

Get Lost in the Chic La Jolla Design District

From unique furnishings to vintage glass, coveted items abound on Girard Avenue

BY REEM KHALIL



The Favigana Bed, designed by Roldorfo Doldoni for Flou, at MOS My Own Space



Vintage glass collection at Esteban Interiors

There is nothing quite like the excitement of redesigning your home. Just ask Esteban Lopez, interior designer and principal of Esteban Interiors. He not only redesigns for his clients, he shops for them, too. He understands firsthand the satisfaction of finding the perfect item. Having recently relocated his showroom and gallery to Girard Avenue, he also knows the ins and outs of a booming design district ripe with resources for the home.

When designing spaces, Lopez finds inspiration in one of the most important aspects of his work: his clients. "I look at their surroundings in terms of where they live, how they live and how they are looking to use the space," he says. Although not committed to any one style, Lopez does like to incorporate urban chic into his designs, as well as a mixture of period pieces.

Where to begin? First, at **Pannikin Coffee & Tea**, for a mocha with just a touch of cinnamon. With its collection of lacquered custom end tables and vintage vignette glass, **Esteban Interiors** would be his next stop, of course. But with clients needing all sorts of home products—from furnishings to linens to accessories—this savvy designer appreciates having other reliable sources within walking distance.

"I would definitely go to **Divan + Studio**," says Lopez, who began his design career in his native New York. "They have lots of great lines, such as Cassina." When looking for new designs in modern furniture, he shops **Ligne Roset**. For an incredible source of bathroom fixtures and tile, he heads to **Waterworks**. When designing a traditional palette, he finds inspiring hand-painted tile at **Cabochon**. However, he's currently cov-



Kokoon from the Royal Botania collection, at MPLA Associates

eting a pair of French chairs at **Maudlin**.

A trip to the La Jolla Design District wouldn't be complete without a visit to **Cerruti & Company**, which "has the most eclectic assortment of furniture in this area," Lopez says, or **MOS: My Own Space**, with its unique assortment of "accessories and kitschy objects." He could go on and on about not-to-miss spots in the area—**Roche-Bobois**, **Everett Stunz**, **Seaside Home**, **Design Studio West** . . . even **Armani Exchange**, where the fashion is always inspiring.

Indeed, the hunt for the perfect chair, lamp or linens can be exhausting—which makes the La Jolla Design District ideal. At the end of a long day, Lopez retreats to the water's edge to watch the sunset. He might even head to **Georges at the Cove** for a crisp apple martini. ■

What's Up Girard

This year marks the fifth anniversary of What's Up Girard, an afternoon and evening of design events in the La Jolla Design District, Saturday, September 20. Leading up to the big day, Girard Avenue showrooms host a silent auction to raise funds for La Jolla Elementary School's campus-beautification projects. From August 20 to September 20, customers can bid on an assortment of innovative seating and interior accessories donated by participating showrooms.

The schedule for September 20 includes:

- 1-5 p.m.: Free seminars on the latest interior trends conducted by top industry experts, held at various upscale showrooms along Girard Avenue.
- 5-7 p.m.: By invitation only, social soirées featuring complimentary cocktails, live entertainment and tray-passed appetizers from San Diego's premier restaurants. Guests who attend seminars will receive an invitation to evening events.

For a list of showrooms participating in What's Up Girard 2008, visit jesbloom.com.