

## Jeannie Fraise finds a vintage, global groove

STYLEMAKER SPOTLIGHT: JEANNIE FRAISE

By Anh-Minh Le | September 12, 2010



Photo: Russell Yip, The Chronicle



IMAGE 1 OF 5

Jennie Fraise, owner of Lotus Blue, seen with her 3-year old children, Kai, left, and Tulla, on Friday, Aug. 27, 2010 in San Francisco, Calif., is in this week's Stylemaker Spotlight.

Jeannie Fraise's penchant for vibrant hues and graphic patterns is apparent the moment you step into her Hayes Valley boutique, Lotus Bleu ([lotusbleudesign.com](http://lotusbleudesign.com)). Textile and rug designers Madeline Weinrib and John Robshaw are well represented here. Vintage chairs recovered in whimsical prints and colorful side tables are prominently featured in the store as well.

Fraise travels often (she recently returned from France) and the global influences on her aesthetic are hard to miss - from Indian-inspired woodblock prints to mirrors fabricated in Mexico and Nepalese rugs designed by a French outfit. Her worldly jaunts have played an even greater role in her personal life: She met her husband, Christophe, 19 years ago while enrolled in a semester at sea program (he is French and from Madagascar); the couple adopted their son, Kai, from Vietnam and their daughter, Tulla, from China.

A smattering of family photos graces Fraise's studio, which is adjacent to the Lotus Bleu shop. In recent years, she has expanded her business to include interior design services - bringing her fun yet sophisticated sensibility to residences throughout the Bay Area.

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## *The Fraise cheat sheet*

**Mix it up:** "To best use your budget, purchase a few larger base pieces such as a clean-lined sofa from Room & Board - but use their custom fabric option - and then make your space unique by adding a Weinrib rug, a pair of cool reupholstered vintage chairs, vibrant decorative pillows, and great solid-colored accessories or glass lamps from vintage stores."

**Combining colors:** "We get so many comments on how people feel so happy when they come into my store or home. That's how you should feel in your living space. I often take two bold colors and ground them with a more sophisticated darker color. At Lotus Bleu, I used hot pink and turquoise with gray on the store side, and hot pink and orange with chocolate brown on the office side."

**Etsy artists:** "I've found some of my favorite new designers for my boutique on Etsy, like Skinny Laminx's mod eco textiles out of South Africa or Jill Rosenwald's updated preppy Hampton ceramic collection."

**Go eco:** "There are some great textile designers who have gone green - offering colorful and graphic prints, so you don't need to only settle for solid colored muted tones. I just started carrying Plover Organic's hip bedding at my boutique. And I'm one of the main sources in the U.S. for French design house Muskhane's playful sustainable wool felt rugs and accessories."

**Hold everything:** "You can create the most gorgeous space but if it doesn't have the right storage, it will soon become cluttered and lose its luster. This is especially true either living with small children or in smaller spaces. The Container Store and Land of Nod are great for colorful bins. And you can't go wrong with adjustable shelving units like the Wonder Wall from Blu Dot."



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