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# Big Design in Little Italy

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The gleaming arch spanning India Street has become a magnet for the best in modern, vintage and, naturally, Italian design. For the past decade Little Italy's culturally intact neighborhood has evolved from a working-class borough to a decidedly hip urban enclave — where dark sunglasses and a fast Euro-sports car have become *di rigore*.

## ← THE EURO LOOK

After outgrowing their Cedros District retail space in Solana Beach, Danish-born Jesper Pedersen and business partner/wife, Cathi, last year relocated their DNA European Design Studio to Little Italy. The enviable 4,000-square-foot corner location is provisioned with an array of Europe's most contemporary design concepts — with an environmental consciousness.

Newly arrived to the showroom are furnishings by Italy's renowned modern master, Piero Lissoni, for Fritz Hansen, and a kitchen line by Valcucine. Clean, spare, and hyper-chic, DNA's furnishings are the perfect complement to San Diego's neo-modernist movement — evident in buildings designed by, among others, Martinez & Cutri and Rob Quigley.



## ← THE REAL MCCOY

"Please, don't call it retro," beseeches David Skelley of Boomerang for Modern. "Because this is the real thing." Passionate about the era of Eames, Noguchi, Saarinen and other post-World War II designers, Skelley's Little Italy modern revival store features pieces from the period's legendary visionaries, its contemporary practitioners, and lots of modern art.

One of the original merchants to embrace the area's retail potential, Skelley moved his furniture store to Little Italy 10 years ago in what has since become a design force in San Diego.

"When I relocated from my cubbyhole in Hillcrest, it wasn't happening here — but I knew that would change."

For the knowledgeable aficionado or neophyte decorator, there's no need to travel to Los Angeles, or beyond, for the real deal. Boomerang's showroom is filled to capacity with masterworks of the modernist era. The incomparable Eames *Loounge*, with leather ottoman, shares space with its ultra-sleek second cousin — George Nelson's futuristic black-leather *Cocoon* chair, both from the mid-'50s. Also collecting a lot of admiring glances is a sensuous, glass-topped coffee table engraved by Isamu Noguchi.

Small exhibits highlight vintage and recent pieces in the modernist spirit by local artists.