

READERS CHOICE: FAVORITE INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM

These designers know that, just like your wardrobe, your home is an expression of your style and tastes.



CLASSIC IN SESSION
A living room designed
by Amy Meier

- 1. AMY MEIER** Whether it's East Coast-tailored or West Coast-worn, this San Diego interior designer knows how to nail it. Just don't say she's trending. Meier's own personal style and her interiors are all about timelessness and hand-picking art and antiques for sophisticated spaces that are lived in, never austere. amymeierdesign.com
- 2. ESTEBAN INTERIORS** Two words: contemporary glamour. The dashing gentlemen behind this venerable firm create modern spaces with just the right dose of color and whimsy, as shown by their revamped showroom. A recent feather in their cap: pulling off the oh-so-pink offices for J Public Relations in S.D. and NYC. 7605 Girard Ave., La Jolla, 858.729.0045, estebaninteriors.com
- 3. BELLS & WHISTLES** This hard-working, hip duo creates statement-making spaces with staying power. Exhibit A: Starlite restaurant, which seven years after it opened, is still a be-seen den of cool that's big on texture, architectural references and thoughtful custom lighting. Newer hospitality projects include Blue Ocean in Carlsbad and Beeffish in North Park. allthebellsandwhistles.com
- 4. LORI GENTILE** The North County-based design guru has mastered Zen in decorating, whether she's transforming a Bankers Hill condo into an urban oasis or creating a Hawaiian manse from the ground up on the coveted Crest Drive in Encinitas. It's all life in balance—with the perfect accoutrements, of course. lorigentile.com
- 5. ROBIN WILSON INTERIOR DESIGN** The past president of the ASID, Wilson is sprinkling her panache all over Southern California, from the old Reader building in Mission Hills, set to open later this year, to the upcoming Urbana condo building in the East Village to the oh-so-glam Desmond Tower in L.A. 1301 3rd Ave., San Diego, 619.687.2411, rwid.com

Bright Idea

Ballyhooed ceramicist **Josh Herman** (joshherman.com) has long been wooing Hollywood elite with his volcanic glazed, midcentury-inspired pottery. Now Herman, who works out of an airy Barrio Logan warehouse, is lighting up the resort scene. Having been commissioned by Studio-Surface in Del Mar, he dreamed up these Modern Buoy lamps for the One & Only Palmilla in Cabo San Lucas. "Lighting is so important to creating ambience," says Herman. "It was a natural progression to incorporate it with my textured, organic vessels."



GET LIT
Josh Herman's
custom Modern
Buoy lamp
(\$1,250).



LIFE ON TOP

Philip Auchettl is one of the young-gun architects behind the new RAD Lab, a development of shipping containers in the East Village.

Contain Yourself When Philip Auchettl was a student at New School of Architecture, he'd stare out the window at an empty dirt lot. Fast-forward two years, and he and fellow alumni have created **RAD Lab** (radlabsd.com), a temporary project made of shipping containers in the East Village that received funding via Kickstarter, with \$60,000 earned in 30 days. "It's a community-driven project funded by the community, and that's what was important from the get-go," says Auchettl, a native Australian who was inspired by a similar project in Melbourne. "This is a quick way to activate the space." Tenants include S&M: Sausage & Meat, Prep Kitchen, Best Beverage Catering and Sugar Shack. And don't forget the dog park and beer garden. "It's going to be a fun crew," says Auchettl. Now there's an understatement.



ESTEBAN LOPEZ & JAMES NIEBLING

ESTEBAN INTERIORS

Q: Why should you hire an interior design firm?

A: Everyone has a key role to play in the overall design process. Bringing in a design professional early on can only enhance and add value to your experience with architects and contractors, as it ensures a high level of talent and creative vision for the living space, as well as an extensive resource for new and innovative products.

Q: What are the benefits of collaboration?

A: Introducing an interior design firm to collaborate with the client's architect or general contractor in the early stages of the design process ensures a more streamlined and well designed project. Designers can examine the initial floor plans and consult with the client on the best use of space, proper lighting, and other issues of building or remodeling a home, often helping to save time and money in the end.

Q: What is the ideal relationship?

A: Open communication is essential, with the goal to collectively identify ways to improve the final design. Every time we work collaboratively with architects and contractors, the client's project runs smoothly, and finishes both on time and in budget.

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