

Peace and Elegance Define Luxury at Chateau Elan

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Nestled within the elite Chateau Elan community, the home of Francine and Ceef Boudewijn exudes imperial elegance. The 9,200 square-foot, European-style estate is a melting pot of sophisticated antiques and serene, yet luxurious, decorating style.

Shunning the traditional look for a style more to their liking, the décor is Asian-inspired with Oriental artifacts and treasured keepsakes used as focal points in each room. Having lived in Tokyo for five years before settling down at Chateau Elan 4½ years ago, the Boudewijns feel their home is the perfect respite and memento of a culture they became endeared to.

Balance and harmony are key to the Asian decorating style. A classy elegance is the outcome of using collectibles, the couple acquired during their travels through Europe, as decorating tools.

"Throughout the entire home, you see lots of different Obis (long scarves used to tie Kimonos) and Kimonos," says Francine. "I love their rich silks, and a lot of them are handmade. There are so many different ways you can decorate with them," she explains.

In the foyer, wedding Kimonos, called Uchikake, hang on the towering walls, and paintings by a famous Japanese artist give guests a glimpse of the home's decorating inspiration. Antique furnishings, including an English seaman's chest from the 1600s and a 100-year-old Indonesian chest, add to the grand foyer's Asian-eclectic look. The dual staircase, which leads to an upstairs foyer, is lined with faux-iron pickets.

Francine is the virtuoso behind all of the decorating in the three-story home. A

light and airy color palette prevails, giving the home a tranquil, yet lived in, feel. The sheer fabrics used as window treatments, which Francine designed, and neutral colored walls complement the coarser, darker woods of the antique furnishings.

In the great room, neutral colored sofas contrast with a French grain chest from the 1700s. A Futon Tansu





chest, which in the past was used as a place to store Futon mats, is the perfect spot for additional storage and displaying the couple's smaller collectibles. "It came out of a very wealthy Japanese home in the 1700s," comments Francine, noting it is made from Keaki wood.

The couple's master bedroom is a graceful oasis. French doors lead to the patio overlooking the pool. Silk bed linens in silver are adorned with white fur throws. Francine draped white Obis and sheer lavender fabric atop the four-poster bed for added drama. Black-colored antique Japanese screens give definition to one corner of the room while adding further color contrast. A fur rug lends the room cozy elegance, while the fireplace radiates instant warmth.

The couple's Jacuzzi tub, encircled by live plants, is the highlight of their master bathroom. "Plants absolutely thrive here," Francine says. In all, the home boasts six full baths and two half-baths. Each one is equipped with hand-made cabinetry and decorative accents. In the master bath, a Japanese screen provides privacy from the large window above the tub.

Located in the formal living room, a Step Tansu "was the actual staircase that came out of a Japanese farmhouse in the late 1700s," informs Francine. In keeping with their eclectic style, an antique Japanese chest is the coffee table of choice in this room. A French curio from the 1800s dominates the corner of the living room and hosts an antique Japanese porcelain.

The couple's kitchen, with elevated

countertops and hand-made cabinetry, is well designed and efficient. An antique table seats 12, while an old Japanese kitchen cabinet serves as additional storage space. "We used all the space in this house. There's no dead space in this home," says Francine, who is the co-chair of Dare to Share, a charity organization. A 300-year-old, hand-painted silk Kimono is the main feature in the formal dining room, and an Obi acts as a runner on the dining room table.

The Boudewijns enjoy the luxury and comfort of their home. Each one has their own hobby room, and a theater room provides high-tech entertainment. While Francine had her hand in decorating

the home, Ceef was busy creating his favorite room in the house: the wine cellar. Beyond the hand-made door, the accomplished executive converted an empty storage space into a cozy cellar where he stores—and savors—vintage bottles of wine.

But the toast is to the couple who have created a unique home to call their own: a plush Asian paradise in the most exclusive community in town. :::

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