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PACIFIC PROVENÇAL

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a bright yellow sleeveless dress, is running barefoot towards the camera in a large, rustic foyer. The room features exposed brick walls on the left, large stone columns on the right, and a ceiling with heavy wooden beams. Three glass lantern-style light fixtures hang from the ceiling. In the background, an arched doorway leads to another room with a lamp and a window. The overall atmosphere is warm and cozy.

Olive Sun careens past the exposed brick windows beneath reclaimed beams from a Canadian mill. OPPOSITE Tones of blonde wood, stone (and fur) strike a soothing note in the foyer.

FRENCH COUNTRY MEETS ORANGE COUNTY IN A COZY FAMILY ESTATE

BY DAWN MOORE PHOTOGRAPHED BY LISA ROMEREIN

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Austrian ebony and ivory hand-carved musicians, circa 1890. An antique gilded wood chandelier casts a soft glow on an 18th century Umbrian painting by Carlo Labruzzi and French farmhouse table from Lief. Wood tools in the kitchen. A limestone sink is guarded by two Jonathan Adler vases.





The circa 1910 Swedish folk art candelabrum sprouts from the piano backed by "Country Canyon" stone walls. Rose Tarlow upholstered chairs coexist with a catalogue-found twist end table.



Perched at a rakish angle on a boulder in a quiet corner of Orange County, nestled in rosemary and lavender in the otherwise perfectly manicured landscape, is a pacifier—left, no doubt, by three-year-old Ailee Sun when her mother, Chi-Lin, wasn't looking. When that might have been is hard to imagine as Chi-Lin Sun's world revolves around her family; husband Donald, five-year-old Olive, Ailee and Mr. Tomten, their Goldendoodle. "I always knew I'd be a stay-home mom with my kids. I couldn't imagine not!" says Sun, who works from home as a photographer.

The desire to nest is strong with the Suns, which made their choice to settle in Irvine's quietly exclusive Shady

Canyon a natural one. The rambling topography is California lush, but offers the craggy terrain and saturated colors of the Southwest. "Five years ago, our realtor showed us this lot and it reminded me of Nevada—open and spread out, facing a natural hill with chaparral. Plus the breezes are perfect," says Donald. "When I saw the hawks and the heard the wildlife in the early morning, I knew this was it," adds his wife.

Shady Canyon, considered a "preservation development," encompasses 16,000 acres of pristine wilderness managed by the Nature Conservancy. Laced with idyllic sounding streets like Blue Heron, Golden Eagle and Cop-

"ALTHOUGH IT'S NOT TYPICALLY PROVENÇAL, IT IS AUTHENTIC."



Parchment and dove grey Venetian plaster walls in the master bath embrace a sleek Waterworks tub. OPPOSITE The master bedroom's custom bed complements the 19th century Gustavian settee.

per Creek, its bucolic openness (and Tom Fazio-designed golf course) have made it a coveted address for prominent sports figures and young business titans looking for spacious sanctuaries. Exactly five harmonious styles of architecture, inspired by rural mountainous regions as varied as Provence, Tuscany and Santa Barbara, are sanctioned by the community's review board, allowing each to blend so seamlessly with the surrounding landscape, you'd think the structures had sprouted straight from the earth. In fact, the board is not only diligent about the exterior colors and plant choices, but also insists on 12-inch-thick exterior walls. Wendi Young, the couple's interior designer, notes

Chi-Lin essentially held the reins on the project and that Donald's only requests were for a grassy yard, a lap pool and what he calls "Hobbit" decor. "Like an English cottage, cozy and small with fires going. That's kind of what I always wanted, but I settled for this," he says with a wink. At 6,800 square feet, the house qualifies as Grand Hobbit.

Young and Chi-Lin met at a mutual client's home four years ago and instantly connected. Although that particular residence was ultra-contemporary, Chi-Lin and Young agreed on a soulful aesthetic for the Suns' interiors. Once the property was purchased and the French Provence style determined, Young dug into research. CONTINUED ON PAGE 72



TOP Even the girls' bedroom gets a touch of soul with vintage textile pillows. BELOW "Olive" and "Ailee" are spelled out in Lagos Azul marble tiles against Calcutta Gold.

What was to be a girly pink and white bathroom was scrapped for the brightly sophisticated "Shanghai Moon" wallpaper and burnt orange Chinese stools.



OLIVE

"WHEN I SAW THE HAWKS IN THE MORNING, I KNEW THIS WAS IT."



The family thwarts Mr. Tomten's efforts under the soon to be wisteria-covered iron trellis.
OPPOSITE An Indonesian tropical wood daybed inspires day-dreaming shaded by the Irvine Ranch 16,000-acre preserve.

"Although it's not typically what you think of as Provence, it is authentic—the fabrics, colors, architectural details." Even Provençal scents waft through the house. As Chi-Lin rearranges herself on the 19th century Gustavian settee, lavender-filled pillows release their soft aroma, causing Mr. Tomten to peer his nose over the back to investigate. Textures are deliciously organic and imbued with tactile sensations on every surface. Chi-Lin's photographer's eye has clearly shaped the couple's art collection; Chagalls converse with paper sculptures from Merja Winqvist and Bernadette Chene along with photographs taken by their 4-year-old.

As the rooms unfold, the textural play deepens. All

the fireplace mantles are antique French limestone; the floors reclaimed terra cotta tiles from French homes; the powder room walls covered in burlap trimmed with nail heads and the bed linens are vintage hemp. The infusion of provenance and life stories, whether inherent or implied, drives Chi-Lin's environs and inspires her work. A 30-year-old snapshot of her mother grocery shopping is her favorite, speaking volumes of her ability to find depth and beauty in everyday life.

The home's heart, though, lies in the children's suite. A common play area is dominated by two massive chalkboards that Chi-Lin and the girls

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