

A workshop scene featuring a wooden workbench in the foreground with a chair underneath. On the workbench are several sheets of paper, a pencil, and a small container holding brushes. Behind the workbench is a wooden chest of drawers with several drawers, topped with three white eggs. To the left of the chest are two large rolls of paper. On the wall behind the workbench are several framed pictures: a group of children, a ship, and a landscape. Various tools are hanging on the wall, including a large hand saw, a long wooden ruler, a folding ruler, a hammer, and a brush. The overall aesthetic is rustic and creative.

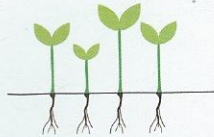
PURE  
GREEN  
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WORKPLACE**



DESTINATION





## Madame Loichet:

### *A favourite artisan food producer of The Cook's Atelier, Beaune, France*

TEXT by MARJORIE TAYLOR  
PHOTOGRAPHS by MARJORIE TAYLOR &  
EMILY JOHNSTON ANDERSON

**JUST NEAR THE TRAIN STATION, ON A TINY STREET, YOU'LL FIND A LITTLE HOUSE WITH A BLUE IRON GATE.** As you swing it open, you'll be greeted by Filou, Madame Loichet's dog. As you walk toward the garden shed, you may catch a glimpse of Madame Loichet as she is finishing up the morning's harvest. Inside you'll find old crates with the day's offerings from the garden and zinc buckets filled with a variety of garden flowers. Depending on the season, you may find a family of swallows nesting in the rafters. It's an enchanting place, and every Friday when we visit Madame Loichet and her garden, it brings us back to the reason we moved to France: to create a life rich in simplicity and to honor our devotion to good and simple food.

We met Madame Loichet years ago, when we first arrived in Beaune, and she quickly became our favorite artisan food producer. She is an adorable lady. You'll always see her in a 1940s vintage dress with a little cardigan, but her hands show her passion for her garden. She's a bit shy until she gets the chance to know you, but once she does, she opens her heart and you are friends forever. She has a small table at the Saturday market where she sells her homegrown produce and flowers. She seems to enjoy the social aspects of the market, and you'll sometimes find her enjoying a coffee with a friend.

Madame Loichet, seventy-nine, continues to live in the house where she was born. Her parents were also vendors at the market in Beaune, and she began gardening at the age of fourteen. In her garden, you can still find vintage garden tools that were used by her parents, reminders from the past. It's a large garden and the rows are neat and well cared for. In the cooler months, she starts her vegetables in a makeshift greenhouse to protect them from the elements. She has rows and rows of old-fashioned flowers; dahlias, peonies, zinnias, and black-eyed Susans line old stone walls and fill the garden with the sweet scent of the season.



*“While the world spins around her with the latest technology, she quietly goes about living an authentic life surrounded by nature.”*



*Top: Rich, buttery greens from the garden.  
Left: Madame Loichet and her beloved dog Filou.*

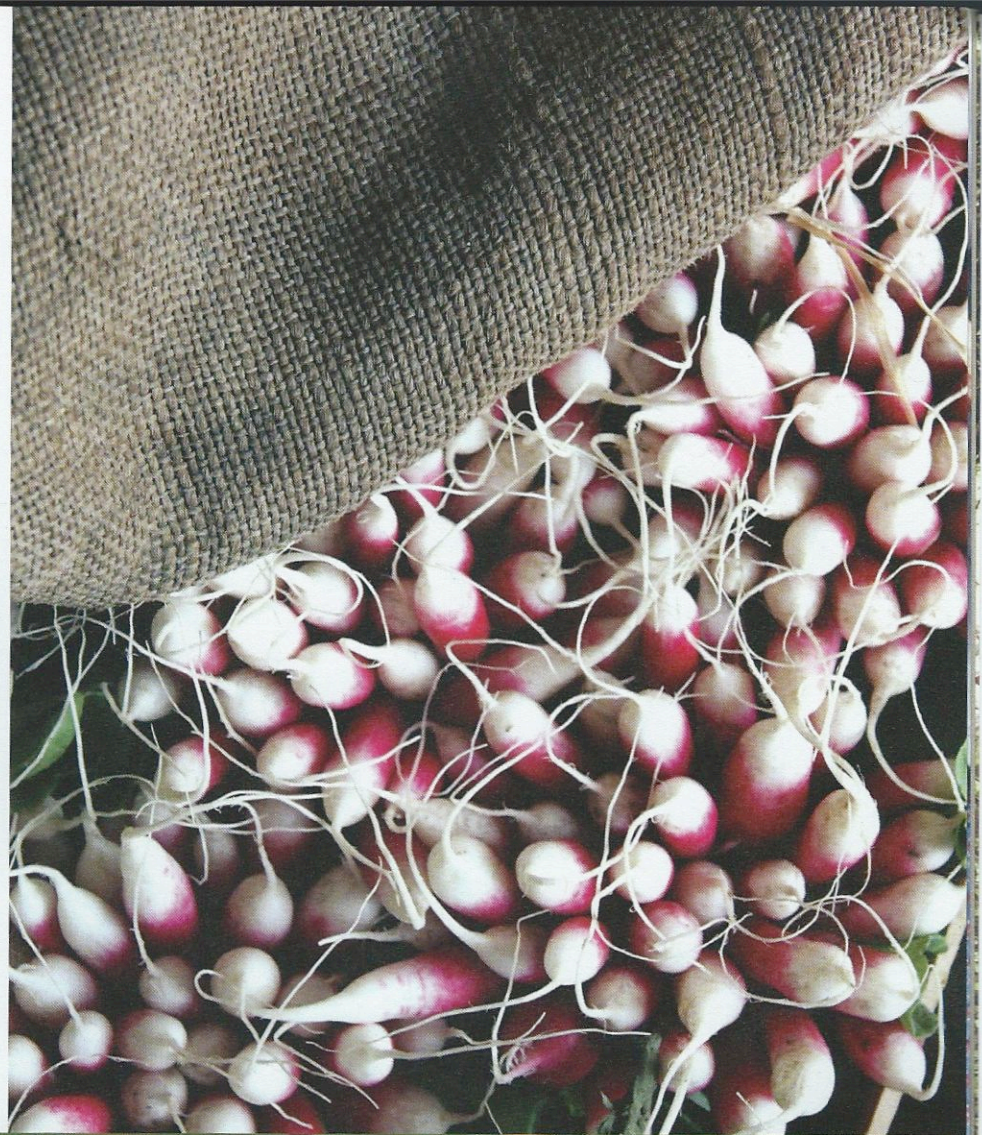
*Opposite Page, Top Right: French radishes.  
Bottom: Flowers from the garden.*

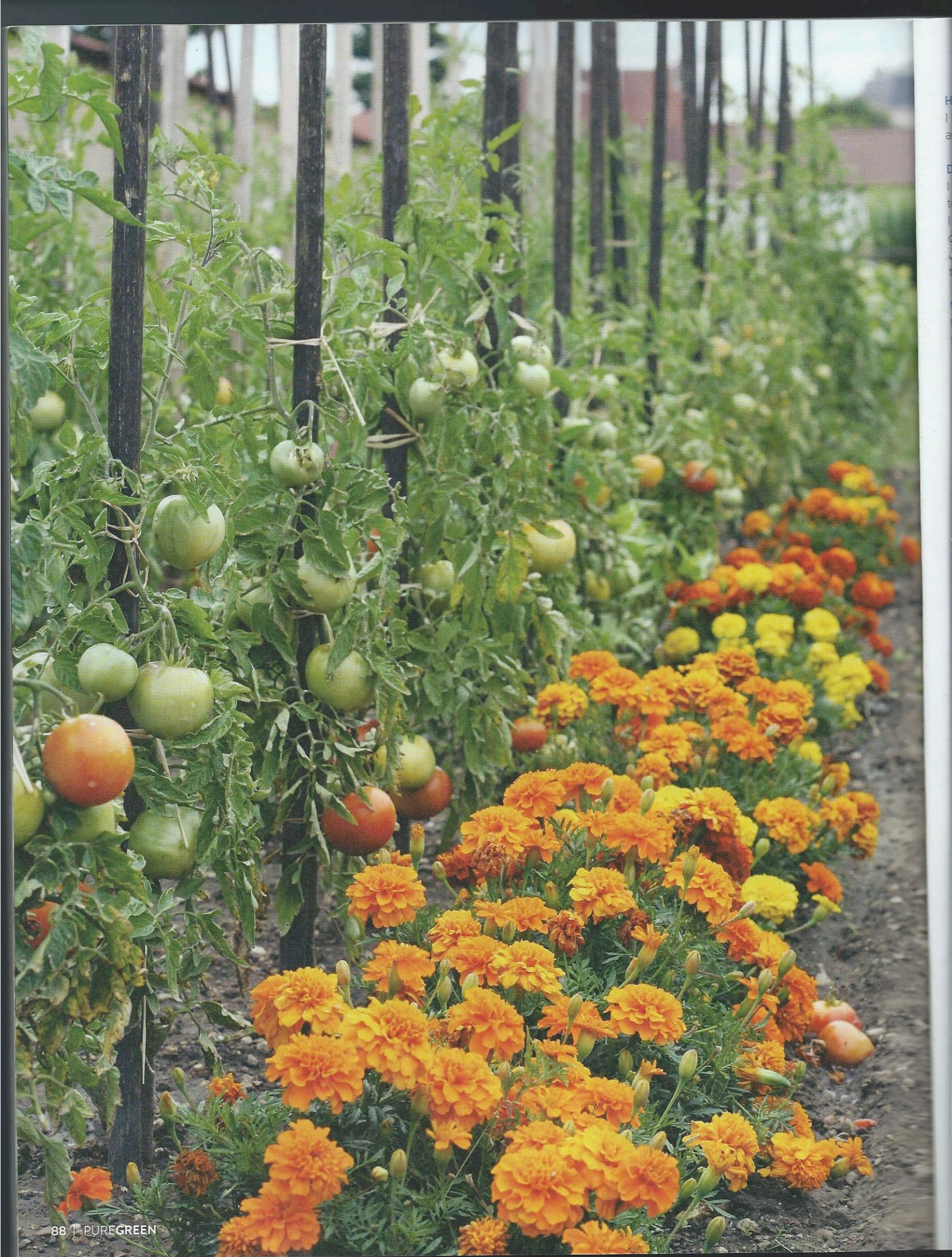
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For a cook, Madame Loichet's garden is a paradise. Heirloom tomatoes that still smell of the garden, new potatoes freshly dug from the earth, and tiny cornichons and onions, perfect for pickling, are stored in old crates covered in burlap in the shed. At The Cook's Atelier, we try to teach our students about the importance of the connection between the cook and the people who grow our food. We visit Madame Loichet's garden each week to gather ingredients for the day's cooking class. Then it's back to our atelier for a lesson on the preparation of seasonal ingredients, followed by the long French lunch.

Madame Loichet's life is centered on the rhythm of her garden. She wakes each morning with the sun and spends her days tending the earth. While the world spins around her with the latest technology, she quietly goes about living an authentic life surrounded by nature. We have a special relationship with Madame Loichet, and we honor her by sharing her offerings from her garden with our guests as they learn to cook from the market. We hope to inspire them to slow down and enjoy the things in life that really matter: the pursuit of an authentic life and the celebration of real food shared with family and friends.





#### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GARDENING?

I began working in the garden with my parents at the age of fourteen.

#### DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY FOR YOU IN YOUR GARDEN.

I wake up with the sun, have breakfast, and head straight to the garden. Around 9 a.m., I have a little snack and then I garden until lunch. After lunch, I take a little rest in my chair for about an hour. Then I return to the garden just until 6 p.m. or 7 p.m., depending on the work that needs to be done.

#### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT GARDENING?

Nothing is repetitive and there is always something to do: to plant, to turn the soil, to weed, etc.

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE THING TO COOK FROM THE GARDEN?

I like all of my vegetables, but especially the green beans and very ripe tomatoes. I prefer to eat my vegetables in their natural state. I like to find the flavor of each food and I don't add many spices.

#### WHY DO YOU LOVE TO GARDEN?

I love the accomplishment of a good day's work. I like to cultivate all sorts of vegetables and flowers and I particularly like the varieties adapted to our region. It is important to have a garden with both flowers and vegetables, as not only are they more beautiful, but it also attracts the bees. I enjoy planting heirloom varieties of vegetables because they have more flavor than those you can find at a supermarket. I prefer to harvest my vegetables when they are fully mature as I think they have more taste. I save the tiny carrots for a treat for Filou. When all goes well, I love to have the opportunity to give my clients beautiful vegetables.

#### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO FELLOW GARDENERS?

Never plant the same things in the same place every year. Love what you are cultivating. Go every day to your garden in order to pay attention to the needs of each plant. Never count the hours of work.

*“At The Cook’s Atelier, we try to teach our students about the importance of the connection between the cook and the people who grow our food. We visit Madame Loichet’s garden each week to gather ingredients for the day’s cooking class.”*

*Opposite Page: Madame Loichet’s tomato plants alongside marigolds, which provide natural protection from pests.*

*Right: Madame Loichet digging up potatoes for a customer.*





Make It!

## Strawberry Tart

Marjorie and Kendall, the mother-daughter pair behind *The Cook's Atelier*, share with us a delicious strawberry tart recipe from the French countryside—the perfect dish to serve during the peak of strawberry season.

Yield: 1 9-inch tart

### INGREDIENTS:

ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR, FOR WORK SURFACE  
1/2 BATCH PÂTE SUCRÉE  
1/2 CUP HEAVY CREAM  
1 TEASPOON SUGAR  
PASTRY CREAM  
2 CUPS STRAWBERRIES  
CONFECTIONERS' SUGAR FOR DUSTING

### METHOD:

On a lightly floured work surface, roll out Pâte Sucrée dough into a 12-inch round, about 1/4 inch thick. Starting at one side, roll and wrap the dough around a rolling pin to pick it up. Unroll the dough over a 9-inch tart pan. Gently press the dough into the pan, being careful not to stretch it—stretching would cause the dough to shrink when baking. To remove the excess dough, work your way around the edge, pinching off the excess dough with your fingers. Chill for 1 hour before baking.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Prick bottom of dough all over with a fork. Line with parchment paper, leaving a 1-inch overhang. Fill with dried beans or pie weights and bake until the edges are just beginning to turn golden. Remove parchment paper and weights; continue baking until golden all over, 10–15 minutes. Cool tart shell completely on a wire rack.

Meanwhile, whip the heavy cream and sugar in a bowl until soft peaks form. Working in batches, gently fold whipped cream into Pastry Cream.

Spoon pastry cream mixture into cooled tart shell and spread evenly. Top with strawberries; dust with confectioners' sugar. The tart is best served the day it is made.

*The Pâte Sucrée and Pastry Cream recipes are available in the Sources section on page 95.*

*Top Left: A rustic strawberry tart made with fresh, local berries.*  
*Bottom Left: Marjorie and her grandson, Luc.*

*Opposite Page: Kendall and Marjorie working in the atelier's kitchen creating a delicious meal.*







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