

Space Explorer

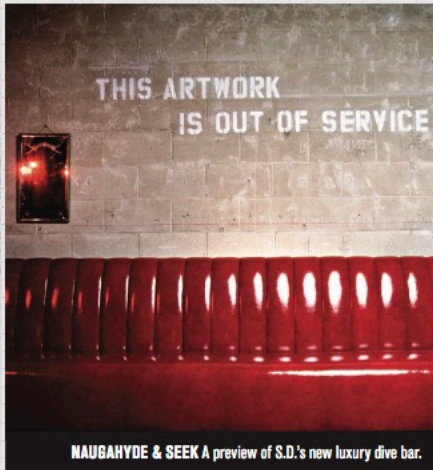
"Instead of sitting around and waiting for the worst, I researched the international markets," says S.D. interior designer Lorena Gaxiola when the recession hit. Since, her **Kuatro Design** been tapped for five new luxury residences in Nanjing, China. and a \$6 million condo project in Sydney overlooking Elizabeth Bay. Locally, she left her mod mark at the energy-saving La Costa Oaks residences by Colrich. She currently splits her time between S.D. and Oz. Must be nice. kuatrodesign.com.



SUBURBAN OUTFITTER
Interior designer Gaxiola injected bold color into La Costa.



Good Genes! The sleek design of The Q in Little Italy is luring some seriously cool tenants. How could it not? S.D. design staple **DNA** studio hightailed to the peekaboo, ground-level space in the Jonathan Segal stunner, stocking it with global lines like Erik Jorgensen. Next up? The IQ haus—an affordable answer to the Pre-Fab (finally!) at \$65 a square foot, courtesy of DNA founder, Danish architect Jesper Pedersen. "It's a whole new way to build," he says. Come this month, an IQ haus model is slated to be erected on the corner of Grape and Kettner. How fab is that? dnaeuropeandesign.com.



NAUGAHYDE & SEEK A preview of S.D.'s new luxury dive bar.

Social Study

More than its purportedly stiff cocktails, S.D.'s first "luxury dive" bar has us thirsty for good design, and we got the sneak peek at **Quality Social**. One would expect nothing less than tongue-and-cheek from co-owner Chris Dexter, a Rande Gerber protégé who left Chi-Town for sunny S.D. Dexter is a walking design lexicon, dropping "Lincrusta" and "grand dossier" where most club-owners his age drop F-bombs. "It's a juxtaposition of highbrow versus lowbrow," says Dex, as pals call him. "The design aesthetic is to take inspiration from the most iconic elements of a dive bar, and elevate them." Expect salvage with a sense of humor. qualitysocial.com.



Va-Va-Vroom San Diego is already home to Nissan Design. Now a local industrial design hipster with international cred is taking a stab at car design as well. Eneri Abillar, of Encinitas-based **Vapor Studio**, took home third place in the Scion xB Tuner Challenge using sectional seating, walnut floors and plasma TVs. "It's the idea of your house inside your car," says Abillar. vapor-studio.com.