



French bliss



Parisian parlour
A dramatic colour scheme teamed with rich fabrics creates a romantic sitting area (above)

Light on
White wooden shutters enhance the light and bright ensuite (top right)

Capture the moment
Shayna's life is captured in a series of photographs (above right)

A mix of traditional and modern brings beauty and personality with it

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As any parent knows, the main bedroom is your sanctuary. It's the place to escape to and unwind in after a long day.

For interior designer Shayna Blaze-Vaughan, her main bedroom is also her own little piece of Paris.

She's teamed dramatic black-and-white furniture with rich dark-brown Jacquard curtains and a chocolate feature wall to create a romantic space that could just as easily be at home in a beautiful French hotel room.

"I am a great believer in creating a bedroom where you can wake up each morning and feel lucky to be there," Shayna says.

"Why do you need to go on a holiday to spoil yourself?"

To add to the room's glamorous look, Shayna poured her heart out in a romantic verse, which was then designed and painted on fabric and used to upholster an ottoman and tasseled cushions.

"The words remind me about the little things that are important – what I love and why I love them," she says.

In keeping with the black-and-white theme, her formerly white cast-iron bed was painted black and then topped with luxurious white

satin-edged sheets, pillows and comforter. The wall next to the bed contains a serene winter-white impasto artwork of sea coral, painted by Shayna, while branch-like lamp bases and timber bedside tables contribute a natural element.

Finishing the opulent effect of this retreat is a Japanese-influenced ensuite with white timber shutters.

While the upstairs parents' retreat is unmistakably glam, the rest of the house has a much more relaxed vibe.

Warm timber furniture and beautiful Laura Ashley and Verve-covered sofas and cushions beckon from the formal living areas, while the family room extends to a large decked outdoor area, perfect for all-year entertaining.

Shayna, her husband, Steve, and their two children, Carly and Jess, moved to the Georgian-style Metricon home about seven years ago.

Having come from a cottage-style house, Shayna admits she's spent the past few years changing their decor from more traditional-style pieces to a modern look.

Relaxed look
Aboriginal artworks command attention in the lounge room

Artworks (on left wall) by Melli Napurrub, (on each) by Rosemary Penjara



Sitting pretty

Old wooden shoe moulds complement the timber of a carved chair (right)

Point of difference

Shaynna likes to try different looks and has put a chandelier in the kitchen area (below right)

Fortunately, it's the perfect task for somebody who spends many of her days scouring junk, antique and designer shops on behalf of clients.

Aside from running her own interior-design company, Blank Canvas Interiors (www.blankcanvasint.com), Shaynna is also a painter, jazz singer and lecturer, as well as the interior designer on LifeStyle Channel's *Selling Houses Australia*. "My style is always changing," Shaynna says.

"I guess I'd describe it as largely traditional French-inspired themes mixed with Asian and Aboriginal influences.

"But then I am always spotting quirky pieces. I don't like to have everything too 'collector' – I like to mix things up a bit."

For instance, she has a chandelier in the kitchen ("my husband and son just shake their heads"), yet a simple wooden table with bench seats in the dining room.

Large antique, amber-and-shell-handled Japanese calligraphy brushes grace her studio's shelves, while a wall of photographs of her family and friends lines the staircase.

In the entrance hall is one of her most treasured possessions – a stained-glass window made by her father.

"We had a big fight over it because he used to make very fussy leadlighting and I wanted it very simple," she says with a laugh.

"In the end, I won. It's the only piece of his leadlighting that I have, so it is very special to me."

Other mementos of her father's interests dot the house – in the lounge room, for example, a black-and-white photograph of an old bridge, which was taken by her father during his Army Reserve days, sits next to an Aboriginal-style painting.

Even her husband's domain, the decked outdoor area, has been given an artistic edge with black material disguising the garage door and wall, complemented by round Chinese paper lanterns set at different heights.

"People think that when it comes to lights, they have to be functional," Shaynna says.

"I am a great believer in trying different looks and putting things to different uses than what they are intended for. It all adds to the personality of your home." 🏠



postscript

with
Shaynna
Blaze-Vaughan

What is one thing that will brighten up any house?
Fresh flowers. There is nothing like filling your house with the fragrance of fresh flowers to keep the mood alive. Oriental lilies and gardenias are my favourite.

Where do you like to shop?
Hermon & Hermon, in Richmond, because they have a great mix of traditional pieces and quirky bits they have picked up during their travels. Asian Tide, in Prahran, also has lots of beautiful, unique pieces. I go to Jardan for furniture and I get my fabrics from the shops in Burwood Rd, Hawthorn.

When is it OK to splurge on a piece of furniture?
When you can justify it. There are only so many bargains out there. For instance, the chair at my writing desk was a really cheap find – about \$30. But I had to get it restored and reupholstered. The cut velvet fabric I bought for it was \$400 a metre. It ended up being quite an expensive chair, but it was exactly what I wanted.

What do you do in your spare time?
When I find some time, I love to paint. My aunt was an artist and I used to paint with her. I've been painting since I was about 15. It has always been therapeutic for me – a way to relax.