

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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AD-AT-LARGE

INSIDE THE DESIGN WORLD

Paris, Louisiana

In dress, manner and accent, Robert E. Smith is the consummate Francophile, and the selection at **Au Vieux Paris Antiques** (right), which Marjorie Shushan calls “a treasure trove of 18th- and 19th-century French furnishings,” bears that out. Au Vieux Paris is housed in one of nine buildings that make up the 1821 Henri Penne house, a Creole plantation that Smith relocated to Breaux Bridge, Louisiana, in 1974 and painstakingly re-

stored. The shop opened in 1985, followed six years later by a branch in New Orleans. Says Smith, “I have everything it takes to furnish a house and garden.” Shushan “came away with a fascinating fund of information and a simple 18th-century table” after perusing the armoires, tables, fabrics and portraits, all displayed to create an ambiance of Smith’s favorite period—“the great age of Louis XIV and his successors.”

A nearly nine-foot Charles X

pendule clock with Egyptian designs shares space with a Louis XVI-style white-marble mantel and a 19th-century Louis XV-style *garniture de cheminée* in bronze doré. In another carefully orchestrated section of the shop, two ca. 1700 Louis XIII fauteuils flank a Régence bowfront commode that has bronze hardware cast with Indian figures in a chinoiserie style. Shushan notes that Smith, “a meticulous researcher,” provides detail on the provenance and history of all his furniture and objects. Au Vieux Paris Antiques, 1040 Henri Penne Rd., Breaux Bridge, LA 70517, 337-332-2852.



COURTESY ROBERT E. SMITH