



# The perfect ESCAPE

With its far-reaching views and abundant olive groves, Nick and Lise Davies' Côte d'Azur home is the ideal spot to get away from it all

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HALL/DINING AREA

French doors and an imposing arch perfectly frame the view of the olive groves enjoyed from the table. Atelier white upholstered linen dining chairs, £209 each; Provence extendable table, £1,099, both Maisons du Monde. Walls in Stone Pole Cool 65 absolute matt emulsion, £43.50 for 2.5L, Little Greene



SITTING ROOM

'I inherited the Balinese daybed from my parents,' says Lise. 'It makes a chunky, characterful coffee table.' The Opium rustic recycled teak coffee table would work, £360, Sustainable Furniture. Java sofa, £1,799, John Lewis



UNIQUE



HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY**  
18th-century farmhouse  
**LOCATION** South of France  
**ROOMS** Hall/dining area, two sitting rooms, kitchen, study, pantry, store room, laundry, five bedrooms, five bathrooms, two guest annexes, pool house  
**PURCHASED** 2004  
**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**  
'A 16th-century coaching inn in Surrey,' says Lise.

The aroma of lavender, panoramic views over the bay of Cannes, and fresh air are among the attributes that most impress visitors to Nick and Lise Davies' mountain-top home. 'Here, we enjoy the best of all worlds,' says Nick. 'We're in a remote spot but close to a medieval village, 20 minutes' drive from a beach and under half an hour from the ski slopes. Best of all, we live surrounded by silence, apart from nightingales and the frogs' dawn chorus.'

Nick and Lise moved to the south of France for a better quality of life for their now grown-up children, Tristian, Tamara, Max and Coco. Previously, the couple divided their time between the UK and a beach house in the Caribbean. When Nick got tired of endless long commutes, the pair decided to relocate to France. 'Finding the right place to measure up to our beach house was tricky,' says Lise. 'I looked at over 100 properties, and it took six years before finding this one.'

'This house was unique in that it had large windows, several pairs of generously sized French doors and level outdoor areas full of pear, plum, fig, orange and olive trees,' Lise continues. 'However, the interior had been untouched for 20 years and was very run down, without

KITCHEN

The soft tones of the beams are echoed in the plastered walls. Cabinets painted in Paris Gray chalk paint, £18 for 1L, Annie Sloan. The galvanised French clock has this look, £100, Cox & Cox. Smeg dual oven, £2,070, John Lewis. The Atelier White tiles are similar to those used for the splashback, £55.20sq m, Porcelain Superstore





**EN SUITE**  
Lovely views can be enjoyed from the bath. The Carlton traditional pedestal basin is similar to this one, £69.95, Victorian Plumbing



**MAIN BEDROOM**  
Vibrant accent colours sing out against a muted backdrop in this inviting space. Walls painted in Stone Pale No 34 absolute matt emulsion, £43.50 for 2.5L, Little Greene. Checked blanket, £79.99, Zara Home, is similar

proper lighting or even one ceiling fan. On the positive side, previous owners had installed an elegant sweeping staircase, stone arches and solid walnut-panelled doors throughout. There were also tiled floors and stone fireplaces, precious relics from the 18th century.

'The oldest part of the house is the kitchen,' says Lise. 'We decided to limewash the beams to lighten the space, and replace the old Fifties units with a classic farmhouse design made by a local joiner.' The bathrooms, plumbing and electrics needed replacing, too. Two outbuildings were turned into guest annexes. Adding a poolside living area with kitchen, dining and sitting room was another big project. 'The renovation took four years,' says Lise. 'Even furnishing was a slow process, fitting in pieces we already had, mixing in finds from brocantes. My parents used to live in Jerusalem and Borneo, so I inherited some lovely rugs, Hebron glass pieces and Asian artefacts.' An expert with a sewing machine, Lise made loose covers, curtains and cushions herself, using French linen and English fabrics.

Four years ago, when their children left home, the couple decided to open up the house to rental guests, and have also hosted local weddings – giving Lise a new excuse to buy even more pretty china, glasses and table linens. 'I love to shop,' she says, 'so it was no hardship. It's so idyllic here, and we wanted to share that with others. When large parties arrive to stay, Nick and I move into one of the guest annexes. We both adore entertaining, I love to cook and produce homemade jams, and Nick is a people person. It's proved to be an ideal combination.'

**FOR STOCKISTS GO TO WHERE TO BUY**

**FAVOURITE SHOP** 'French brocantes are the best place to source quirky accessories, you can't beat them for quality eclectic finds'



**GUEST BEDROOM**  
An iron four-poster bed bought in an antiques shop takes pride of place in here. To rent Nick and Lise's house, see [peyloubet.com](http://peyloubet.com). The Sheherazad bed has this look, £344, Maisons du Monde. Walls painted in Oval Room Blue estate emulsion, £45 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball