



RUSTIC & REFINED

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ORGET STALE STYLE LABELS. IF YOU'RE A PERSON OF MANY DIMENSIONS LIKE HOMEOWNER HERMINE MARIAUX, USE AND DISPLAY WHAT YOU LOVE IN YOUR OWN UNIQUE WAY.

On one hand, Hermine Mariaux lives a casual, plop-your-feet-up-anywhere lifestyle and can't resist time-scarred primitives and folk art. But on the other hand, she's ever the sophisticate who insists on a crisp edge of slick, contemporary styling in her living spaces. Then again, she's a bit of the traditionalist, who appreciates the finely polished lines of classic furnishings. Can she have it all? With a mastery of eclectic styling, absolutely. And so can you.

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

The recipe for Hermine's flavorful melting-pot approach to decorating is simple: Blend different ingredients but allow each to retain its unique flavor. In other words, be eclectic but don't muddy the waters. How? Start with the backgrounds—the floors, windows,

and walls that are the bones of your home. Choose one look for them and stick with it. For Hermine, this is the place for the clean, contemporary stamp—white, white, and more white—to provide a simple backdrop and ample breathing room for each of her character-filled treasures. Windows and French doors are undressed except for their white wood frames. She even made her wood floors go pale with paint in an effort to purify the context. “Color back-

grounds don't bring out the individual qualities, shapes, and colors of both objects and fabrics,” says Hermine, a marketing maven and former magazine editor. She boils down her decorating formula into three rules: Edit the number of pieces, make sure they're large enough to fit your space, and keep them simple.



Starting with an airy contemporary shell, Hermine Mariaux's living room takes on rusticity with bold silhouettes of folk art. “The objects I bring home,” she says, “have simplicity of form, a sense of humor, and that special patina that only comes with age.”