

# French Farmhouse Style

This '90s-style California home got a thoughtful makeover with European flair.



When Sherrie Friday-Knight and her husband, Jerry Knight, purchased their 1992 ranch home in Central California, they had quite a project ahead of them—removing burgundy-colored carpet throughout, taking down walls to create a more open concept, vaulting the ceilings, gutting the kitchen, and so on. Luckily, with Sherrie, who is a designer, and Jerry, who is a woodworker and furniture builder, the task was in capable hands. “This home was very outdated—stuck in the ’80s even though it was built in the ’90s,” Sherrie says. “It [was] easy for me to see past the ugly, knowing what the possibilities could be for this home. It had good bones and is located in a wonderful neighborhood, which made it worth putting in all the work of the renovations.”

Sherrie loves soft neutral colors and decorating with white, which is evident throughout her modern French farmhouse-style home. The designer is quick to encourage the idea that decorating with white is far from boring. “Layering and adding texture to a neutral room, in my opinion, is the best way to achieve a relaxed, beautiful space,” she says. “These items build interest in a room in subtle ways like nothing else can.”



*“I lean towards light, airy spaces; worn woods; and a French-country, relaxed vibe that is welcoming, very livable, and beautiful all at the same time.”*

—Sherrie Friday-Knight



The home's original formal dining and living rooms were combined into one large area to create a new dining room and open-concept living area that connect to the kitchen. The ceilings were vaulted, and the central beams were exposed. "We opened up a wall to create a more open floor plan between the dining room, kitchen, and family room," Sherrie says, noting that Jerry made custom-built furniture to fit this room for large family gatherings.

The living room is anchored with a Rowe Aberdeen slipcovered sectional. "I believe anyone can do a white sofa—as long as it is slipcovered," Sherrie says. "That's the key! Also, having some twin-size (same color as sofa) blankets help to protect it if you have dogs and kids and husbands who are messy. Throwing a blanket in the laundry is way easier than pulling off a slipcover to wash, and life is easy when you don't have to worry about ruining a sofa. Live on it; slipcovered sofas can handle it."

The family home is thoughtfully decorated with special décor and is intentional with its layout and design. "I believe when you walk into a room, you should see the entire room. You may have a focal point, but not multiple ones," Sherrie says. "In order for a room to be calming, it cannot be screaming from every direction. Keeping things within a neutral color palette and allowing architectural details to be the standout feature also really help the room achieve that serene look."



"Finding a beautiful vintage piece of furniture or architectural find also spurs my imagination," Sherrie says. "The wonderful patinas found in old wood [or] a room filled with amazing morning light—really anything that someone finds stunningly beautiful—can create a sort of excitement or energy that can fuel a creative fire."



The French farmhouse-style kitchen is centered beneath the newly exposed support beams and double chandeliers from Ballard Designs. The cabinets are painted in Benjamin Moore's White Dove, which pairs beautifully with their White Ice granite countertops. The center island serves double duty as a kitchen table. It is topped in African mahogany, which creates a striking contrast while adding warmth to the heart of the home. "Our favorite space [in the home] is the table/ island in the center of our kitchen," Sherrie says. "Our kitchen is truly the heart of our home. Friends and family gather here for the holidays, and memories are made every Sunday night with family dinners with our grown children. And nothing makes this mama's heart happier than having her children home and gathered at the dinner table."





With so much open space for family to gather throughout the home, the design duo created a tranquil retreat for two in their primary bedroom and en suite bath. “My design goals in the space were to open up the entire space and give it a light, airy feel,” Sherrie says. “The bedroom is actually quite small, but opening it up to the bathroom created the illusion that it was much bigger.” After vaulting the original 9-foot ceilings and adding an exposed beam, they opted to create an arched entry between the two spaces. The thoughtful renovations now give a direct sight line—from the moment you open the bedroom door—all the way to the tub and the private garden patio just outside the window.

Sherrie’s design goals for her home—and any home she works on for a client—is “first and foremost, that it functions well to meet the family’s needs. And second, [I] meet those needs while creating the most beautiful space possible,” she says. And it’s clear she’s achieved those goals in her beautiful French farmhouse.

For more of Sherrie’s interior design work, visit [@lavenderlaneinteriorsofca](#) on Instagram or [lavenderlaneinteriors.com](#). ✨

TEXT BY KATIE ELLIS  
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The vintage doors flanking the opening between the bed and bathroom were a salvage find that determined the dimensions of the curved archway. “I needed to make those vintage doors look like they had always been there,” Sherrie says. “If you find something you love, just make it happen. Follow your heart, and it will always work out.” BOTTOM RIGHT: The cozy guest bedroom is layered in inviting European bed linens from Mooshop on Etsy. The artwork over the beds was made by a talented mother-daughter team out of Texas.

