

ICONIC HOME



VOLUME THREE



AUTHENTIC *Artistry*

A French Chateau-inspired home shaped by
bespoke interiors and refined craftsmanship.

By Nakayla Shakespeare \ \ Photography by Douglas Friedman

Authenticity was the driving factor in the design of this breathtaking French-inspired home along the Newport Coast. Rooted in French grandeur and opulence, no detail was spared. When you step through its doors, the attention to detail is evident. The magnificent entry, crowned by a gold-leaf dome and antique chandelier, elevates the arrival experience and sets the stage for the grand living room with its soaring windows and dramatic draperies. Custom walnut flooring, expertly crafted boiserie paneling, intricate frieze work and decorative strapwork ceilings set the tone for the rest of the home.

Designed by Sheldon Harte, founder and principal of Harte Davis Interior Design, the home is a richly layered interpretation of sumptuous French luxury. Working closely with the client, every detail of the home was executed with pinpoint precision to bring her vision to life, from the custom embroidered drapery to the intricacy of the wallpaper.

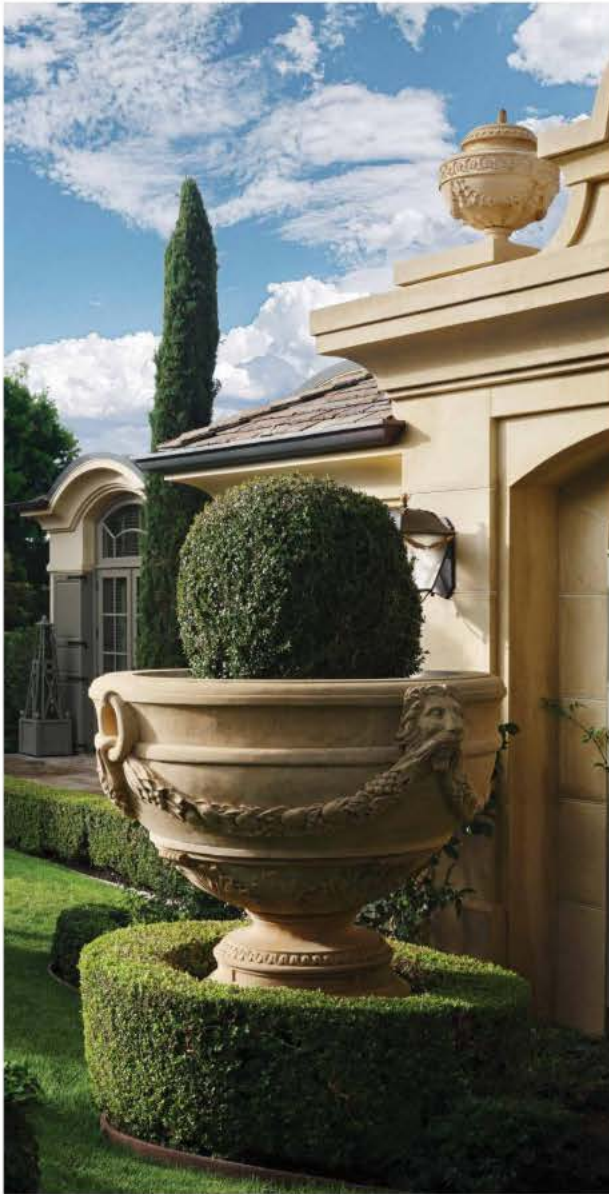
"She's very much a Francophile with a discerning eye for French design," Harte says of the client. "Almost everything in the home is authentic; she didn't want reproductions... everything was found. We made sure everything had provenance and that we knew the lineage of the items."

The antique Aubusson rug in the living room inspired the classic French palette for the home. A layered mix of antique Continental furnishings and custom furniture pieces fill the luminous room, inviting conversation and gatherings. The double-height ceiling and elongated window panes allow the space to be showered with sunlight.

"We looked at auctions and period drawings of French architecture," explains Harte, who worked closely with his partner and senior designer, Derrick Davis, and architectural detailer Donna Pozdro. "We studied books about French chateaux and researched what was appropriate and what was not."

INTERIORS Harte Davis Interior Design. **PHOTOGRAPHY** Douglas Friedman.

Photos included are featured in The Refined Home: Sheldon Harte, published by Vendome Press (Fall 2025).





The dining room boasts hand-finished walnut flooring arranged in a Versailles-style parquet panel, custom wall-paper accentuated by antique sconces, a pair of glistening Baccarat chandeliers, and a dining table and chairs from C Mariani in San Francisco, showcasing authentic Parisian glamour. "We drew a crest and initials for the client and had them all hand-embroidered on the backs of the chairs," Harte says. This reflects the acute level of detailing that elevates the home into an extraordinary work of art.

Customization extends throughout the home, including the decorative paneling in the kitchen. Elaborate carvings adorn each refrigerator door, reinforcing the home's classical style while adding depth and character; it's an unexpected element that creates a lasting impression. "Donna does exceptional drawings and details," Harte remarks. "We would find examples of cabinetry and carvings, she would draw them to scale, then we would realize them on the couture millwork."

The art curation and presentation are just as impressive as the home's design. A museum-worthy collection of French paintings, including works by Bouguereau, Loir

and Lhermitte, adorns the home's walls, emphasizing the authenticity of the French chateau aesthetic.

"[The client] and her husband were very careful watching for things...whether it was traveling or from an auction," Harte says of the client's approach to acquiring the art. "She would research it [the art] and make sure that she liked the subject matter. She didn't buy art just to hang on the wall; she bought it as a collector."

Harte appreciated his client's patience and commitment to having things executed properly. "She was willing to let us do the research and spend time to find things, and, if we had to have something made, make it," he explains.

That shared commitment to getting the details right is evident throughout the home, including in the theater, which features plush, patterned carpeting, embossed leather wall paneling and beautiful espresso velvet seating. "The husband is very tall, so we had to do some custom







sizing," Harte says. "You don't notice it at first, but in the back row, the chairs are a little larger. We wanted to make sure he was comfortable."

Achieving this level of refinement required the collaboration among designers and artisans to be seamless. "We had a great team of craftsmen. Everybody respected each other," Harte shares. "We all had a lot of fun working on this project. We all know she [the client] knows what she's talking about and likes. When the client has a vision like that, it makes the end result come out so much clearer. She trusts my instincts and acknowledges the firm's talent and resources. It makes for a wonderful, collaborative effort."

The result is a home that captures the spirit of grand French classicism while remaining deeply personal to its owners, making it truly one-of-a-kind. The home is currently featured in Harte's recent monograph, *The Refined Home*, published by Vendome Press in 2025. ❶

