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text: Robyn Prince, Laure Jakobiak
photos: Hans Fonk

SAINT-REMY MON AMOUR



Their studio is located in the small town of Saint-Rémy, in the very heart of the French Provence. Their architecture, restoration, interior and garden design activities extend throughout the Côte d'Azur to far beyond Monaco.

He specialises in the restoration of 18th-century estates and her gardens at their former home, Les Confines, attract visitors from all over the globe. Meanwhile their son, Alexandre, has in fact taken over much of the design work. Some time ago Dominique and Bruno Lafourcade exchanged their characteristic French 'manoir' for a new, modern house in Les Baux de Provence. It is an former warehouse for which Alexandre drew up new architectural plans. Bruno co-ordinated the transformation of the old premises into a modern, warm dwelling.

The Lafourcades invited OBJEKT©International to visit their new home and we discovered how a tautly designed house combined with a warm décor can produce a delightful result.

Below left: Dominique and Bruno Lafourcade. Beside that: the former warehouse in Les Baux de Provence where fruit was once processed and packaged. It has been transformed into a modern, welcoming home. Their son, Alexandre Lafourcade, drew up the architectural plans and Bruno took charge of the renovation. Below the entranceway with, suspended from the roof, an artwork by François Chevalier, inspired by Calder. The chairs and table are by Knoll, Henry Bertoia. On the first floor, right, a complete, miniature interior has been furnished in the style of a 17th-century French castle.

Overleaf

The open kitchen is at one of the long sides of the house and has been furnished entirely in keeping with the Lafourcades' ideas. The table made in maple-wood is their own design. The chairs are by Knoll, Henry Bertoia. The red candlesticks and the paintings are by Dominique and the ceiling lamps were designed by Alexandre. The stove is by Boretti. The chair in the foreground is made from oil drums and came from Albania. The wooden sphere was made by Jean-Philippe Reynier and the painting in the background is by François Chevalier.









Above: the master bedroom styled entirely along Hermès lines by Dominique. She made the lamps from Hermès boxes and applied Hermès carrier bags to the cupboard fronts, covering them with plastic film. At the back right, the amazing walk-in closet is just visible – it is located between the landing and the bedroom. Beside that: the master bathroom.

Below: looking indoors from the garden – exterior and interior merge together seamlessly.

Right: the middle part of the house with the stairs to the bedrooms and a view of the garage which houses Bruno's vintage Bugattis. Dominique's studio can just be seen on the left.



The South of France, the Côte d'Azur and, especially Provence have magical associations for people throughout the world. This is where, in the heart of the region – in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence – Dominique and Bruno Lafourcade have their studio. Bruno has earned acclaim for his restoration and furnishing of 18th-century country mansions, wine estates and castles along the entire south coast of France. Dominique's garden creations are equally acclaimed, the pièce de résistance being the gardens at Les Confines, the country house on the outskirts of Saint-Rémy where they lived until a few years ago.

In 1977 they opened their studio in the centre of this picturesque little town, from which they still conduct their activities today. They work for an international clientele, who wish to have their recently acquired estates converted into a south-French dream.

Bruno is a self-made man with a wealth of hands-on experience. He succeeds in adapting large country houses and castles for modern living without a whole army of servants. Dominique is on the same wavelength as her husband in her

work. Her unicolour Jardins à la Française are in complete harmony with Bruno's creations. These days their son Alexandre undertakes some of the design and development activities. He, too, acquired his skills 'on the job' and has proved capable of achieving optimum results with major projects. In 2000 he converted a old apple warehouse into a modern loft, giving Bruno the idea to carry out a similar conversion at a small fruit-packing plant in Le Baux de Provence. It took eight months for Bruno to translate his son's architectural plans and his own ideas into a modern and welcoming home.

Bruno: "The basic idea is simple. We wanted a contemporary house, but without the severity and coldness exhibited by many modern designs. Also, I needed a place for my vintage Bugatti which had to be visible from inside the house. We wanted as few doors as possible on the ground floor to enable the rooms to flow together naturally."

The complex sits behind a sculptured wall with a rectangular pool beyond which has small fountains along one of the long sides. Following on from that, along one axis, there is a small garden, as well as a covered terrace and the house itself. The garden walls are





Adjoining: the dressing area fitted out by Dominique and forming the entrance to the master bedroom. The armchair is from Kare Design. The painting in the background is by Vilalén. The rug is by Flipo.

Right: the dining table in the back part of the spacious living room with Warren Platner chairs and a colourful lamp: PXL by Fredrick Mattson. The rug is by Flipo.

The paper ceiling lamp is by Paola Navone; the other lamps and candlesticks were made by Dominique Lafourcade.

The painting on the left is by François Chevalier who drew his inspiration from Miró.

Overleaf

The living area with the dining room in the background and, right, behind the fireplace, the library.

Dominique made the colourful lamps from pieces of PET bottles. In the foreground, two 'Wing' chairs by Eero Saarinen. The other furniture was designed by Bruno. François Chevalier made the giraffe, the horns came from an African buffalo.



covered in greenery and there are long stands of bamboo. The transition between exterior and interior is marked by paving made from local stone.

Large glass doors access an enormous living space which extends right up to the roof. Most of the furniture and lighting was designed by Bruno, apart from a couple of 'Wing' chairs by Eero Saarinen. A large fireplace separates the living space from the library, which has been situated at a slightly higher level. The formal dining room is at the rear, with the kitchen beside it. Dominique created the striking candlesticks and lighting objects.

At the back of the living area the ceiling is lower. This space contains Dominique's studio, which is separated by a glass wall from the garage housing the Bugattis. The studio area also contains the staircase to the bedrooms – the handrails are clad in 'leather'. Five bedrooms, four bathrooms and a master bedroom with a large walk-in dressing room have been ingeniously accommodated in the back part of the house. The Lafourcades describe their home as possessing a pleasing rhythm between large open spaces and the more intimate private quarters. The interior is a veritable waterfall of Dominique and Bruno's creative ideas. For example, the master bedroom is defined by Hermès, with lamps Dominique constructed from Hermès boxes and cupboard doors decorated with pieces of Hermès carrier bags sealed with clear plastic. Out of doors, Dominique has transformed a grey concrete car park into a garden with a clearly delineated design.

"The former car park wasn't particularly large, so I attempted to stretch the perspective and screen off the view to the neighbouring property as far as possible. The basic ingredients of my garden were water and clear lines. I added various exotic plants, but mainly used indigenous species."

To combat noise from passing traffic, she built four fountains from simple stone at the long side of the pool. And, in a tribute to modern edge technology, artificial grass was added here and there. In the end, artificial grass is poles apart from Dominique's garden. Les Confines: a Mediterranean garden along classical lines, creating a number of garden rooms. Today it is a famous attraction for garden aficionados and connoisseurs from all over the world visit throughout the entire year.

Dominique: "In Provence the garden is truly a continuation of the house for us, a place where you can create different moods. At Les Confines I primarily used plants and trees that grow close to the wild in the Alpilles region." It was not a problem for her to create a cohesive ensemble of garden 'atmospheres' at the home as well, even though the garden here is considerably smaller than the more than 8 hectares at Les Confines.





