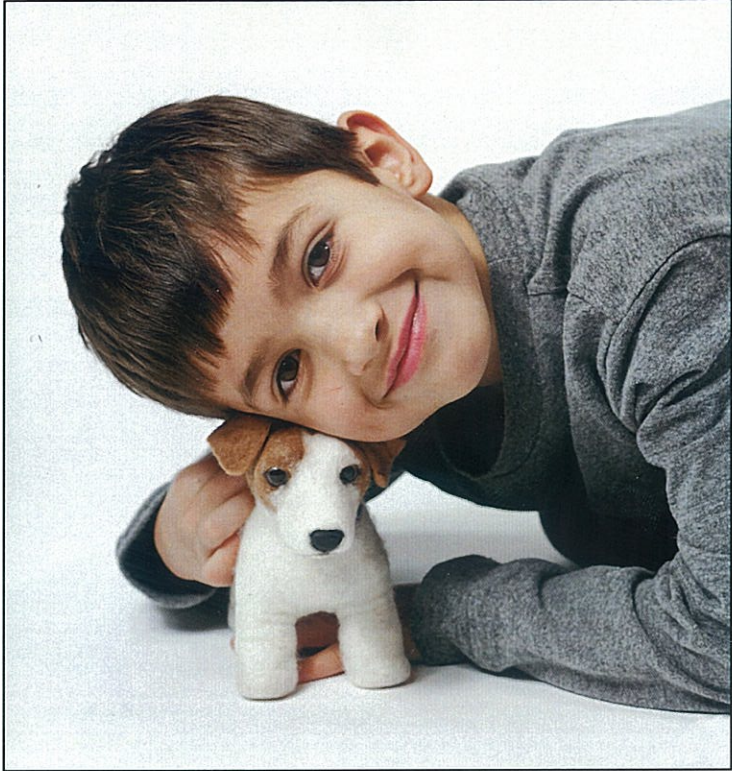


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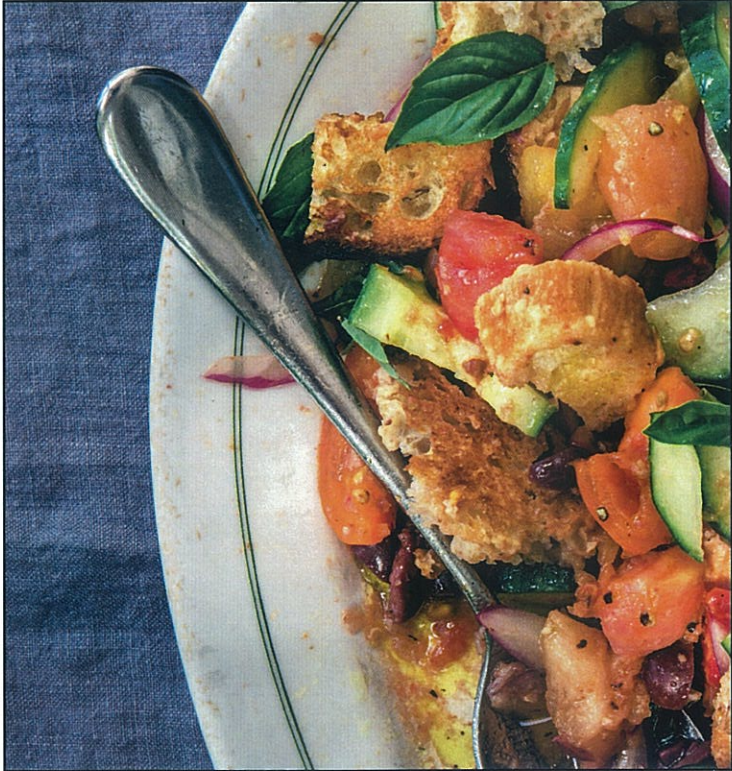
# AMERICAN LIFESTYLE

THE MAGAZINE CELEBRATING LIFE IN AMERICA

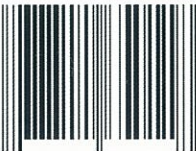
ISSUE 65



Leafy Litchfield County - pg. 24 | Shelter Puppy Love - pg. 20 | Tailoring Colorado - pg. 32 | Fresh Recipes for a Midday Meal - pg. 12



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65

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#### DESIGNER EDDY DOUMAS NEVER THOUGHT

his self-described “artsy fartsiness” would someday be a marketable talent. Explains Doumas, “I went to a fine arts high school, and I have a degree from Cornell College in fine art and classical studies and art history, but I never thought I’d end up doing this.” Growing up as a first-generation American in an immigrant family from Greece, being artistic didn’t really count as work.

Doumas was raised in Chicago while spending summers in Greece. “At fifteen, I was with my buddy in Greece. We’d strap on our backpacks and get on a ferryboat and find a job for the summer. I was always pretty adventuresome.” After college, he followed a couple friends to Vail, Colorado, intending to learn to ski for the season. “There were twelve of us, and we worked together and lived together and had a blast. And before we knew it, we had real lives.”

#### FROM BUSINESS TO CREATIVE

Doumas started out as a bookkeeper for a small design firm. He assumed he would stay on the business side of things, easily grasping concepts that seemed foreign to more creative types. As a side job, he set up little vignettes in the window displays of a t-shirt shop. Eventually he began creating window displays for the design firm. Through one of these creations, he met his first client. She was not interested in hiring a designer, but she needed a design firm to deal with reupholstering a couple pieces of furniture. Doumas ended up designing her 6,000-square-foot home and soon found himself at a crossroads—stay on the business side or migrate to the design side? “All of a sudden, I realized this artsy fartsiness could turn into something I really enjoyed, and a way to make a living,” Doumas recounts.

Twenty-six years later, Doumas is a very happy designer, though he is adamant about loving the business side of things just as much. “I love reading spreadsheets. I love profit analysis



photo | EMILY MINTON REDFIELD



# Tailoring Colorado

THE DESIGN SENSIBILITIES OF EDDY DOUMAS

text: LAUREN DAVID | photography: AS NOTED

*Designer Eddy Doumas reflects on his accidental and yet destined shift from the business side of the industry to the creative side.*







photo | EMILY MINTON REDFIELD

and negotiating contracts just as much as I love brainstorming fabric schemes and floor plans.” He is certainly a rarity—a business-savvy brain in a predominantly creative industry. And his colleagues recognize it, often turning to him for help with contracts. He gives informal lectures and offers free consulting to his colleagues on how to effectively present the business side of a design job.

Extroverted, with a great sense of humor and a genuine warmth, it is easy to see why Doumas excels in this people-centered profession. His favorite clients are repeat clients. He reasons, “We get to know each other on the first project, and after that, I’m working with a friend. The interaction is much more fun and joyous, and I know where I’m going with the project.”

#### FOREST ROAD HOMES

He also works with high-end residential developers. In the case of Forest Road, the property was a series of tennis courts on Vail Mount purchased by a developer who divided the land into four separate home sites. The home sites, three of which are featured here, were put on the market preconstruction



photo | EMILY MINTON REDFIELD



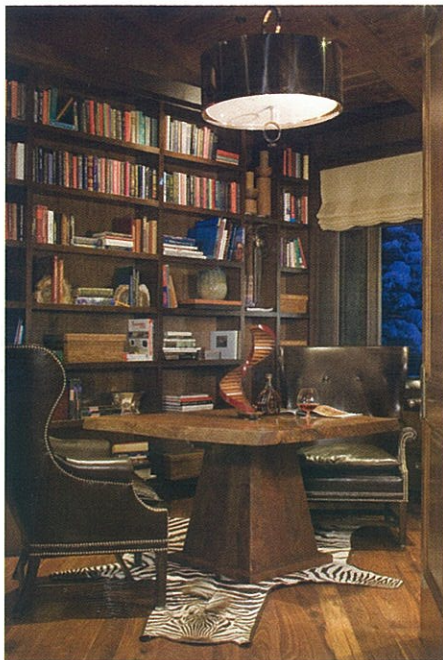


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and purchased individually at framing stages, allowing for more customized floor plans and finishes.

#### COLOR PALETTE

One house belongs to a young, fun, energetic couple with three children, all under the age of five. The bright color palette with lime green and turquoise reflects the owners desire for a less fussy design. They wanted a fun home.

#### CUSTOM FURNITURE

Another Forest Road home belongs to a more serious older couple. The circular couch was custom designed to suit the big, square room. The client knew she wanted to use the Ingo Maurer light fixture that hangs over the space. Doing a very sleek, stark fireplace allowed the light fixture to really be the centerpiece of the room, without competing





photo | RIC STOVALL STUDIO



**ONE HOUSE BELONGS TO A YOUNG, FUN, ENERGETIC COUPLE WITH THREE CHILDREN, ALL UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE.**

*The bright color palette with lime green and turquoise reflects the owners desire for a less fussy design.*



with other elements. The light is truly an art piece—brushed aluminum on the outside and hand gold leaf on the inside—and comes with gloves for the electrician. They are all one of a kind.

In the bedroom, the wood headboard is the showpiece. Custom made from a ten-foot slice of a walnut tree from Southern California, this beautiful wood is simply oiled, with no finish on it.

The kitchen is lighter and brighter than most of the house, which is primarily dark wood. The woman of the house is very social and likes to entertain, so the kitchen was designed to convey a lighter, happier, more breakfast-room feel. The man of the house is much more introverted, preferring to spend time in the dark wood oasis of his study.

#### MIXING FINISHES

A third home is owned by a father with two adult sons, who each have families of their own. The space would be occupied by all adults, all guys, or full of kids, and the challenge was to create a design that would be adaptable to all of those scenarios. Doumas loves mixing woods of the same species, but in different finishes. This is most evident in this particular house, with the white oak floors in one finish, a lighter version of the white oak floors in the tongue-and-groove planks on the ceiling, and then a much darker architectural beam in the same material.

#### COLORADO AESTHETICS

Doumas and other designers have been working to change the stereotypical design aesthetic of Vail. For years, everybody felt their mountain home needed a certain amount of rusticity and western flair. In the last decade, it's shifted to a more sophisticated, tailored look. Doumas jokes, "It need not be covered in plaid and antler chandeliers. There's no reason to pretend you're a cowhand or a cowboy when you're not." With that said, he asserts the importance of introducing some organic elements into the design. Doumas'



photo | RIC STOVALL STUDIO



photo | RIC STOVALL STUDIO



own style would best be described as organic modern—a mix of very clean, tailored pieces with more organic, natural pieces. He lives for the juxtaposition of styles and rule breaking. Someone looking at his room should not be able to identify it as all contemporary or all traditional, etc. There are elements of everything stirred together.

#### INSPIRATION AND DESIGN PROCESS

It's this contrast that makes Paris his go-to city for design inspiration. He elaborates, "There's so much creative energy in Paris, with so many contemporaries of mine working in spaces that are several hundred years old. I love the combination of modern aesthetic and technology with architecture that is historic." He has great love for Greece as well—a country with a landscape that is both calming and inspirational in an emotional way. The aesthetic doesn't quite translate into Vail style, but visits there renew his creative energies.

Doumas' design process and the way he starts each day have one thing in common—preparation. He wakes up early on purpose to have time at his coffee table to review financial reports, flip through magazines for inspiration, or just have some quiet time before the phone starts ringing. For his clients, preparation involves collecting the ideas and likes and dislikes in the form of magazine pages or Pinterest accounts. Doumas notes, "It's always fascinating when they hand me a pile of magazine clippings, and they have torn out

the same picture multiple times." He takes the pile of images (virtually or literally) with him to study, and then presents his vision, aiming to hit the nail on the head with the first presentation.

Perhaps most telling is Doumas' response to the most rewarding part of his career—the people. "It's a joy to be around beautiful, talented people. I know so many incredible furniture and textile and landscape designers, and all we do is talk shop because we're creative people living the dream. My vision coming to life integrates their vision. There is a synergy between all the designers and the end user." It's an answer in line with Doumas' outlook on life—he lives for his family and friends. His friends and coworkers would describe him as a generous goofball, who loves to take his staff on trips and have people over for dinner. He loves to cook Greek food, taught well by his mother, who also advised him to always be a gentleman. It's quickly apparent he has taken her words of wisdom to heart.

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