

# Cigale et Compagnie brings Provence to Crysler

CRYSLER - There's a little corner of the Mediterranean nestled into a bend in the Shane Road just west of here.

The creation of Jean and Diane Stöckli, *Cigale et Compagnie* is a shop specializing in textiles, soaps, oils and ceramic and decorative items from the southern French region of Provence in their home at 14665 Shane Road.

Opened in the spring of 2005 in a small area of the Stöcklis' home, *Cigale* - the French name for the cicada, the insect whose droning mating call is a signature sound of summer in Provence and whose likeness is woven into much of the region's folk art, is gradually taking over the house. It has now expanded to take over the living room as well as the home's entranceway, bright table cloths, runners, placemats and bags in the primary Provençal colours of blue, yellow and red competing for space with new lines of ceramics from Tuscany, Portugal and Morocco and with a separate area for the shop's Marseilles soaps, essential oils, flowers and lavender sachets.

The idea for a shop devoted to items from the Mediterranean regions - Provence also encompasses

the Côte d'Azur and borders Italy on its easternmost side - was sown during the Stöcklis' visits to the region to visit Jean's brother. A native of Switzerland, Jean met Diane in the late 1960s while she was on a class trip to Lausanne with other teachers' college students and they started writing to each other when she returned to Canada after the summer vacation. Jean had two brothers who had visited Canada so was familiar with the country and a planned round-the-world trip in the early 1970s got him as far as Crysler.

They admired the handcrafted items they saw and the relaxed lifestyle of the region, so celebrated in Peter Mayle's books, "A Year in Provence" and "Toujours Provence" and started searching out manufacturers and distributors on the Internet, purchasing a few items that went on sale in the winter and spring of 2005.

They travelled to Europe last summer, renting a house for a week about a 20-minute drive from Marseilles and near the market city of Aix-en-Provence, so they could meet and negotiate face to face with manufacturers and meet those with Canadian



Jean and Diane Stöckli in what used to be the living room of their Shane Road home near Crysler but which has been converted to their shop, *la Cigale et Compagnie*, which specializes in Mediterranean-style furnishings, decorative items, handcrafted soaps and lavender in a variety of forms, including essential oil, sachets, bouquets and gift baskets. The shop was inspired by their visits to the southern French region of Provence.

distributors.

Fortunately for them the woman who owns the house they rented lives next door and guided them to some of the locations they were seeking, including a trip to a manufacturer hidden away in the maze of streets in the ancient port city of Marseilles that, Diane says, they would never have found on their own.

The trip to Marseilles

yielded some of the fabric and tablecloths they carry at *Cigale* as well as the handcrafted all-natural Marseilles soaps made by Marius Fabre, one of only a handful of manufacturers that still crafts soap in the traditional way.

The most popular item at *Cigale et Compagnie* is their line of tablecloths, in 100-per-cent cotton and in a polyester blend, some

coated with Teflon. Brightly coloured and evoking the blue skies and golden beaches of the Côte d'Azur, they come in round, rectangular and square shapes in a variety of sizes. Customers are now asking for them in larger sizes, Diane adds.

Tablecloths are followed in popularity by *Cigale's* line of essential oils. According to their website

essential oil is also known as volatile oil and ethereal oil. It may also be referred to as "oil of" the raw plant material from which it was extracted, such as oil of cloves. The term essential is intended to convey that the oil is an essence of the plant it is extracted from, and not in the more common sense of being indispensable. Essential oils are used in perfumery, aromatherapy, cosmetics, incense, medicine, household cleaning products, and for flavoring food and drink. *Cigale* specializes in that most Provençal of plants, lavender. The Stöcklis came home from their first buying trip carefully cradling bottles of essential lavender oil.

The scent of lavender permeates the shop and the plant - which is both floral and herbal - is available as an essential oil, lavender water, in sachets and in bouquets.

The Stöcklis both still teach so *Cigale* has limited opening hours. The shop is open from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Thursdays, Fridays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is also open by appointment by calling 987-2913.

The Stöcklis' website is [www.cigale.ca](http://www.cigale.ca).

**IT'S PLANTING SEASON**  
**SCREENED TOP SOIL & SCREENED COMPOST**  
 Sand • Granulars • Regular Top Soil  
 Compost adds nutrients to your soil, improves the organic matter and has long term benefits.

Also Available:  
 Culverts, Drainage pipe, Septic tanks, Geotextile,  
 Equipment Rental:  
 Backhoe, Bulldozer, Excavator, Trucks

**443-2954**  
[www.lapointedrainage.ca](http://www.lapointedrainage.ca)  
 E-mail: [info@lapointedrainage.ca](mailto:info@lapointedrainage.ca)  
**LAPOINTE DRAINAGE LTD.**

Over 20 Years in Business

**GREELY SAND & GRAVEL INC.**

**GST INCLUDED IN PRICE ON DELIVERIES MONDAY TO FRIDAY.**  
 Special to home owners on delivered materials.

**GREELY'S TOPDRESSING SOIL™**  
 A rich blend of Topsoil, Black Peat and Mushroom Compost  
**IDEAL FOR:** ✓Topdressing lawns or beds ✓Starting or adding gardens  
 ✓Planting flowers or shrubs

**ALSO AVAILABLE**  
 ✓Screened Topsoil ✓Riverwash Stone ✓Playground Stone  
 ✓Coloured & Natural Mulch ✓Washed Sand ✓Landscape Rocks  
 ✓Playground Sand ✓Crushed Stone ✓CONTINENTAL Mushroom Compost

**821-3003**  
 or toll free 1-800-361-2406  
[www.greelysand.com](http://www.greelysand.com)

Offer expires June 30, 2006.

**NEW** **Greely's on the Roll...**  
 Spring to life your landscaping with Greely's Mini Roll-off Containers!!  
 Get two different products delivered at the same time AND rent the container for your yard waste clean-up