair in Rogers & Goffigon linen, a custom slipper chair in Osborne & Little linen, and an eighteenth-century Spanish armchair.



Louis XIV Doors from  
Chateau Domingue

17th c. Rustic Sink from  
Chateau Domingue

A pair of Louis XV doors (far left), circa 1760, and an antique shop cabinet, used as an island, add character to the kitchen. The seventeenth-century stone sink is from France's Dordogne region. Brass trim brightens an Art Culinare/Sully Classique range. Nickel faucets are by Waterstone. The counter is made of Lagos Azul limestone. The backsplash's mosaic Calacatta marble is from Walker Zanger.



In the dining room, an oak table under an Italian chandelier, both nineteenth century, along with bastide reclaimed pine benches, continue an unfinished-wood motif throughout the home. A Designers Guild linen stripe enlivens an eighteenth-century painted Swedish settee with a trundle.



18th c. Swedish Settee  
from Chateau Domingue

Benches made  
from Reclaimed  
Pine from Chateau  
Domingue



Painting of a  
French Landscape,  
c. 1937 from  
Chateau Domingue



In the library, a round antique painted elm table keeps company with a 1937 oil painting of a French landscape and an antique settee, also from France, in an antique linen textile. The custom wing chair is upholstered in a Rogers & Goffigon linen. The Restoration Hardware lamp wears a linen shade. The contemporary Aubusson rug is woven from wool and silk.





Left: Neutral tones prevail in the master bedroom, which has access to an outdoor perch. A vintage crystal chandelier hangs above a bed with custom linen bedding. The throw at the foot of the bed is a vintage textile. Above: In the master bath, a Moroccan lantern glows above a Waterworks tub and polished nickel faucetry. The Carrara marble flooring is from Walker Zanger.