



ANTIQUES IN STYLE

THE FASHIONABLE ARCHITECTURE OF LA BELLE ÉPOQUE

By Inessa Stewart

This pair of amazing carved Renaissance doors can be used with other Italian Renaissance antiques throughout the room to create a grand and timeless look.



La *Belle Époque*, a fascinating chapter of European history that I love to study, transpired more than a decade. The richly fashionable era produced remarkable styles and famous works of architecture and interior design. This celebrated period started in late 19th century France, and the rest of Europe followed suit until about 1914, giving us a bountiful variety of amazing antiques and art. In the United States the period was called the Gilded Age, with many historic advances in craft and furniture manufacturing. Incorporating traditional hallmarks of the historic homes built during this generation influenced the finest decorators and architects during the past century and even now in our modern age. These professionals have taken many cues from the old elements, which bring a certain integrity to today's designs.

I took these photographs while walking down a street established during the *La Belle Époque*. I truly felt that I was back in time - when absolute jewels of architecture were created and furnished. I couldn't help but be inspired by the chic interior fashions of the illustrious Gilded Age. I also took note of each building that was devoted to a singular style, those with fetching elements of the façades that encompass the selected manner - completely reflecting the design in windows, doorways and rooflines. In such mansions, the interior would often reflect the exterior down to elaborate chandeliers, fireplaces and furnishings.



If it's romance you crave, choosing a Regence Carrera marble mantel will bring the impressive elegance of *La Belle Époque* to any room with the desired impact of a one-of-a-kind architectural treasure.

Architectural antiques from this era make it easy to create one-of-a-kind designs even in a modern dwelling, and they are the secret ingredient of many top interior designers and architects. We have been privileged to work with many of them and have been honored to supply amazing treasures and relics for a multitude of elegant modern-day homes. Most people do not realize that the chateau that appears at the top of our website's homepage is our actual headquarters and flagship showroom in Baton Rouge, La. It is a modern structure in every way but appearance - totally achieved with the incorporation of a

We all know that antique furniture brings instant charm and style to a room in the same way that architectural antiques evoke instant grandeur, romance or quaintness - depending on which fashion you choose. Today, such antique architectural details can lend a convincing aura of age to graceful new homes. During my travels, I love to spend my time in historic homes stateside, as well as ones abroad. Some are preserved as museums; others restored as private homes. When I visited these and other historic places I always came away with a lingering, edifying memory of the experience, coming away from the visit impressed by such amazing structures. What reverence these builders had for architectural antiques a century ago during this Golden Age! Even then they realized the importance of incorporating antiques into what was at the time modern architecture, at the time.

decades-old collection of architectural antiques.

The famous Roman orator and philosopher Cicero, who helped introduce Rome to even more ancient art, architecture and philosophy of Greece, wrote in the first century B.C., "History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time, it illuminates reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life, and brings tidings of antiquity."

We are grateful to this golden era of industrious prosperity, because today we can use the architectural antique gems from the *La Belle Époque* to define a new generation of homes and build to meet the needs of today's families. If you have a passion for quality and an eye for detail, you'll recognize that the use of such relics of antiquity lends a timeless virtue to any design.