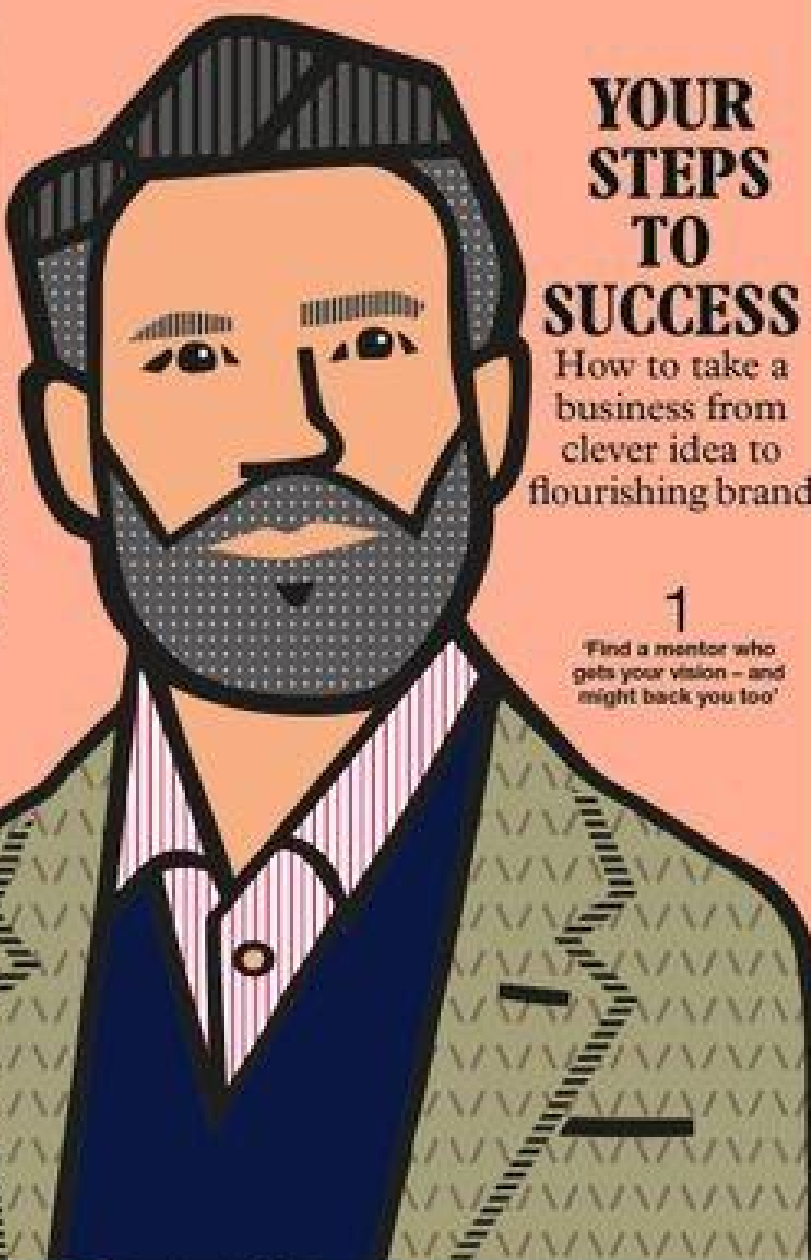


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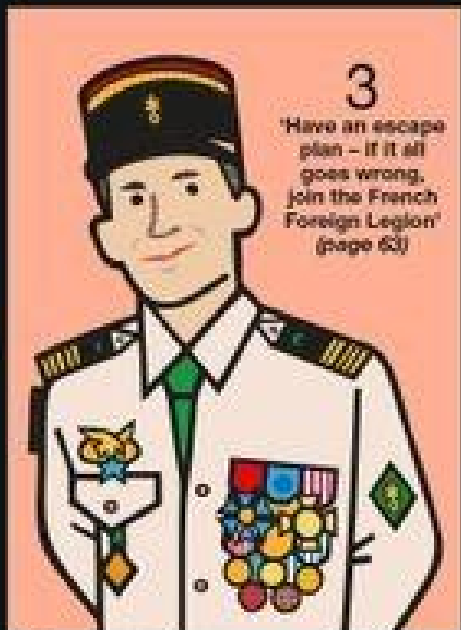
YOUR STEPS TO SUCCESS
How to take a business from clever idea to flourishing brand

1
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'Pick your battles: not all tech needs to be deployed'



3
'Have an escape plan – if it all goes wrong, join the French Foreign Legion' (page 63)

REPORT: Paris, Austin, Melbourne: three hot hotels to have on speed dial. How to build an **OFFICE** for a start-up maverick and well-honed family firm. A Paris design store that's **BEST IN CLASS**. Plus: late summer **RESORT GUIDES**.



BEST IN CLASS... Paris

WORLD AT YOUR FEET.

Shoppers are welcome to WANDER at their leisure around this inviting emporium where homeware, CROCKERY and even the colours are inspired by the owner's love of TRAVEL.

By *Sonia Zhuravlyova*
Photography *Thomas Humery*



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Every item in Sarah Lavoine's homeware collection evokes the Parisian interior designer's passion for careful craftsmanship. As such, it's little wonder that she fell in love with a former locksmith's workshop in Passy while looking for a place to open her fourth shop. The 19th-century building is nestled beyond a blink-and-you-miss-it archway but Passy's savvy shoppers clearly know their way around; they are drawn in by the smell of fresh coffee and an inviting cobbled interior courtyard.

"I wanted to keep it quite rough," says Lavoine, pointing to the original red bricks and finely wrought green metalwork. "It's important for me to keep the soul of the place so we left it very much like we found it." Shoppers wander through the wide metal doors to find a corner of the industrial

space occupied by a patisserie, courtesy of friend and chef Pascal Rigo. Lavoine's tableware, assorted lampshades and accessories jostle for space on the original workbenches.

The vibe is of unabashed bonhomie, where picking up a candle, sinking into a velvet sofa or rummaging through delicately embroidered fabrics doesn't feel out of place. "We want to make people happy," says the designer. "Life is tough – just listen to the news today. So when you come home we want you to feel good, to be in a cocoon."

Most items come in a shade of Lavoine's signature colour: Blue Sarah Lavoine, a vibrant aquamarine. Her inspiration, she says, is extensive travel, as well as keeping a keen eye on the world: "I grew up in Morocco, my father [Jean Poniatowski, editor in chief of

What to buy

Léo velvet pouf: This 1970s-esque striped pouf is a bestseller and comes in vibrant yellow and a cool shade of Lavoine's signature blue. Perfect for pulling round the coffee table when guests drop in.

Yasmine sofa: This terracotta-coloured velvet sofa is a favourite with male shoppers. It's wide and masculine, with deep cushions that are exceedingly inviting.

Crockery: The Sicilia collection is all yellows, terracotta and blues, reminiscent of drawn-out lunches in the heat before a well-deserved siesta.

Ovo mirror in walnut: "Mirrors are very important in my world," says Lavoine. Her organically shaped effort nods to mid-century modern designs.

Dinner jacket: Channel Parisian chic with Lavoine's timeless dinner jacket, which works with jeans and a T-shirt or for a more formal occasion.



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Who:

Interior designer Sarah Lavoine is opening shops across Paris to showcase her collection. She's also worked on commercial projects, including Roch Hôtel & Spa in Saint Honoré and Elle Café in Tokyo.



What:

A mishmash of influences make Lavoine's pieces easy on the eye and compatible with any interior, whether strict and classical or more homely and laidback.



Where:

The Passy neighbourhood in the 16th arrondissement has hidden alleyways, cosy restaurants and top-notch boutiques. Its upwardly mobile residents are hungry for unique shopping experiences.



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French Vogue between 1981 and 1995] lived there and I was even married in Marrakech. I was lucky to travel with my dad. It was such a gift."

Her curtains and bed throws are sourced from Morocco and India, while much of the warmly coloured crockery comes from the artisan pottery workshop Jars near Lyon. "We do our lacquer in Vietnam, we go to Mexico for our baskets. But we don't go to China, that's our principle," says Lavoine. Although she's had her fill of mid-century modern ("there was an overdose"), hints of it pop up in her pebble-shaped side tables, rounded lampshades and moulded wood-framed mirrors.

Last winter the interior designer ventured into clothing but she is bashful about her sartorial ambitions: "I'm not pretending to make a new fashion brand but everyone has the one pair of jeans that they love, one white T-shirt, one cashmere jumper – so it's all very simple but well made."

Her idea is to build a village of the brands she loves: fashion house Sézane and jewellery brand Pascale Monvoisin have already moved in next door. And as families make Passy their home, seeking out the formerly staid neighbourhood's large apartments, Lavoine is helping to unlock the area's potential with a design offering that has the intimate pull of a boutique. "There's a new dynamic," she says. "There's a second life in this quartier." — (M)

maisonsarahlavoine.com



Report card

You might wander in looking for a simple candle but it takes all the willpower in the world to leave without a pile of cotton bed throws and some charming tableware too.

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- (1) Moroccan tiles in the patisserie
- (2) Oval tables
- (3) Tableware in Lavoine's signature blue
- (4) Sicilia crockery
- (5) Cosy courtyard
- (6) Mirror with a hint of mid-century modern
- (7) Famous pouf
- (8) Vases made in Portugal



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