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April 2012

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"I chose furniture based on comfort and a relaxed American style. It says, 'Come in and let me offer you a drink.'"

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# BARBARA BARRY

## DEFINING CASUAL ELEGANCE, CALIFORNIA STYLE



SEE INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPH PAGE 93

Her interiors have a soft, quiet glamour, and she has brought the clean, serene, elegant simplicity of her signature look to a host of home furnishings collections.

**DAVID A. KEEPS:** You're the queen of design licensing. How many Barbara Barry collections are there?

**BARBARA BARRY:** I have furniture with Baker, Henredon, and McGuire; contract furniture with HBF; lighting with Boyd and Visual Comfort; fabrics and carpets with Tufenkian; tile with Ann Sacks; plumbing with Kallista; accessories with Global Views; and Barbara Barry sheeting and towels with DWI.

**Is that all? How did you start this empire?**

I began designing custom pieces for my clients on my very first job because I couldn't find what I was looking for—at the time it didn't exist, and we now call it 'transitional.' I wanted fluid, pared-down forms that worked with my vision of streamlined

elegance. So I had to make them.

**How did you learn?**

I would buy furniture off the road on lower La Cienega and Robertson Boulevard, take it to my Mexican upholsterer, tear it apart, and work to get it more simple and modern. It was easy to just jump in and begin if you had a vision and a desire to spend hours on end at the upholstery factory and the cabinet shops in the Valley and you knew how to draw, which I did. I trained my eye and the hand of my upholsterer, gaining a keener awareness of form and scale. Once you do that, it's hard to buy from a catalog.

**What makes it possible to create furniture collections in Southern California?**

Some of the best talent is here in Los Angeles, mostly Latin. We have all grown together

over the years, improving the craft and the quality of the work, creating a true atelier community of craftspeople. There's an ease of access as compared to the East Coast, where people just don't take as many chances.

**Is that what makes California design so distinctive?**

I wasn't aware of how unique it was until I started working outside of California. It's all about proportion, scale, light, and a certain casual elegance I mentioned earlier that you find here and nowhere else. It's the soup in which I cooked my look. It's a great example of designing from a sense of place and developing your own style rooted in that place. We're free of the yoke of history here, free to invent ourselves, and I did.

## LA CIENEGA BY THE NUMBERS THE ULTIMATE SHOPPING STREET MAP

L.A.'s premier destination for home design, the La Cienega Design Quarter boasts a wealth of stores, galleries, and ateliers. Here, a close-up look at the three-block strip at the heart of the legendary district.

• LOCATIONS ON MAP ARE APPROXIMATE



### EAST SIDE

**1. 8490 Melrose Place** FIG & OLIVE (restaurant)

**2. 8485 Melrose Place** MONIQUE L'HUILLIER (apparel) 323-655-1088 and DAVID PHOENIX (interior design, upstairs) 310-657-6577

**3. 708 NEIL LANE** (jewelry) 310-275-5015

**4. 716 STUDIO WORKSHOPS** (Therien custom pieces and antiques) 310-657-4615

**5. 722 QUATRAIN** (period reproductions) 310-652-0243

**6. 724 HOLLYWOOD AT HOME** (textiles) 310-273-6200

**7. 730 KOI** (sushi restaurant)

**8. 736 LOS ANGELES FINE ART GALLERY** 310-855-2599

**9. 740 ENGS-DIMITRI** (European paintings, antiques, modern sculpture) 310-657-5222

**10. 744 LUCCA ANTIQUES** (European antiques, found objects, Lucca Studio Designs) 310-657-7800

**11. 746 PAT MCGANN** (ethnic textiles, Missoni Home and vintage furniture) 310-657-8708

**12. 748 CHRISTOPHER FARR** (designer contemporary rugs—in back of courtyard) 310-967-0064

**13. 750 HOLLYWOOD AT HOME** (furniture, vintage, lighting) 310-273-6200

**14. 752 HARBINGER** (designer textiles—Holland and Sherry showroom—and Lucas Studio) 310-858-6884

**15. 760 KELLY WEARSTLER** (interior design studio) 323-951-7454 and SALLY HERSHBERGER (hair salon)

**CROSS STREET** WARING AVE.

**16. 800 SCALAMANDRE** (fabric) 310-657-8154

**17. 804 GEORGE SMITH** (English upholstery, imported European lighting) 310-360-0880

**18. 808 NANZ HARDWARE** (handles, knobs, hinges) and REMAINS LIGHTING (light fixtures and lamps) 310-358-9100

**19. 810 CHEZ CAMILLE** (20th-century European and

American modern) 310-854-3565

**20. 814 ST. CROIX COLLECTION** (multi-line showroom for Lewis Mittman, Hartmann & Forbes, mirrors, textiles, and trim) 310-360-0800

**21. 816 RALF'S ANTIQUES** (country antiques from Spain, Italy) 310-659-1966

**22. 818 ROMÁN SALON** (hair salon)

**23. 826 THE SPANISH KITCHEN** (restaurant)

**24. 868 PAUL MARRA DESIGN** (vintage furniture and lighting and contemporary Hollywood glam designs by Marra) 310-659-8190

**25. 910 SZALON** (Secessionist and Art Deco antiques) 310-657-0089

**CROSS STREET** WILLOUGHBY AVE.

**26. 906 JEAN MARC GALLERY** (fine arts) 310-659-2975

**27. 912 KRISTEN BUCKINGHAM** (antiques and bespoke furniture) 310-659-1180

**28. 916-918 BARCLAY BUTERA** (designer furniture, upholstery and accessories) 310-657-0882

**29. 920 MARGE CARSON** (high-end home furnishings) 310-289-9900

**30. 926 HOLLYWOOD SIERRA KITCHENS** (cabinetry) 310-659-9290

**31. 928 THE RUG AFFAIR** (handmade carpets) 310-659-3847

**32. 930 TODD ALEXANDER ROMANO** (lighting, upholstery, lacquered pieces) 310-855-1280

**33. 936 JOSEPH'S ANTIQUES** (old-world, Oriental) 310-490-9779

**CROSS STREET** ROMAINE ST.

**34. 980 RENDEZVOUS DETOX** (spa)

**35. 986 JOSEPH'S ANTIQUES** (old-world, Oriental) 310-490-9779

**36. 988 RENDEZVOUS DETOX** (spa)

**37. 992 KRISTEN BUCKINGHAM** (antiques and bespoke furniture) 310-659-1180

**38. 994 KRISTEN BUCKINGHAM** (antiques and bespoke furniture) 310-659-1180

BARRY: VICTORIA PEARSON (2); HAINES INTERIOR: PHOTOFEST; GETTY IMAGES (2)