

Country Decorating Ideas.

# FRENCH COUNTRY STYLE™

#139

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& ELEGANCE  
Room by Room

Decor Details  
Alluring Gardens  
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TRAVEL



# Dreaming of Gerberoy

Discover why this picturesque village is the very essence of French country charm.

It is often said that France is like a fairytale. Given its deliciously varied countryside, its abundance of romantic castles, and its medieval villages, it's no wonder that for those who travel there it is an escape from the reality of everyday life as the scenery brings back all the magic of childhood dreams.

#### HIDDEN GEM

Gerberoy is just such a place. It is the sweetest of medieval villages, and sits on a hill midst rolling farmland and wooded valleys, with long-ranging, breathtaking views.

The town has been designated as one of the 140 most beautiful villages in France. It is the very essence of French Country. There are no stores, no distracting billboards. With only two streets, and narrow cobbled ones at that, and no telephone or electricity wires in sight, you feel as though you are truly walking through the pages of an old storybook. The most iconic house in town is the Maison Bleue, with the date of 1691 carved over the front door. Hollyhocks and hydrangeas grow rampantly throughout this tiny village.

#### Pristine Beauty

Although only a couple of hours from Paris there is a definite hint of Picardy and Normandy in the village's homes and gardens. The scenic haven remains a favorite of artists and history buffs alike.

#### Path to Pleasure

A cobblestone street meanders along historic homes lined with hollyhocks, roses, hydrangeas and goldenrods.





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grow rampantly throughout the  
tiny village.





Rambling roses clamber over plaster walls to meet shuttered windows, often thrown open to capture the fragrance of the very flower.

#### BUILDING ON THE PAST

Gerberoy is today the smallest town in France, but it was once a very powerful city and saw many battles during the Hundred Years War. At the end of that time, the local château laid in ruins. Centuries later, in 1901, it was that château, and the picturesque village as well, that convinced the Post-Impressionist painter Henri Le Sidaner to settle here. The artist set about creating a comfortable place in which to live by enlarging an old cottage and converting a barn into an art studio. He then built a pavilion and set a cupola, called the Temple of Love, on a portion of the crumbling 15th century tower. The château's ruins were transformed into terraced gardens, bounded by baroque stone balustrades. And he planted roses everywhere and gave rose bushes to everyone in the village.

#### CASTING A FRAGRANT SPELL

Roses became the symbol of the town and, since 1928, are celebrated every June during the Fête des Roses, with unflinching popularity. Lovers of the queen of the flowers can buy roses grafted from those first bushes at the town's delightful B&B, Le Logis de Gerberoy. Though the lovely village is close enough to Paris to be a popular weekend destination, it remains pristine, uncontrived, and immune to the lure of commerce. A true 21st century fairy tale.

#### Editor's Note:

For a dreamy getaway go to <http://lelogisdegerberoy.free.fr/index>







### Proud Heritage

Untouched and unspoiled by modern times, Gerberoy remains a symbol of French country simplicity and charm. A discreet sign announces the local bistro. Ever present, roses perfume the air and add happy bursts of colors against a verdant background.

### As It Was

Half-timbered, brick and flint homes dating from the 17th and 18th centuries contribute to the village's picture-perfect enchantment.



### Color Mates

A little pink gate harmonizes with blooms in similar hue.

### A French Fairytale

A delicate poster illustrates one of the timeless homes and abundant flowers.

