

White Home Decorated With Antiques

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Don't You Love The Curtain Cabinets?

Nelia de Wet has always been drawn to beautiful things. From a young age, she yearned to become an artist. She studied art and over the years, through trial and error, she taught herself furniture-painting techniques inspired by the French. Five years ago she combined her passion for painting and her love for antiques, and set up shop in Somerset West. 'I wanted something simple and unpretentious,' she says about its name, Gister. 'I am Afrikaans and I love my language, and whatever you find there is from yesterday.'

Gister is an extension of Nelia's home in more ways than one. The shop is just 20 meters away from her pebbled backyard, and both the house and store are treasure troves of antique pillowcases, silver-plated tea sets and sparkling crystal decanters hand-picked at flea markets, auction houses and junk shops. The demand for her magical ability to breathe new life into old pieces has snowballed. 'I'm so fortunate in that I can picture what a piece will look like transformed by a coat of paint,' says the vivacious magpie, who finds her inspiration in being around other creative people. 'I tap into their energy,' she says. 'I'll see or hear something and that will spark an idea.'

Nelia's teenage son, Stephen, 15, and daughter, Jane, 13, often join her on her spirited trawling missions. 'It's hard work, it's all on foot, we hand-pick every item,' she says. The Milnerton Market is a firm favorite. 'I go on Saturdays and maybe even on Sundays and complete about 20 rounds!' laughs Nelia. 'I love that my kids can appreciate the finer things and stimulate their own creativity.'

Her best-loved finds make their way to her home, but only for a few weeks before she sends them to her shop – where they usually fly off the shelves.

'Every piece in my home has already been booked by a friend or family member!' she laughs. Here, Nelia did away with color for the first time, choosing a gentle, soothing canvas of cream and white, layered with natural textures. 'The kids and I lead really busy lives, so I wanted to create a tranquil cocoon to come home to in the evenings.' The decision to go all white was sparked by Nelia's own personal transformation seven years ago. 'It's a stripped-down way of living. I'd reached a stage in my life where I didn't want to keep anything that we didn't use or need.' [Read More on House And Leisure](#)



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