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Photos & text: Pia van Spaendonck. Editing: Rikke V.



In the South of France in the town of Anduze is an amazing pottery. Nicole and Jacques are the owners of this wonderful place where they've worked together for the past 30 years. The design of the beautiful pots dates all the way back to ancient times but they've also drawn inspiration from the Italian parks and gardens that were laid out in the 18th century. These beautifully landscaped gardens were filled with large, lavishly decorated pots and beautiful statues. So their inspiration comes primarily from the Italian renaissance but also reaches into the Romantic period where the French gardens came into fashion. Vases, pots, bowls and statues are still very popular, and they fit in especially well with those of us who love the French country style and swear by brocante. Everything is made by hand. The clay is kneaded by hand before it's placed in casting mold and turned into pots, statues or busts. The fact that everything is made by hand ensures that the items have a very authentic look that's highly sought-after.





Few of us that like this style would want to have a pot or statue that looks brand new. We prefer when things have some patina. It's important that they look authentic after all. In fact, ideally you should have to really study the beautiful, handmade pots up-close in order to tell that they're completely new. The older the items look, the better. Jacques and Nicole make great efforts to patinate each item just right. You can actually choose from several different patinas, all of them with their point of departure in the antique shades found in nature. The pictures speak very clearly for themselves. A large statue patinated to look like a centuries-old, verdigrised bronze statue despite the fact that it's cast from clay. Large pots and busts that look as if they've been left outside for many years and thus taken on the most beautiful patina of moss. Making things look as authentic as they do here at Nicole and Jacques' is truly an art in itself, but then the couple and their employees do have years of practice.



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The surroundings here in the pottery and in the courtyard certainly contribute to the authenticity of the production as well. It's so wonderful here – very rustic with the beautiful, old stone walls as a backdrop for the wet pots that are left out to dry for a certain amount of time before it's time to bake them. The pots have their natural, red clay color, which is what they're all made from. Only once they're dried and ready will it be decided whether they're going to look like old iron urns with spots of rust, aged, verdigrised copper or red clay pots that have been sitting outside for 100 years. You really can't help but have the greatest respect for this craft.

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