



# TRUE FRENCH *Bleu*

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## Queensridge Home Makes a French Connection

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BY BETH SCHWARTZ | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM K. DECKER

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Lucky for Liz Jones she has some really solid family connections in the building industry. Longtime Las Vegans and the owners of custom home building company Merlin Contracting, Bart and Steve Jones, are her husband's brothers.



The lamps in the home's front garden room are all collected. The settee came from an antique store in California as did all of the artwork on the left wall.



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With fortuitous family ties in place, all Liz needed was the will, the vision, and, oh, the right home to transform from drab to fab. With a job in real estate, Liz knew a lot of builders and was very familiar with Southern Nevada's neighborhoods so it didn't take long for Liz to ferret out a house with good bones and, more importantly, just the right lot.

"It (Queensridge) seemed more homey than some of the custom neighborhoods and I really wanted a lot with a big back yard," explained Liz of she and husband Mark's choice of community they wanted to call home.

The home she, with the help of Merlin Contracting, would spend the next seven years transforming is approximately 4,000 square feet and sits on a ½-acre corner lot in the Summerlin adjacent neighborhood of Queensridge.

*Top photo:*  
The kitchen features glazed and washed custom cabinetry, Viking appliances in an enameled painted finish, and beautifully executed concrete counters with painted floral garland detail.

*Bottom photo:*  
The parlor/wine tasting room's most unique elements are the French-styled black and gold bar and fabric covered built-in banquet.

*Photo inset on page 49:*  
The master suite's sitting area was transformed with built-in bookcases as well as painted molding and casing.



*The homeowner cites the drapery around the bed and custom lampshades as her two favorite elements of the master suite.*

The Jones' have been remodeling the home on and off since they bought it in 2006. "We did it in stages," said Liz of the Pulte tract home, "and according to my husband, we aren't moving -- ever."

Liz's idea of what the home should be was years in the making. "My vision was for a traditional French European, even English (style). I had a cabinet full of magazines I had saved that illustrated things I liked. I had pictures of pretty much everything I wanted," Liz explained of her aesthetic which is inspired by home design and interior decorating magazine *Veranda*.





"I wanted timeless too. Our former house was Tuscan and I wanted something completely different. When I would go to California, to Balboa and Newport Beach that was the look I liked, but you never saw it here. It was something about all the wood. It's so warm and inviting. People see the trim and always love it," Liz adds with regard to the home's elaborate casework and moldings built by Merlin Contracting.

"My husband said I could never pull the

trigger," Liz revealed of her desire to turn her carefully culled magazine pages into reality.

But pull the trigger she did when she brought in Leslie Parraguirre of local design firm Colours, Inc. "I had the concept and Leslie brought it to life. I wanted that authentic feeling but didn't want it to be too heavy," said Liz. "That's why Leslie was so great. She would keep me from going overboard. I made her job easier in some respects because I was so hands-on and involved."

"Mark and Liz were great to work with and had a clear vision for their home. When they moved in, the entry was uneventful and essentially comprised of standard drywall texture and a very basic rail system. It felt dark and heavy," explained Leslie. "By changing to all white painted moldings and casing throughout, the house literally came alive. The hickory floors added the warmth and a more casual elegance to the home as it evolved into a lovely French country experience."



Merlin Contracting oversaw the high level of detail shown in the entry/staircase, wainscot and casings throughout the Jones' home.

The home's French experience continues into the garden room, located at the front of the home. "The garden room is painted a true French Bleu. The settee is a Provençal antique circa early 1900s as is the lovely painted end table," explained Leslie. "I loved the drama of the black and gold painted chairs in contrast to the soft feel of the room along with the silk drapery."

Also at the front of the home is a parlor/wine tasting room "with its center point being a spectacular French-styled bar with Chinese influence in black and gold. Cleverly hidden behind the lower cabinet doors are refrigerator drawers and a chilled wine cabinet," said Leslie. "And the built-in banquet and table are perfect for gathering

with friends over a glass of wine."

The parlor's fabric covered built-in banquet came from one of Liz's many inspiration photos. In addition, the couple had a smaller replica of a wine table they had seen custom made for the space. "I didn't want it to be a formal dining area so we could use it year round," explained Liz of changing the space to make it informal.

The parlor's bar/wine cabinet with marble top was also directly from Liz's collection of vision photos. "I wanted it not to be a built-in. It's almost an exact duplicate of the photo I gave him (the craftsman who built the custom piece)," said Liz.

The kitchen is also an abundance of beautifully ornate custom cabinetry. "No space was left unattended. Every cabinet has storage use," said Leslie. "The kitchen features Viking appliances in an enameled painted finish, glazed and washed cabinetry and beautifully executed concrete counters with painted floral garland detail."

Liz is hard pressed to name her favorite element in the kitchen but finally decides it's the island. "I love that it's hand-painted and you can't even tell it is made from concrete. The cabinets are a close second, oh, and there's the chandelier, which came from an antique store."

As for the master suite located upstairs, Leslie offered that "the space was quite large but not well utilized. The sitting area was unused. We added lots of painted molding and more casing along with lots of bookcases, and created a reading niche to bring the two spaces together. We carried forward the hickory wood floors here as well.

"The nightstands are purposely mismatched and very his and hers," explained Leslie. "Mark's side was customized to accommodate lots of late night reading materials with additional pull-out writing shelves."

Liz cites the drapery around the bed and custom lampshades as her two favorite elements of the room, while Leslie is smitten with the bed linens. "They are Italian from Legna and are made of wood fiber. These have become a favorite requested by all of our clients. These sheets are 'life altering,' according to my husband who has never noticed a set of sheets in his life!"

The master bath underwent its own set of changes. "We tore out the standard built-in tub and deck in favor of the more traditional footed tub. This truly opened up the bath space," said Leslie. "The shower and commode room doors went to all frosted glass adding to the already fresh Bleu shades, made only that much better with the use of crisp white surfaces. The stone (floor) is Calacatta Gold marble, one of my personal favorites. The fixtures are all polished nickel, and I love the roll-up

storage hiding all of the daily necessities that can make a bath feel cluttered."

"I really wanted the footed tub," revealed Liz, "but my husband wasn't so sold on it."

Just like the tub, Mark Jones may not have been sold on a custom home but between his wife and her cabinet full of home magazine clippings, the interior design skills of Leslie Parraguirre, and the woodworking talents of Merlin Contracting's subcontractors, he got it. □

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