

# HOMES

With interiors reprised for a new generation, these homes embody style, beauty, glamour and comfort.

## MAKING WAVES

French designer Jean-Louis Deniot refreshed his sister's island seaside hideaway with a maritime-themed makeover. See *Blue Rinse*, p110.

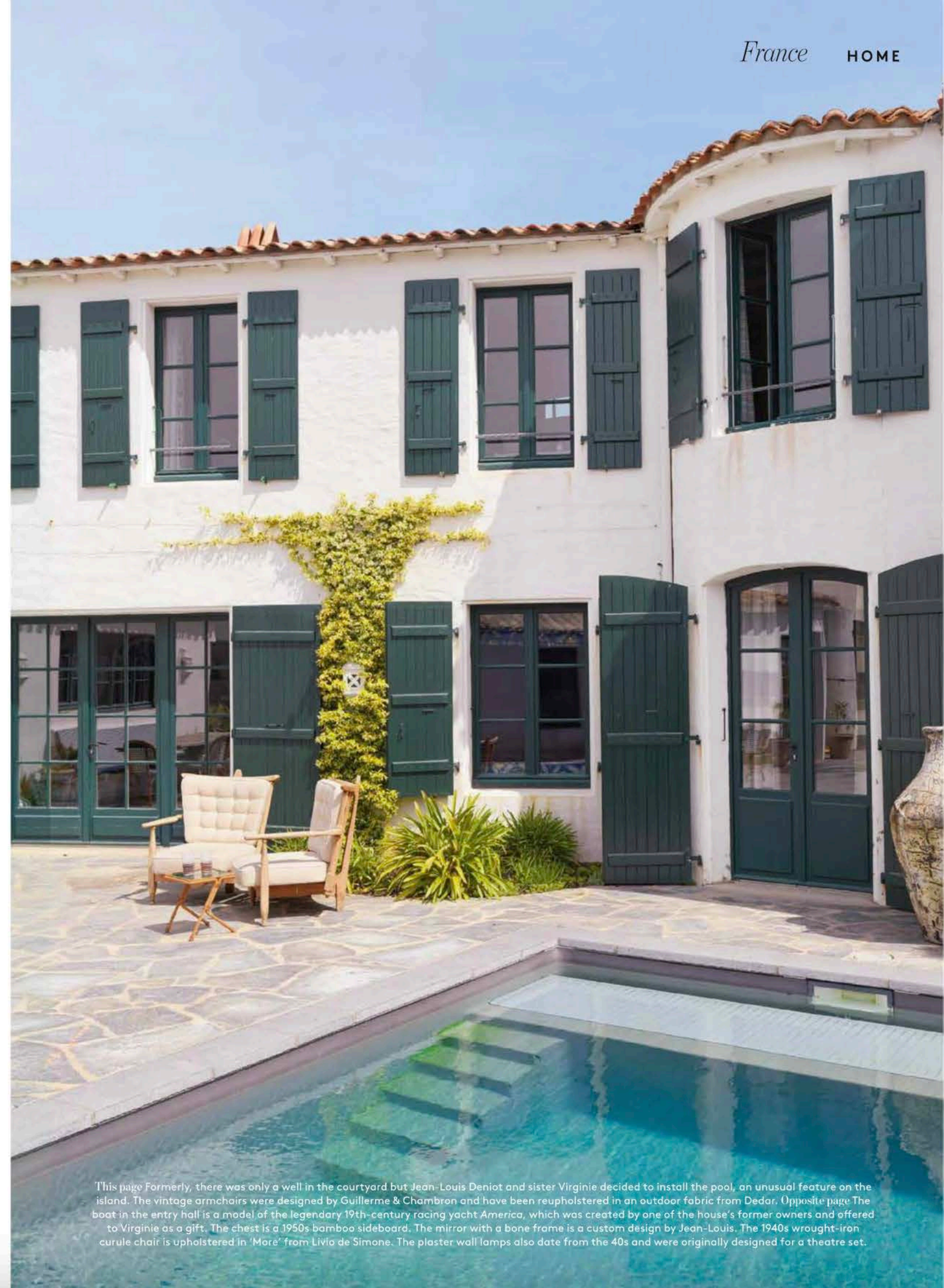
Photography **STEPHAN JULLIARD**



# BLUE RINSE

Washed throughout in maritime shades, the decoration of this seaside retreat is deliberately dated in a cheeky nod to generations past.

Words + production IAN PHILLIPS Photography STEPHAN JULLIARD



This page Formerly, there was only a well in the courtyard but Jean-Louis Deniot and sister Virginie decided to install the pool, an unusual feature on the island. The vintage armchairs were designed by Guillerme & Chambron and have been reupholstered in an outdoor fabric from Dedar. Opposite page The boat in the entry hall is a model of the legendary 19th-century racing yacht *America*, which was created by one of the house's former owners and offered to Virginie as a gift. The chest is a 1950s bamboo sideboard. The mirror with a bone frame is a custom design by Jean-Louis. The 1940s wrought-iron curule chair is upholstered in 'More' from Livio de Simone. The plaster wall lamps also date from the 40s and were originally designed for a theatre set.



These pages, clockwise from left In the dining area the painted bamboo chairs are 1940s neo-Gothic and were reupholstered in a fabric from Tangier. The custom banquette is covered in 'Primavera' by Josef Frank. The custom table has a distressed gold leaf and hammered iron base and stained oak top. The watercolours on the wall are by Frédéric de Luca. Vintage wall lights by Audoux Minet. In the living room, the 'Julien' sofa is from Jean-Louis' collection for George Smith. The coffee table dates from the 50s and was bought in L.A. The rug is Moroccan from Marrakech. Mid-century teal floor lamp by Jean Rispoli. Vintage oak sideboard with a 70s wicker lamp from L.A. The blue bottles on the mantel are mid-century glassware. Armchairs bought from Christopher Gibbs were reupholstered in a custom woven stripe from Tangier. The Brutalist vintage fish sculpture is by Ernie Abdelnour.

September will see the release of the second monograph published by Rizzoli dedicated to the work of Paris-based interior designer Jean-Louis Deniot. *Destinations* presents 18 of his projects, from Bangkok to Cali in Colombia. There is what looks like a mini-Versailles in New Delhi, whose owners refer to as their 'farmhouse', though there is nothing remotely rural about it, as well as his own house in LA's Hollywood Hills. There's also the dacha (seasonal residence) on Yves Saint Laurent's former country house in Normandy, the Château Gabriel, which he has redecorated for its new owners.

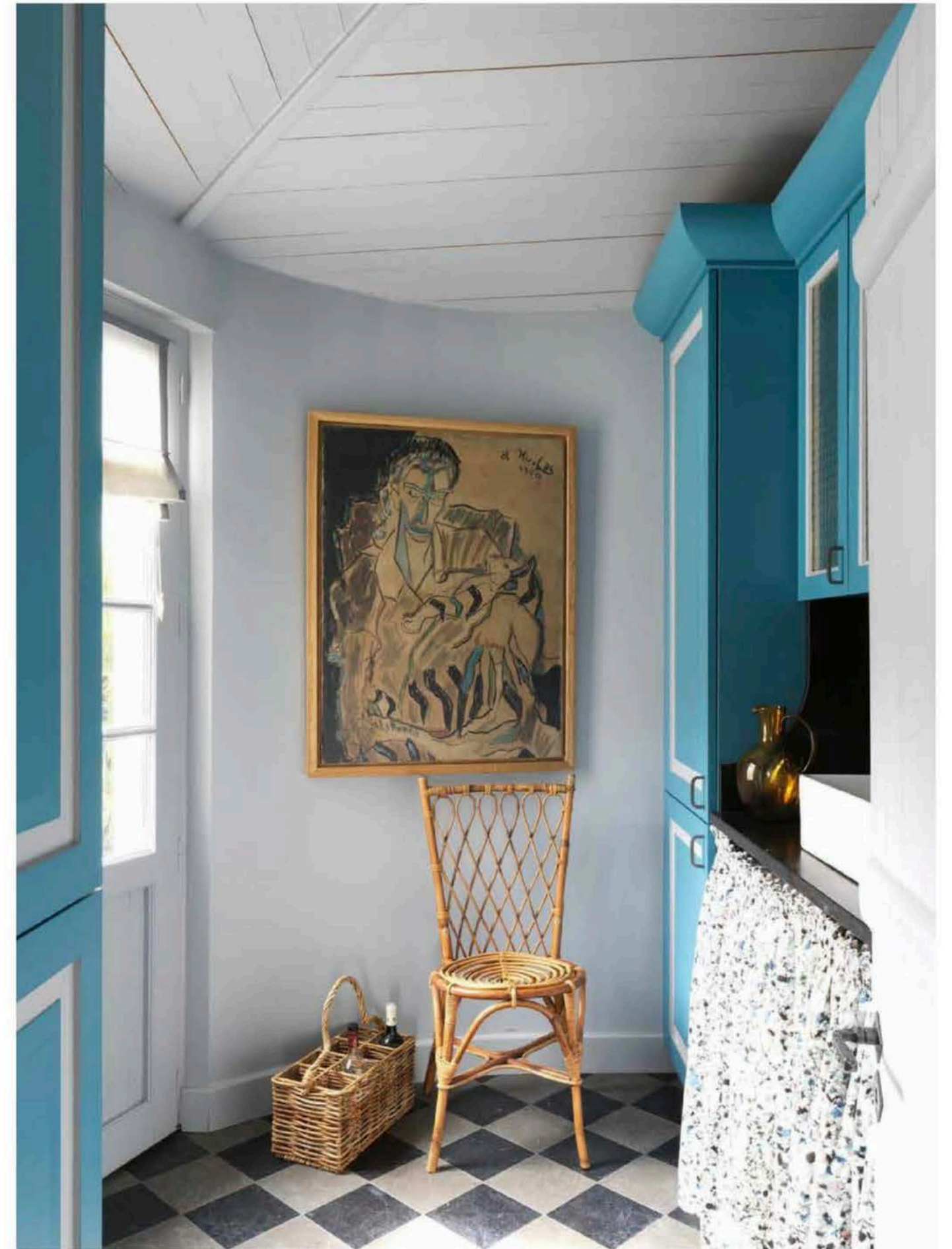
In many of the places Jean-Louis works, he tried to create a new paradigm of just how an interior should look there. For a loft project in Miami, he referenced the city's status as one of the world's art capitals and took inspiration from the reconstitution of sculptor Constantin Brâncuși's atelier near the Pompidou Centre in Paris. But for this holiday home on the Île de Ré, off France's west coast, he also decided to come up with a fresh new aesthetic. "The houses there tend to be pretty old-fashioned with lots of driftwood," he says. "They look rather sad."

The project was of special significance to Jean-Louis because the house belongs to his sister (and office manager) Virginie. She first visited the Île de Ré 15 years ago and fell in love with it. "I love its temperate climate and the light is incredible," she says. "There are vineyards, tractors and fields, and at the same time ports, beaches and sailing boats." It's those landscapes and kilometres of coastline that see the island as a sought-after holiday destination. The late Christian Liaigre famously had a house there and other visitors have included the likes of Vanessa Paradis and Katy Perry.

The house Virginie found dates back to the 40s and was built for a family from the Bordeaux region, who had owned it ever since. Rather serendipitously, her husband was already acquainted with it. "He knew the family and had played inside the house when he was a small child," she says. Little work had been done on it. There was just a sole bathroom for the whole house, with individual washbasins and bidets in each of the bedrooms instead. Jean-Louis says it was also very dark. "There were pitch pine walls and terracotta floors," he says. Still, the property was not without its appeal. It had wooden ceilings, including the one in the »



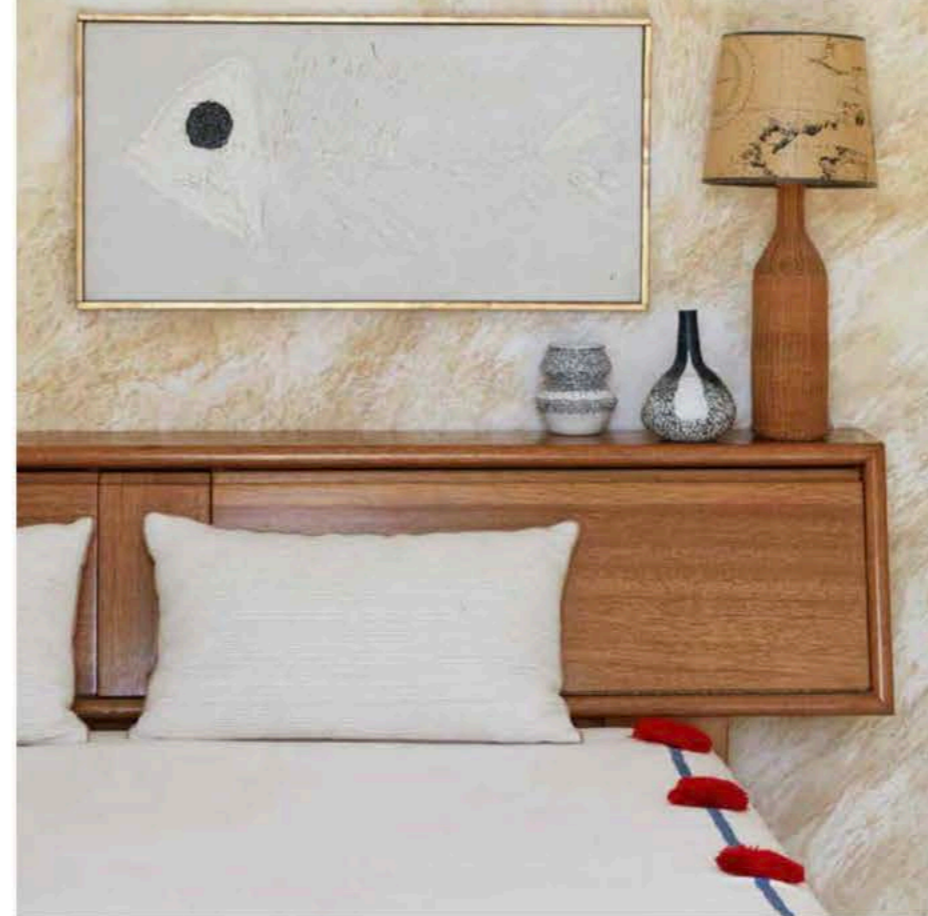
“THE IDEA WAS TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE HOUSE BELONGED TO ONE OF OUR AUNTS. WE WANTED IT TO LOOK DATED.”



**This page** An artwork by an unknown French artist anchors the pantry. The bamboo chair dates from the 1950s and the wine basket is also vintage. The skirt curtain is made from a fabric by Paris-based textile designer Robert Normand. **Opposite page** The kitchen units were based on a salvaged 1940s model and have antique mirror inserts. The benchtops are Zimbabwe granite and the chequerboard floor tiles are a mix of the same granite and grey limestone. The wall sculpture of a donkey head dates from the 40s and is made from rope. The oven is from Miele. Tapware from Franke.



**This page** Parisian decorative artist Florence Girette painted the sandstorm effect on the walls of the guest bedroom. Jean-Louis designed the bedspread with red pompoms. The lamp is vintage and the artwork of fish bones dates from the 1940s. The master bathroom vanity was custom-designed in Carrara marble and painted wood. The mirrors are also custom with a bone mosaic frame. The wall lights were designed by Jean-Louis who also created the shower tiles in cracked ceramic. Outdoor dining table, made from wooden planks, with bamboo French bistro chairs. **Opposite page** The custom sofa in the study is upholstered in 'Notturmo' by Josef Frank. Vintage yellow rope table and floor lamps by Audoux Minet. Teak 'Boomerang' desk by Peter Løvig Nielsen. The photo is by Slim Aarons.



« living room that incorporates an old boat mast. There is also a turret and a south-facing courtyard that is not overlooked by any of the neighbours, despite being located slap bang in the centre of one of Île de Ré's charmingly picturesque villages.

Jean-Louis decided to anchor the interiors in the past. He replicated the existing doors, mouldings and other architectural details, and installed a stone floor in a traditional chequerboard pattern in the entry hall. He also integrated a number of more classical-looking pieces, including a sofa from his collection for the English manufacturer George Smith in the sitting room and a pair of 1940s wrought-iron curule chairs close to the front door.

"The idea was to give the impression that the house belonged to one of our aunts. We wanted it to look dated. The last thing I wanted was that you could guess it belonged to someone of my age," says Virginie. That's not to say that they didn't have fun. Part of their inspiration came from Belgian comic strip hero Tintin, which resulted in the use of lots of bright blue colours. They played around with pattern and prints, especially those created by the mid-century Swedish designer, Josef Frank. "There's a kind of eccentricity to his style," says Jean-Louis, who also decided to commission Paris-based decorative painter Florence Girette to paint the walls of one of the guest bedrooms on the ground floor with a motif meant to resemble a sandstorm. In the same room, a white bedcover was installed with a blue stripe down either side decorated with red pompoms. "It's like a landing strip for sailors," quips Jean-Louis. "After seeing »



« the blue of the sea for so long, they're happy to find themselves in the middle of a desert storm.” It is only one of a number of nautical references that run throughout the house. Others include the doorways framed by rope and the model of the legendary 19th-century racing yacht *America* in the entry hall. The canopy of the master bedroom is a nod to fishing nets.

“For us, the project was like a breath of fresh air,” enthuses Jean-Louis. “It really brought Virginie and me even closer

together.” For him, however, the most important occupants of the house are his nephew and two nieces. “What I really wanted more than anything was to create a place that would conjure up wonderful memories of childhood holidays for them in later life,” he says. And he firmly believes the swimming pool he installed in the courtyard will contribute to that. “Pools are a rarity on Île de Ré,” he notes. “I knew they’d be the most popular children on the block.” [deniot.com](#)



#### SPEED READ

» Acclaimed French interior designer Jean-Louis Deniot took on a project close to his heart: his sister Virginie's seaside holiday home on Île de Ré. » The pair aimed to bring comfort and amenity to the well-worn 1940s home with a deft update and redecoration. » Jean-Louis assembled a mix of classical furniture and sourced vintage pieces to give the impression the “house belonged to one of our aunts”. » Playful notes were added with the use of Tintin-inspired bright blues, vibrant patterns and prints, and twists of nautical rope on doorways and custom objects. » A swimming pool, a rarity on the island, completes the picture for the ultimate relaxing retreat for Virginie and her young family.



This page, clockwise from above A crochet canopy inspired by fishing nets adds to the maritime ambience. The custom bedspread was made in Tangier. Local artist Erick Valencourt created the artwork. The custom bedside table features an integrated lamp. Vintage pieces include the 60s chest of drawers made in rattan and oak, bamboo mirrors and an armchair reupholstered in a Romo linen. In a child's bedroom, the custom bunks are covered in a bedspread made in Tangier. Rope horse sourced in Morocco. 'My Terrazza' wallpaper from ENOstudio. Vintage armchair by German designer Hartmut Lohmeyer. The children's bathroom is painted in Majorelle blue. The striking shower tiles are by Jean-Louis who also designed the wall lamps, mirrors finished in antique silver and the vanity topped in Carrara marble. **Opposite page** In one of the guest bedrooms on the ground floor, the straw headboard was designed by Charlotte Perriand. 'Tweed' wallpaper from Cole & Son. Vintage ship sculpture by Curtis Jeré.

