

Interiors

The designer's room

Interior designer Fi Crole used French antiques and reclaimed materials to create a timeless feel in a newly built house

FI CROLE, who recently joined forces with fellow interior designer Sophie Eadie to form Eadie & Crole, had a clear objective when it came to the decoration of her home in Hampshire. 'It's a new-build, but I didn't want it to feel new,' she says of the seven-bedroom house she shares with husband, Charlie, and their three sons.

For this reason, she chose antique pieces and a palette of reclaimed materials for the kitchen-dining room. 'My aim was to create a welcoming space for family living and easy entertaining,' explains Fi, who set off for Normandy to track down antique limestone floor tiles and a large rustic fireplace to suit the generous proportions of the room. 'I love the relaxed elegance of old French interiors.'

The same flagstones have been used in the hall to give a coherent feel to both spaces and double doors were added to accentuate the open feel of the ground floor, but, she says, 'they're rarely closed'. Walls painted in Stone 10A by Papers and Paints (www.papersandpaints.co.uk; 020-7352 8626) create a simple backdrop to paintings by Ruth Miemczyk, bought before the house-build had begun.

The antique table and bench were found at Maison Artefact (020-7381 2500; www.maisonartefact.com) and the cushions, made from old linen cart covers, are from Beyond France (07710 148915; www.beyondfrance.co.uk). To complete the design, over-sized pendant lights, believed to be from a Rolls-Royce warehouse, were sourced at Retrouvius (020-8960 6060; www.retrouvius.com).

The key to the success of the design, says Fi, was the combination of textures: 'The colours are neutral, chosen to accentuate the spacious feel of the room, so I used a mix of limestone, natural linen and aged wood to add interest and warmth.'

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