

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT GETTING THE HOME YOU WANT

Design Desire



INSIDE:

What to do
with a bare shell

Secret Ingredients
to Kitchen Success

London Calling?
Euro Design's
hottest furniture
collection yet!



EURO DESIGN
PATTAYA

PLUS: PORTFOLIOS OF SPECTACULAR PATTAYA HOMES



Pure Line

Quality is our guidance;

WE ASSURE IT



Fridge Freezers;

LESS DECISION, MORE SAVINGS



COVER STORY

Englishman Steven Walsh has a well-rounded condominium in terms of both shape – and style! We give a taste of the custom-built solutions Euro Design came up with to suit his unusual unit.

07



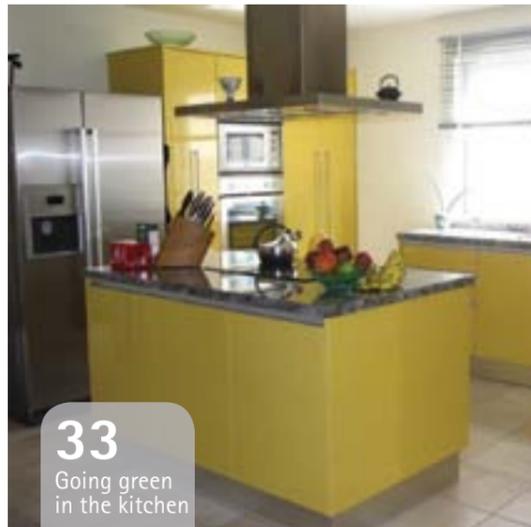
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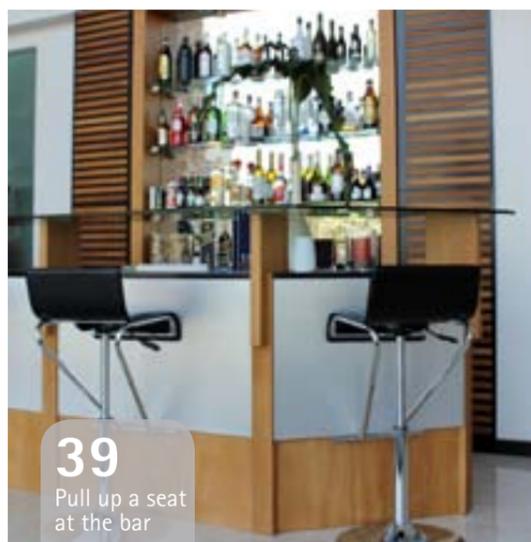
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Trust us to deliver

Welcome to Design|Desire, the magazine about finding and getting the interior designs that you really want. Fifteen years ago, my company was a pretty traditional furniture manufacturer. We designed furniture, we built furniture ... and then we sold it.

What made us different was a certain level of quality.

But, I knew that wasn't enough. I knew we had to find more ways to distinguish ourselves from other furniture companies. What we needed was a truly unique selling proposition. So, we set upon a journey to do something nobody else could.

We started with the most important element of any profitable enterprise ... the customer. It occurred to me that everyone in our business pays great lip service to 'giving the customer what they want', but in the end they place the most emphasis on selling what they have. We decided to be different.

When you come into a Euro Design showroom or visit our website, you will no doubt see many things you want. The superior quality, the innovative design and good old-fashioned pride in our product will be obvious.

But, in very short order, you will also realise that the gorgeous high-gloss kitchen you want is also available in a colour and finish you like even better. That king-size teak wood bed is also available in oak, or maple or high gloss purple should you desire. There are a lot of advantages to owning a 2,500 square metre furniture factory and the ability to customise is one of them.

Design|Desire is a testament to our ability to give the customer what they want. In the pages that follow, you'll not only see shining examples of our best work, but also some guidance on how to get exactly what you want.

We hope this magazine will inspire you to think outside the box and settle for nothing less than absolutely what you desire.



Luc Parietti

Managing Director, Euro Design Furniture



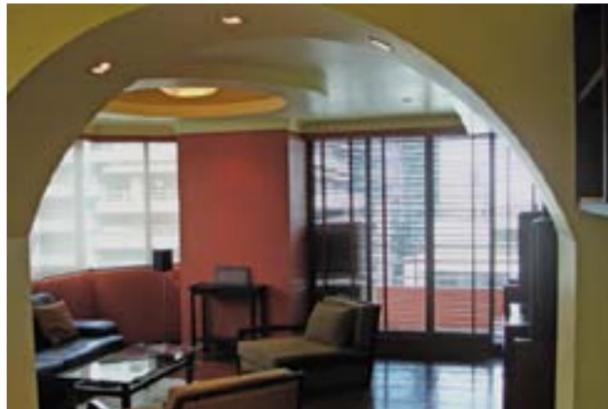
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Recovering from bare shell shock

This is the first of a series of articles on interior design. We kick off with what to do when faced with a bare shell. For some it's an exciting challenge, yet for others it is downright daunting. Here Bart Walters strips away some of the mysteries of starting from scratch.

The desire to design your own place starts young. Boys have their tree house or secret fort made of pilfered 2x4s somewhere in the woods. Girls have their elaborate doll houses. Nothing is more thrilling than decorating your college dorm room or first apartment. It is a place of your own ... a place to call home. We all want to live somewhere that has our personality stamped on it.

As we get older, the desire to create your own living space gets much more difficult to satisfy than just nailing some boards together or putting up a girlie poster on the wall (although, some folks still do it that way).

We want a place with class and style. We want a place that's functional and livable. We want a space that says a little about who we are and how we choose to live.

Sadly, when it comes to interior design, most people truly don't know what they want. Most folks can tell you what they don't like ... some can tell you what they like when they see it ... and quite a few want everything, all at once, in one

room. If the space you have chosen is partially finished; meaning it has flooring, ceiling lights, bathroom fixtures etc, at least you'll have a starting point. The most daunting task the average homeowner will ever face is the finishing out of a bare shell condo or house.

The mere two words "bare shell" conjures up images of a Spartan concrete box ... which is exactly what most bare shells are.

You really don't realise all that goes into making a place complete until you are standing in the middle of a completely empty room, or a formerly finished place that has been gutted.

The first question that usually comes to mind is: "Where the hell do I start?"

In this four-part series, we will attempt to shed some light on the mystery of interior design and décor as it applies to a bare (or mostly bare) shell. This first installment should help you get started.

Systems

This is the boring part. Before you start hanging pictures and placing furniture, it is most important to

“The first question that usually comes to mind is: 'Where the hell do I start?'”

take a good hard look at the life and comfort support systems of your new abode. Electric, water, air conditioning are the main three.

Most bare shells come with electrical wiring already run and outlet plugs usually placed exactly where you don't want them. Take your floor plan and figure out where things like outlets, ceiling lamps and cable TV adapters should go. If you need to move existing outlets, or create some new ones, now is the time to do it; not after you've painted your walls.

The same goes for built-in audio systems or surround sound. If you've got to tear holes in the wall or punch holes in the ceiling, do it before you start making the place pretty.

Pay attention to lighting fixtures that come with your bare shell. Many will have those awful fluorescent bulbs everyone thinks saves money, but lights up your house like a grocery store.

If you want warm halogen lights, now's the time to put them in. If you want cool energy saving, long lasting LEDs, this is when you should do it. Dimmer switches,



remote controls, and any other hard-wired electro-gadgetry should all get installed first.

Your water system may seem like a pretty straight forward issue, but here in Thailand, adjustments may need to be made.

Check your water pressure. Is it enough to draw a bath in less than 20 minutes? Is it enough to run through the cycles on an average washing machine? You may need to install an internal booster pump.

Check your water quality. If you have existing taps, unscrew the screen filter on the end to look for sediment. You might even want to draw a sample of your water and have it tested.

Water fed from tanks on the rooftop can easily be contaminated with all sorts of nasty stuff. City water supplies can be just as dodgy. And well water? ... no need to be unduly graphic here.

Fortunately there are several suppliers of good quality filtration systems in town. Since systems like booster pumps and filtration take up room, make some noise and need to be close to the main water source, the time to place and

Controlling light both natural and electrical is essential to livable interior design.

Learn how to look at a space for what it could be, not what it is. Bare shells are literally a blank slate.

install them is in the beginning of the process.

Air conditioning is an essential element of life here in the tropics. The only thing worse than having no air-con is having a crappy air-con.

Don't be cheap ... buy a good product. Make sure the units and vents are placed where it makes sense, not what was easiest for the contractor. Also make sure the condensation evacuation lines are run at a downhill angle and do not drain to an area prone to pooling. Measure your rooms and make sure you buy units that are rated for the relative size or larger. Moving or installing new air-con units can involve all kinds of cutting and drilling, so make sure you get it done first.

Controlling light

Once all your life support and comfort systems are in place, you can begin to think about how you want your place to look and live. Think of your new home as a theatrical stage that has to be properly set before the big name actors appear.

The most expensive leather sofa in the world will look like vinyl if it's sitting under a cheap fluorescent light or in an unlit dark corner.

First, get a grip on the natural light. Pay attention to where the sun comes in and at what time of day. If your bedroom is facing directly east, you will obviously need to have the ability to completely block out the early morning sun with blackout curtains, or quality blinds. If your living room has a direct western exposure on the beachside, you'll need to figure out how to keep it from turning into a microwave every afternoon. Understanding and controlling natural light is essential to creating the right atmosphere.

We've already talked about lighting a little bit from a technical angle. Make sure you can clearly light every inch of your home. Installing dimmers and lower wattage bulbs can help create whatever mood you desire, but dark spaces where you can't control the light at all makes a place seem unfinished.

Incorporate wall lamps, floor lamps and even indirect lighting

Recovering from bare shell shock

behind mirrors and in recessed ceilings. With all lighting, the key is control.

Along with lighting decisions may come ceiling alterations. If your ceiling is not installed yet, make sure your desired lighting plan is considered before you start putting up gypsum. If you decide on a recessed, trayed or “drop” ceiling, indirect lighting cleverly hidden can have a spectacular and warm effect. If you’re unsure, start paying attention to ceiling configurations everywhere you go and look at some home design magazines. The possibilities are endless.

Putting down a good base

Probably about the same time your lighting questions are getting answered, it’s time to decide on flooring.

Everybody has a favourite type of floor, but not all materials are appropriate for Thailand, and not all floors are created equal.

Hardwood floors always look good in the showroom, and usually after they first get installed. But be careful; radical changes in humidity and temperature can cause even the finest woods to buckle and creak. Not to mention the fact that Thailand is home to several species of airborne and subterranean termites.

A nice economical compromise is wood veneer parquet. Some type of polymer barrier is used to separate the actual parquet from the floor to help prevent termites, warping and creates a “floating floor” effect. The product installs in hours, not days and some brands are even waterproof.

The most popular choice of flooring here in Thailand is ceramic tile or natural stone of some description. Marble and travertine (a stone somewhere between limestone and marble) can be beautiful but hard to maintain. If it’s just you and your spouse walking barefoot around your show home, go for it. If you’ve got a big active family with pets, it’s



Using quality materials is essential, but make sure you understand the care and maintenance of your new home. Not all floors are created equal.

“The most important thing to ponder when choosing a tile colour is time. How long can you live with that tile?”

probably a good idea to go with a hearty ceramic tile.

Again, it is important to be cost conscious, but not cheap. Do not put wall tiles on the floor just because they are cheaper. They are also thinner, more brittle and since they aren’t designed to be walked on, possibly a safety hazard. A decent ceramic tile here in Thailand should cost between 350 to 600 baht per square metre. Imported tiles will naturally be quite a bit more.

The two main considerations when choosing ceramic floor tiles are size and color. Large tiles (60cm x 60cm or larger) can make a small room look big as well as adding scale to really large rooms. Rectangular tiles can run against the grain of a room to give it balance, hence making a really long room look squarer. Installing tiles in a diagonal pattern help to give a room an interesting sense of motion.

Again, start looking at the flooring in places you enjoy hanging out to get an idea of how designers use materials and sizes to create an effect.

Colour can be quite subjective. Dark tiles like slate can create a strong masculine feeling but are best used in rooms with a lot of

natural light. Lighter colors like travertine, marble and natural look ceramic tiles tend to open rooms up and cool them down. Lighter colours also appeal to a wider range of people which is something to consider if you are finishing for resale or a rental market.

The most important thing to ponder when choosing a tile colour is time. How long can you live with that tile? If it’s some trendy green colour everyone is doing, think how you’ll feel about it in five years. Natural or natural look tiles tend to be more palatable to more people for longer periods of time.

Next time

So now you’ve got your systems in, your floor down and your lights up ... and you still have an empty box. Rest assured, you’ve started in the right place and spent money wisely. Next will come bathroom fixtures and built-in furniture. See Pages 22-24 where I cover some exciting subjects like toilet selection and exactly what particle board is made of.

It’s only exciting if you are trying to finish your dream home, or in the furniture business I know, but exciting all the same. Also learn more about building out your next place.

The Walsh Residence



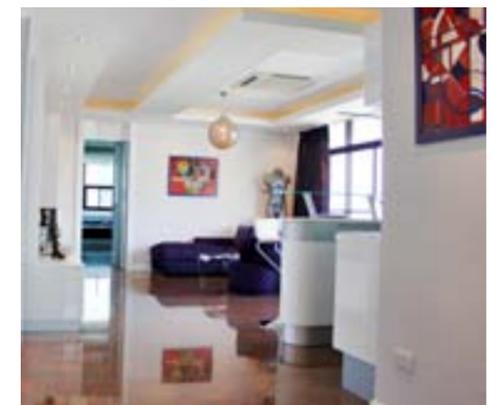
Retired Englishman Steven Walsh must have had some vision when he purchased this two-bedroom seaview condo in Jomtien Beach.

The unusual barbell shape of the unit required some innovative solutions. It’s not everyday you run into two round rooms in one home.

The existing décor was well in excess of a decade old and in now way reflected a seaside lifestyle. Steven knew everything had to go, but was overwhelmed with ideas on how to fill the rooms.

That’s when he arrived at Euro Design with his floor plan, his ideas and his budget.



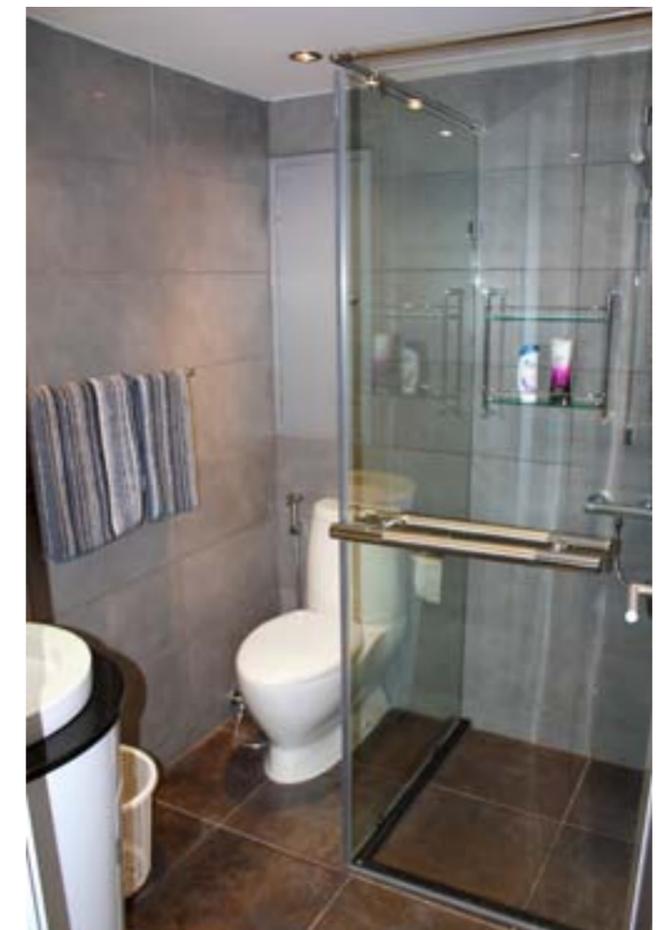


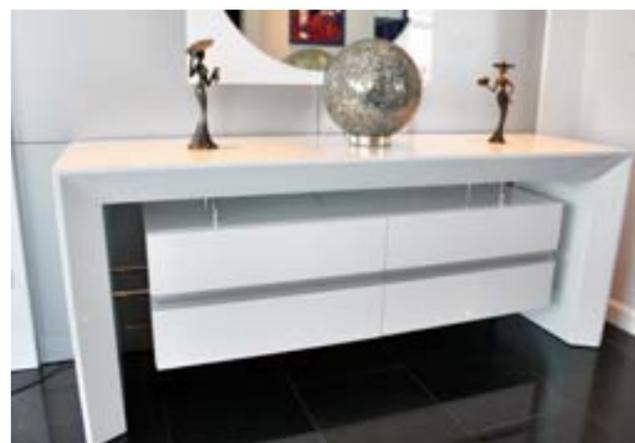


Everything about the master bedroom is round. The headboard for the bed, the dropped ceiling ... even the curtain apparatus must accommodate the unusual shape of the room.

But, with that shape comes the advantage of an incredible amount of natural light available to show off the vibrant color and finish.

The slick white high-gloss and purple are warmly supported by the rich oxblood marble floors.





The puzzle solver

Thinking “outside the box” is a state of mind. Looking at lines and angles ... calculating in centimetres and degrees ... evaluating everything by height, width and depth ... interior design could be easily viewed as a simple three dimensional math problem.

But when you’re sitting with an anxious first-time home buyer and using words like “perspective” and “ambience” and, God forbid, “Fengshui” ... my job takes on several different dimensions.

When it comes to interior design, most people don’t know what they want, but they know what they don’t like, and they seem to know what they like when they see it.

Getting to that point is a unique journey. At Euro Design, our job is to listen, interpret and draw on years of experience managing projects as small as a studio condo renovation right on up to multi-million dollar mansions.

Most people would say that you can’t solve an emotional issue with computer technology, but I beg to differ. When a customer walks into our showroom, full of angst and confusion about their home design, we apply experience, understanding and a dazzling display of technological knowledge to soothe their anxiety. That is possibly one of the best applications of computer technology I’ve ever heard of.

We take the client’s requirements and ideas and massage them with the most state-of-the-art three dimensional architectural computer programmes available. Our customers are directly involved and see, from a very real perspective, what works and what doesn’t. In the end, they walk away knowing exactly what their space will look like when we finish.

And, most importantly, they know they’re going to get what they want.



Michel Bertrand

Director of Creative Services, Euro Design Furniture



London Calling ...

Euro Design's most popular collection is an instant classic



Euro Design's complete London Collection in Anthracite Car Lacquer finish.

Furniture designers face a similar challenge as their counterparts in the fashion industry. Everything has been done before in some form. Trends come and go with each season. Rare are the new designs that become classics.

The holy grail of any designer is to create a classic style that transcends trend and becomes timeless. A design that never goes out of style is truly elusive; but when you find one, you know it.

Euro Design's London Collection is such a design. Of all Euro Design's collections, London is the one that usually grabs a designer's attention. "Elegant,

Classy and Slick" are the adjectives that routinely pass their lips.

The flawlessly executed 45 degree angles and substantial, yet refined, stature of this collection are what appeals to most buyers.

But the flexibility of London is what makes it a favorite of interior designers. Dressed in BMW black or metallic anthracite car lacquer, London emits a design driven sophisticated vibe that cannot be denied. Wrapped in fine teakwood or maple, the horizontal lines and natural materials create an understated aura of Zen.

Ironically enough, London had nothing to do with the inspiration for the design of its namesake collection. Furniture designer and managing director of Euro Design Furniture, Luc Parietti, explains how he came up with the unique design.

"I was watching a documentary on architecture, and the show was focused on the Arch la Defense in Paris (below)," says Luc. "I was mesmerised by this giant beveled U-shaped building. Immediately I started to envision drawers and cabinets fitting inside and manically sketched them."

According to Luc, his design wasn't so well received by his boss, Euro Design's founder Heinz Pichler. "He thought I was crazy," says Luc, "but he was intrigued by the gravity-defying design as well. Seven years later, it is our most popular collection ... an instant classic."





The London sideboard in three variations.



London King Size Bed w/side tables in Black and Silver Car Lacquer.



London Executive Desk in Black Car Lacquer.

User-friendly bathrooms



Last month we explored the first phase of transforming a bare shell into a living space. Now you are standing in a box with floors and lights and window treatments and not much else.

It's time to build in some of the other key elements necessary for comfort and everyday living.

These permanent additions generally come in three categories: bathrooms, kitchens and wardrobes.

I like to refer to these items as "hard fixtures" as they are furnishings that are, at the very least, semi-permanent.

In this segment we will explore the joys of designing and building full-blown bathrooms and washrooms.

Form and function

The Loo, The Bog, The Water Closet, The Comfort Room, The Hong Nam ... no matter what you call them, nowhere, but nowhere does the marriage between form and function show itself more than in a bathroom.

It is imperative you have a firm grasp on what looks good versus how this facility will actually get used.

Installing a bathtub when you know you'll never use it is a waste of time, money and space.

However, if you plan to rent and/or eventually sell a home with three bedrooms or more, at least one bathroom with a tub could make a big difference as your clientele is more likely to include families.

Who uses what

Women and children use bathtubs; men generally do not. Fancy stuff like rain-head showers and Jacuzzis may be totally useless or absolutely necessary ... dependent on how they will be used and who is using them.

So, let's pick it apart ... toilets. A toilet is a toilet, right? Go to a local home mega-store and witness the wide variety of sizes, shapes styles and prices.

If you're like most people, you'll end up scratching your head and thinking, "just what is it that makes one toilet cost Bt2,500 and the one next to it cost Bt25,000"?

For the most part price is predicated upon brand name, design and hardware.

Chances are the cheaper toilet has a plastic seat, plastic inner-workings, and plastic flush handle - not to mention the fact that it

“Fancy stuff like rain-head showers and Jacuzzis may be totally useless or absolutely necessary ... dependent on how they will be used and who is using them.”

is molded in a style that hasn't changed in 50 years.

The cheaper toilet probably doesn't have some of the other features like water-saving flush options and rust-proof floor bolts either.

Lucky for us, good quality toilets are available from local manufacturers like Nahm. You can get import quality and features at a much more reasonable price.

The same goes for wash basins and water taps; the prices are all over the place. Choose them as a set so they work well together. That big high faucet you like won't work so well with a shallow sink and will have water splashing all over.

Material considerations

And, watch your materials. Those sexy glass basins are great to look at, but don't count on them to wear very well.

A good hearty ceramic is a much better choice.

Taps made of thin, painted plastic may be easy on the wallet, but don't hold up well under heavy daily use. You don't have to be extravagant; just don't cross over the threshold between frugal and cheap.

With showers you have a number of variables to consider; space, drainage and maintenance being the big three.

Shower first

Don't consider space for the shower last ... make it first ... it's the main thing you do in a bathroom.

Give yourself a good couple of square metres for ease of movement and water containment. Use non-slip flooring and wall tiles that are easy to clean.

That black slate looks really cool until you have to get the soap scum off of it. Avoid designs that include shower curtains or elaborate sliding door mechanisms.

Make sure your drain is big enough to handle the water flow and doesn't back up to form a pool into the rest of the bathroom.

Remember big rain-head showers allow a lot more water to flow, so consider how good your water pressure is to properly drive it and how adequate your drainage is to take the water away. A combination shower tap that allows switching from overhead rain to hand-held wand is a nice option for showers that service males and females.

“Shower curtains are quite simply mildew magnets. Nasty and decidedly unstylish ... avoid them at all costs”

Men like the rain ... women worry about their hair ... this covers both.

Here are my top four shower secrets: First, if you have the space, create a "his and her" shower. Many modern bathrooms feature his and her sinks, which is certainly nice, but separate, or semi-separate showers is utilitarian and an eye-catching design choice.

Bathrooms sell a place to the lady of the house and trust me; this can be a big selling point for women.

Secondly, in a fully tiled shower, soap scum, mildew and mold can be a maintenance nightmare.

Before you ever use a new shower, buy some good car wax in paste form (Turtle Wax for example). Give your new shower a couple of coats of wax and observe the water beading up.

Nasty invaders

All those nasty shower invaders like soap scum and mold have a hard time attaching and you can basically just wipe them away right off the top of the wax.

Consider using mosaic tiles on a shower floor to aid rapid drainage. Many shower designs employ as lip

or step down to help collect water before it is drained.

This can be unsightly and a safety hazard. If you've ever rammed your big toe on one of these devices you'll know what I mean.

Since mosaic tiles come in a flexible sheet, a more radical slope can be achieved and allow water to run in the right direction without the need to change the floor's elevation.

This allows for a functional shower with cleaner lines and fewer corners to clean gunk out of.

Things to avoid

Avoid sliding glass doors and shower curtains as they are always the dirtiest element of any shower. Honestly, have you ever seen a shower door that was clean and clear after the first time you used it?

Excessive lime content in our local water and soap residue cling to glass making it look cloudy and unclean from day one.

Shower curtains are quite simply mildew magnets. Nasty and decidedly unstylish ... avoid them at all costs.

Finish off your bathroom with



some storage that hides your stuff, not displays it.

And, whatever you do, make sure you use water-proof material to build it. Nothing looks worse than disintegrating particle board in a brightly lit bathroom.

Counter tops are another place you need to pay attention to materials.

Marble looks great but may not be able to stand up to caustic chemicals used in a bathroom. Abrasive toothpaste and some of the harsher chlorine-based cleaning fluids necessary to sanitise bathrooms can wreck that beautiful Indian Green marble in no time.

Choose a tough granite or indestructible Corian because they can take the abuse.

Want to save money?

Bathrooms can get expensive quickly. By the time you've chosen toilet, water taps and waterproof cabinetry, your budget could be severely strained.

Saving money in a bathroom is not about buying everything cheaply; it's more about what you don't buy.

If you are buying a bathtub, do you really need one with a



The threshold between being 'frugal' and 'cheap' can be unclear and easy to cross over. Don't cheat yourself.



Jacuzzi? They look so sexy in the showroom but go largely unused after installation.

You could easily shave a third of the cost off the price by choosing a quality, standard tub.

Expensive items

Do you really need six towel racks? People tend to over-complicate a bathroom with bolt-on wall fixtures they don't use like extra towel racks, toothbrush holders, cup holders and stainless steel wall-mounted soap dishes. These items are expensive and tend to be sold as a set.

Think about how you actually live and unclutter your space accordingly.

And, if you've ever looked at dozens of boxes of tiles stacked up and ready to be installed in your six square metres begs the question, "are all these really going in there?"

For some reason, many people think a bathroom must be tiled ceiling to floor.

A good way to save on materials and money is to finish your bathroom with water-proof gypsum (sometimes called "green-board") and tile only a portion or none of the walls.

Paint the walls in a nice accent colour and behold a much more inviting and interesting space that costs significantly less.

One place you don't want to scrimp is on a quality hot-water heater. One good German-made HW unit ultimately costs less than the cheap Chinese brand you'll have to replace once a year.

Know how they work and make sure you get the size rated for the volume of water you intend for them to handle. The hot water heater is the engine that drives a nice bathroom ... don't under-power it.

Very personal

In the end, designing a bathroom is a very personal choice. My advice is to think hard about how you actually live and use a bathroom and all its fixtures.

The final expense has as much to do with what you don't buy as what you do buy. And please remember, the threshold between being "frugal" and "cheap" can be unclear and easy to cross over. Don't cheat yourself.

Turn to Page 36 for my favourite topic ... kitchens!

Bart Walters

Häfele Design Centre – Phuket



In 2011, the International networked and German-based group Häfele constructed a new landmark building on the island of Phuket.

Häfele supplies furniture fittings, architectural hardware and electronic locking systems to most of the planet.

Rising out of the ground like a giant crimson submarine, the new Häfele Design Center is easily one of the most memorable buildings on the island.

When the Häfele management team set about the painstaking task of finishing the interior of this sprawling 2,000+ square metre facility, they called in the experts from Euro Design. Häfele and Euro Design have maintained a synergistic relationship for years, so it seemed only natural.

The result is a breathtaking wonderland of household hardware and design. It's no wonder that Euro Design was tapped to build their new flagship facility in Bangkok due to open later this year.



Uber-modern kitchen display.



The complete bedroom à la Häfele.





Form and function in perfect harmony.



New mega kitchen centre.



A dazzling array of choices.



Every gadget
imaginable
for the
perfect
kitchen.

Pursuing Perfection

Delivering perfection in a country as delightfully imperfect as Thailand is a daily challenge. Getting everything right is rarely easy.

Imagine asking 90 native Thai artisans to build something they've never seen, out of materials they never heard of, with machines that must seem like they come from the future ... and all on a tight timetable. But, if it was easy, everybody would be doing it.

At Euro Design we believe in growing our own expertise. We take smart people with open minds and good skills; then we teach them the Euro Design way.

Our unique advantage is decades of experience working with Thai people and the ability to communicate with them in their own language.

The result is dedicated employees who take great pride in their work. We have technicians in our factory that have worked for Euro Design for more than 20 years.

Not many manufacturers of anything in this country can make that claim.

But, building something in a factory is only half the battle. If what our customers order doesn't look as good in their home as it did on paper or in the factory, we have failed.

That's why we work so hard to make sure our products arrive in pristine condition and installed as specified. Anything less is unacceptable.

We offer a two year guarantee on our products and work. Not many manufacturers can make that claim either.

Our customers want the highest quality furniture installed with professionalism and technical expertise.

No matter what it takes, we give customers what they want.



Jacques LeFebvre

Director of Production, Euro Design Furniture





Gorenje Ora-ito Collection;
THE NEW CLASSIC FOR TOMORROW'S KITCHEN

Gorenje Simplicity Collection;
LESS DECISION, MORE LIFE



Ingredients for the right kitchen

Since time began, the kitchen has been the command centre of the house. It is where food is stored, meals are prepared and where people invariably congregate.

Visitors can come to your home and never see the bathroom, but everyone sees the kitchen. The breadwinner of any family usually thinks they are the most important person in the household. But, if the bread maker doesn't have the proper facility, or is unsatisfied with their domain ... the chances of that being a happy home are pretty slim.

Before you start picking out laminates and countertops, consider exactly how your kitchen will be used. What appliances are required? How much storage will you need? Eat in or separate dining room? The requirements for a bachelor who can exist with a coffee pot and a corkscrew are quite different from a homemaker feeding five hungry children and a spouse.

Envision how you will be living and build your kitchen accordingly.

Choosing appliances

Appliances are the engines that drive any kitchen. Choose well and build the rest around them. If the kitchen will be used extensively and many meals prepared, shop for cooking surfaces (hobs) and ovens carefully.

For hobs, I recommend the new fangled glass or ceramic type. They look good, are easy to use and easy to clean. For those of us who cook frequently, induction systems are magic. If you are unfamiliar, check it out. An induction equipped hob uses some kind of magnetic magic to heat only the cooking surface and not the whole pan. The heat



“One of the biggest mistakes people make with appliances in the kitchen is to ‘over fridge’.”



comes up nearly as quick as gas and efficiently uses electricity. Make sure to get a hood or smoke ejector to match your cooking style. If there is a Thai chef in the house this is very important as they seem to have an insatiable need to burn fish sauce in a wok.

Choosing ovens is another area where you'll need to analyse your usage. Most people need and use a microwave, but not everyone needs a conventional or convection oven. Don't buy one just because it looks good with the set.

My favourite solution is one of the new combination microwave/

convection ovens. They take up less space, can prepare any meal you could imagine and are programmable. Even big restaurants use this kind of device as a secret weapon. Imagine popping in an 8 oz sirloin steak, setting it for “medium well” and having it come out perfect every time. They are kind of pricey, but well worth the money if you actually use them.

Feeling of power

One of the biggest mistakes people make with appliances in the kitchen is to “over fridge”. Yes, those big double-door behemoths do give



one a feeling of power, but do you really need it? Recently I went to a friend's house to marvel at his two-metre stainless juggernaut only to open it and find a half bottle of spoiled milk, two beers and his wife's face cream. He was decidedly “over refrigerated”.

This brings me back to my point about usage.

Having the Swiss Army Knife of kitchens with a dishwasher, wine cooler, ice maker and automatic dog-polisher may impress your friends, but unless you truly use all that stuff, it is a severe waste of space and money. Remember,

a kitchen is a tool, not a status symbol.

An aspect of the appliance purchase most people don't think of is service and warranty. If your brand new built-in fridge with ice maker goes on the fritz, how will it be serviced?

Choosing appliances

Does a crack team of repairman show up and fix it on the spot? Does a truck magically arrive and replace the unit free of charge with a new one? Or, does someone haul it away to Bangkok for six months, promising to bring it back “very soon”?

“The more corners you have in a kitchen, the more space you waste.”



Buying from a mega-retailer could leave you dealing directly with the manufacturer's service department which could be a blessing or customer service hell.

Buying from a reputable interior design firm or kitchen shop should mean they have a good working relationship with whoever produced the equipment and will get your problem solved quickly.

Now that you know “what” you want in the kitchen, it is time to consider “where” to put it. Most homes or condos kind of pre-determine where the kitchen will go by locating water outlets and drains.

In a bare shell you don't have to let the house dictate where the kitchen goes. You decide if you want a kitchen with a view or placed safely away in a cosy corner. Figure out where you want it and how much space you are willing to allot.

Jamming a kitchen up into a space with three walls and only one opening will make it seem exponentially smaller. The more corners you have in a kitchen, the more space you waste.

The cabinets underneath a corner are invariably too deep to reach and are impractical as storage. Corners also limit openings on doors and drawers. Try to design your kitchen as open as possible, with more than one entry.





Without a doubt the most important decision you will make regarding your kitchen is the materials to construct it with.

Kitchen cabinets can be made of a wide variety of materials. Some will last a lifetime ... others start disintegrating 10 minutes after they are installed. When selecting materials, it is a bad time to get overly frugal. It is also a bad time to get lazy, so do some research and understand what is available.

Sometime in the mid-80s, a new material called MDF (medium density fibreboard) became quite popular. It was strong, light, easy to work with ... and cheap. It is also the very definition of planned obsolescence.

MDF is literally pulp paper with resin or glue mixed together and formed into sheets. No matter what coating is sprayed onto it or what space age polymer is vacuum affixed to it ... eventually it will succumb to moisture and pressure from granite counter tops and such. Trust me, an MDF kitchen is not built to last.

Holds up well

What I recommend is 18mm moisture-resistant particle board, grade E1 or E2. This is real wood for making real furniture. It is heavy, tough, accepts all manner of finishing well and can hold up even the bulkiest countertops. And most importantly, it is made to last; not to have you coming in for a new kitchen every few years.

How you finish your cabinetry speaks to the style you want to create. For a wood finish, go with a good quality veneer. For a textured finish, try using a laminate and applying whatever paint colour



For most households, the kitchen is the most high traffic and heavily utilised room in the house. Outfit it accordingly.



you want over it. Perhaps the most popular finish going right now is high-gloss. Buyers beware ... not all high-gloss is created equal.

Most kitchens you'll see in model condos or lower-priced kitchen shops are made of MDF with PVC plastic vacuum sealed over it. It might be cheaper, but the "high" will soon wear out of the "high gloss" and discoloration is a big problem, especially with lighter colours.

Car lacquer finish

High gloss laminates are also popular, but not long after installation, the dark edges of the laminate sheet will start to show. For a truly reflective high gloss, I recommend using a car lacquer finish.

A few companies in town have the facility to enhance furniture with a proper car lacquer finish producing a high gloss reflective shine that is head and shoulders superior to other types.

Car lacquer is a little more expensive, but once you've made the comparison ... you just can't opt for the plastic over paper Mache model.

Choosing countertops can be confusing as there are an overwhelming number of materials to use. Corian is a manufactured surface that is tough as nails and looks good, but can be quite expensive. Natural stone is also gorgeous but pricey ... and isn't necessarily the easiest to maintain.

Many of the new synthetic stone surfaces look great but scratch if you look at them too hard. Marble is breathtakingly beautiful and not so expensive, but stains and is easily damaged.

Do not let someone fool you

into thinking a laminate countertop is a good idea just because it is cheaper. These materials are not made to take the kind of use the average kitchen endures.

Good old granite is the kitchen top of choice in these parts and for good reason ... it looks good, is reasonably priced and virtually indestructible. Go for the double thickness type and make sure places where the stone has been cut is highly polished.

Hardware like hinges, handles and knobs are also a detail not to be overlooked. Buy real stainless steel from a manufacturer you know like the German company Häfele. The same goes for taps, faucets and sinks. Don't go running for the cheapest product. The sink and water tap are easily the most used equipment in any kitchen. Get the good ones.

Don't be a Cheap Charlie

I hate to sound like a broken record here, but please suppress your need to be a Cheap Charley until you get to a low-usage room, like the guest bedroom. For most households, the kitchen is the most high traffic and heavily utilised room in the house. Outfit it accordingly.

As a final note, please be honest with yourself about your spatial reasoning and construction knowledge.

Hiring an interior design firm or a company that specialises in kitchens to help you could save you time, money and headache.

Find one that can create your ideas and tweak them with computer 3D graphics. This way you can see exactly what you are getting before you spend one satang.

Bart Walters

I was in your I shoes

Everyone loves those stories about a person who works his way up from the mailroom to the boardroom in some mega-company. Invariably they will credit the fact that they knew every nuance of how the company ran for their ultimate success. At Euro Design, we don't have a mailroom, but I think where I began was the ultimate place to start ... as a demanding customer.

Euro Design completely designed and furnished a 215 square metre bare shell condo for me from stem to stern, and I live there to this day. Two other condo renovations later, I became their marketing director with firsthand knowledge of just how good we really are. During my long and circuitous career path, I've sold everything from laptops to penny stocks. Let me assure you that it is incredibly satisfying to promote a product you truly believe in.

What inspires me most about working with Euro Design Furniture is that before I came they already knew what is important. Many companies keep their eye on the bottom line, seeking big profits as their ultimate goal. Others measure their success with pie charts and bar graphs indicating their dominance over market share. At Euro Design we measure our success with a lengthy list of happy customers. It sure makes my job easier; our clients are our best sales people.

Perhaps the most fulfilling aspect of my position is seeing the entire cycle of service. I observe the customer walking through our door on the first day, with a fistful of interior design problems to solve. At the end of the project, I show up to take pictures of the finished product. The customer is aglow with pride in his newly decorated home and it is then that I know why they are so happy.

Because they got what they really wanted.



Bart Walters

Director of Marketing, Euro Design Furniture





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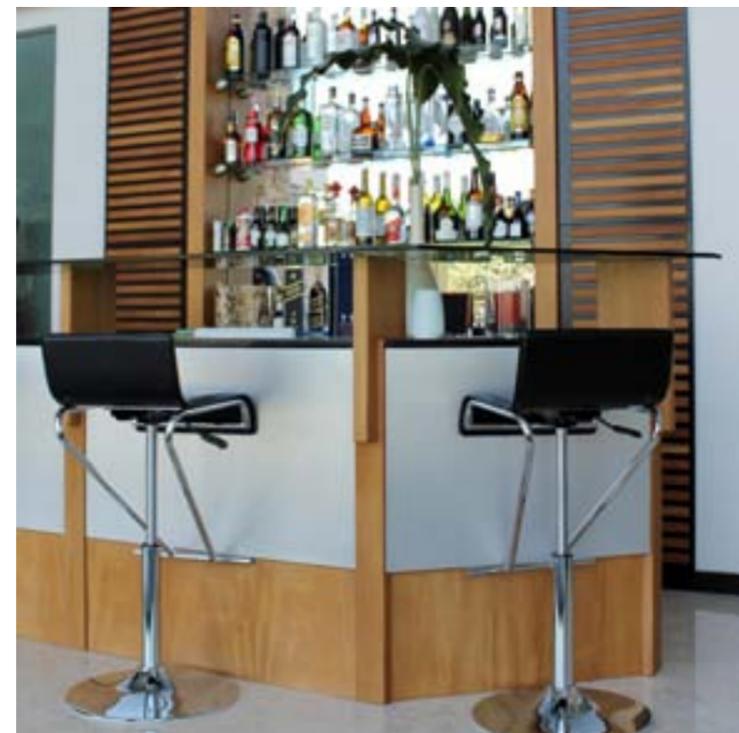
The Turner Residence



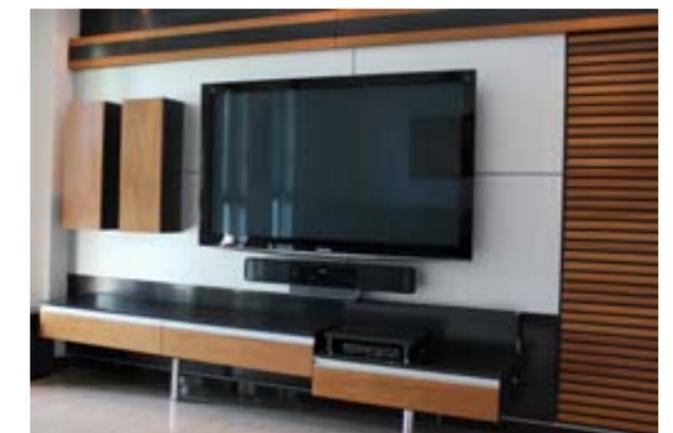
The home of Simon Turner is living testimonial to the ability of Euro Design Furniture. We basically designed and furnished nearly every room in this sprawling country club mansion.

Custom-made doors, built-in wine cooler, double screen entertainment centre ... we even built a one-of-a-kind triangular dining table (pictured).

Mr Turner prides himself on having a unique abode with a decidedly eclectic vibe. Browse the next few pages and you might agree with us ... he's achieved his goal.



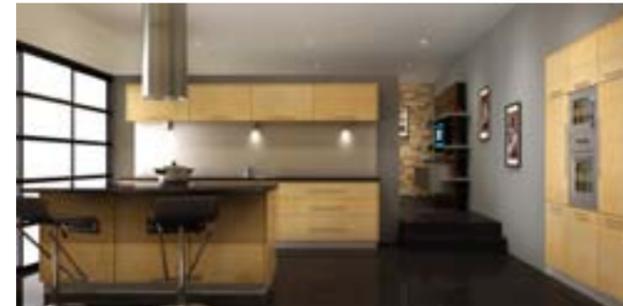








Heartbeat of the house



Euro Design Furniture company knows just how important kitchens and dining rooms are. Ever since humans moved out of caves and into houses, the place where food is prepared and consumed is the undeniable heartbeat of the home.

It's where you eat; it's where you meet; and have you ever been to a party that didn't end up in the kitchen?

What makes a Euro Design kitchen and dining room something special is three-fold:

First is superior design. Euro Design custom designs each and every space using state-of-the-art 3D architectural software. They can manipulate exactly

the right elements to achieve the perfect result. Above witness the magic of 3D computer-generated graphics as the same kitchen is represented in four distinctly different styles.

After the perfect design is achieved, Euro Design follows up by using only the highest quality materials. Real wood, real granite, tempered glass and real stainless steel sing in harmony as a masterpiece of form and function comes to life.

Finally, after all the components have been built and quality control certified, an experienced team of installation specialists ensure flawless fit and function.





Embracing permanence



On previous pages, we've taken a bare shell condo and nurtured it along to a semi-finished place with floors, lights, bathroom fixtures and an ergonomically-efficient kitchen. In this issue we will discuss the fine art of built-in furniture.

Where I come from, wardrobes, entertainment centres and the like are usually already installed in a new house or condo. Here in Thailand this is generally not the case. And if your new place is equipped with such furniture, many times it is of sub-standard quality or simply ill-equipped to do the job for which it was intended.

Did you ever notice that many places have built in plenty of space to hang your clothes, but absolutely no place big enough to store the suitcase that you carried them in with?

Drawers too small

And what, exactly, is the purpose of an entertainment centre that has a place to mount your TV and space for your DVD player, but drawers too small to hold a DVD collection?

But let's not be too hard on our friendly developers. How are they supposed to install furniture to store your stuff when they have no idea what it is you have?

This is why built-in furniture can very easily be the most important aspect of home design where the future inhabitant *must* be involved. So, when you are contemplating

“

Sometimes you may be overwhelmed with gadgets and mechanisms you don't need that can add significantly to your bill, especially in wardrobes and closets.

”

what built-in furniture you want and where, here are the main things to consider.

First and foremost, make accurate measurements. Properly designed and fitted furniture can be spectacular additions to any home. But, poorly fitted built-ins, with gaps and glaring miscalculations can be real eyesores. Buying pre-made items and trying to fit them to your home almost never works.

My advice is to use a reputable company that sends and installation team to your home to accurately measure every centimetre of space they will fill. Make sure they measure walls at different elevations (floor, midway and near the ceiling). I've been in Thailand for 12 years and haven't met a straight wall yet. Properly constructed and installed built-ins can atone for the sins of imprecise builders.

Once you know exactly what space you are working with, step back and imagine how you will realistically use the furniture. If it is for storage, consider how much capacity is required. What are the dimensions of the items you will store?

For wardrobes, think about how many shirts, trousers, shoes, etc. If your wife is a petite Thai lady, make sure shelves and doors are at an appropriate height.

For an entertainment centre, take into account the size, weight and number of components your audio-visual system might contain.

When it comes to built-in furniture, function should be considered over form. An experienced interior design company can always make things look better, but only you know how the furniture will be used.

Easy way out

A major mistake many people make is to overdo it on built-in furniture. They get it into their head that there is no such thing as “too much storage”. Rather than take the time to consider it rationally, they opt for the easy way out and build out every nook and cranny of their space. The result looks like a retail store or an office rather than a home. And, my experience has been, if you build storage, you feel somehow obligated to fill it with stuff you probably don't need anyway.

It is important to pay attention to what kind of hardware is used in your built-in furniture. Radical differences in price from vendor to vendor can usually be attributed to the materials used ... especially the hardware. Insist on stainless steel hinges and drawer runners. Don't “over hardware” ... sometimes you may be overwhelmed with gadgets and mechanisms you don't need that can add significantly to your bill, especially in wardrobes and closets.

Finishes for built-in furniture are similar to kitchens. Use good wood veneer, high quality laminates or real high gloss finish.

Consider how much use each piece will withstand on a daily basis. High gloss finishes in heavy usage may not be a good idea as they tend to get scratched. Built-in furniture near water sources like bathrooms and kitchens should be constructed of water resistant materials. Just because something is built-in doesn't mean it shouldn't be treated like loose furniture. Finishes and hardware should live up to the same standards.

Built-in furniture takes up open space, but it also creates new spaces you can't ignore. Take for example a wardrobe that is 2 metres tall installed in a room 2.3 metres high.

Unreachable top

A down-n-dirty installation would feature the wardrobe starting flat on the floor and leaving 30 centimetres of space over the top. Not only will the flush to the floor mounting make the unit look overly bulky, but the unreachable top will begin collecting dust immediately. A proper installation would feature a separation from the floor with a kick board closing the space and a matching recessed trim closing out the top with the ceiling to prevent dust bunnies and a hiding place for critters.

It is important to think about your built-in furniture in a complete and holistic way. One element most people only consider as an afterthought is lighting. Entertainment centres may be enhanced with any number of lighting systems, from LEDs



highlighting shelves to snake light indirect lighting that changes colors. Having proper lighting in your wardrobe is essential; otherwise you won't know you are wearing one brown shoe and one black until you get to work.

Take a look at some of the newest versions of wardrobe lighting like slim-line LED strips with motion sensors. When you open the door to a closet or reach into a walk-in, a light magically appears to help you make your clothing selection. Remember, you are creating new spaces with built-in furniture ... spaces that need to be lit.

Think beyond the square

Wardrobes for clothing usually come in pretty standard configurations. Think beyond the square and try to create multi-use wardrobe sets that incorporate other useful furniture like a TV stand and make-up table. If you have the space, a walk-in closet may be a good option.

If you want a ton of storage but not a visible wall full of cabinetry, trying constructing a short wall that may or may not go all the way to the ceiling. Creating a room about 1.5 metres wide, you can install the "guts" of a wardrobe affixed directly to the wall. So now, instead of a "clothes box" you have a "wardrobe room". All your stuff is hidden and your visible walls

“ Do not create an elaborate wall of shelves, drawers and lights, then go out to buy your TV. That's just the tail wagging the dog. Get your system together, and then design the unit. ”

are free to display artwork, lighting any other number of useful or decorative items.

Entertainment or TV centres can be a very personal thing ... especially for men. Women fixate on kitchens and bathrooms, but for men it's entertainment centres.

It is important to have a complete grip on the dimensions and number of audio-visual components. Do not create an elaborate wall of shelves; drawers and lights, then go out to buy your TV. That's just the tail wagging the dog. Get your system together, and then design the unit.

Determine where your loose furniture will be placed and at what distance. Only in this way can you figure out how high to mount your TV. Speakers should be placed at ear level for the most realistic sound. Again, function should take the lead and form should be bent to its will.

The materials you use for entertainment centres should reflect usage. High gloss is great, but make sure to install a glass top on flat surfaces to protect them from components or décor resting there. Consider the light, both natural and man-made, as no amount of adjusting your TV can counter constant glare.

Background materials are important to comfortable viewing. A highly reflective surface may be quite distracting. A totally black

background may darken the whole room and look like a "black hole".

The best background for state-of-the-art TV viewing is a medium gray colour. A popular choice is alu-carbon, a grayish/silver background that creates a natural backlight without being reflective like a mirror. It's inexpensive, easy to install and stylish.

Great dramatic effect

When you are talking to your designer about built-in furniture, don't rule out using loose furniture in combination with it. Tailoring built-ins to accent nice beds, sideboards and TV stands can be used for great dramatic effect.

If you have a piece of furniture whose lines and design are pleasing to your eye, mimic them in your built-ins to advance their lines even further.

Resting your flatscreen TV atop a nice sideboard may look small and bland, but a matching built-in back splash could really make it pop.

My best advice is to seek out a professional company that employs a designer with computer 3D skills. Get the measurements right, look at lots of examples of good built-in furniture and stay focused on the usage. Built-in means custom, so make sure you get what you really want.

Bart Walters

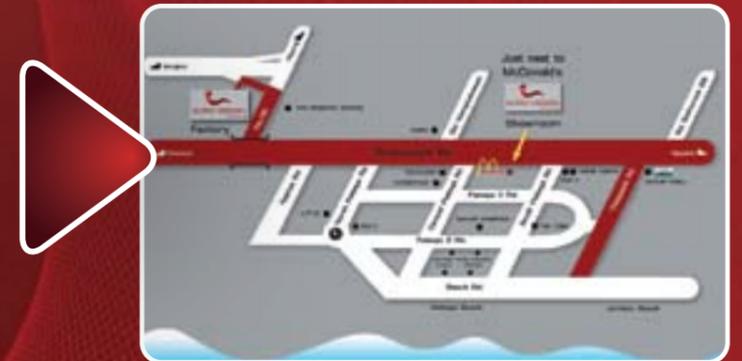


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History of Euro Design Furniture



Every morning our factory staff get together for a flag-raising ceremony and to pay tribute to his Majesty the King.

In 1999, Euro Design Furniture was formed by Heinz Pichler and Luc Parietti. Heinz had owned and operated a small furniture manufacturing shop for many years, gaining a reputation for innovative designs and good quality. When Luc came onto the scene, new energy and vision was injected into the shop house company and Euro Design Furniture was born.

What started as a furniture manufacturing business grew into a vertically integrated interior design company. With a retail showroom based on Thepprasit Road for many years, EDF widened its scope of operations to include interior design, full fit-out of homes, hotels and businesses of all descriptions.

Over the next few years Euro Design also expanded its range of unique furniture collections. From the Asian modern feel of the Osaka Collection to the city slick London, Euro Design covers the entire range of tastes and styles, truly offering something for everyone.

Driven by ever-increasing demand, Euro Design built and opened its new 2,500 square metre production facility in Banglamung, just north of Pattaya.

This significant increase in capacity allowed EDF to service more customers as well as larger projects.

French-Canadian Jacques LeFebvre joined the team as director of Production and Operations to maximise the new capacity.

The old showroom on Thepprasit Road had served Euro Design well, but in 2011 a sparkling new 600 square metre furniture showcase was unveiled at a prime location on Sukhumvit Road.

The new two-storey showroom houses a dazzling array of both built-in and loose furniture as well as lights, carpets and artwork.

Managing director Luc Parietti and creative director Michel Bertrand work feverishly upstairs helping clients get just the right design. Marketing director Bart Walters and his staff ensure the showroom is a dynamic living example of Euro Design's creative prowess.

Today Euro Design concentrates on expanding both its range of products as well as its well established base of satisfied customers. One thing has never changed; when customers come through our doors, they still get what they want.

You ain't seen nothing yet!

Follow all our new projects and marvel at the pictorials we post on our website (www.euro-design-furniture.com). The next issue of *Design Desire* will keep you up to date with the latest accomplishments of Euro Design Furniture and continue to supply you with invaluable tips on how to get the home you really want.

ADMIRAL PUB/MERMAID HOTEL, BANGKOK



Euro Design has spent the better part of 2011 creating the ultimate pub experience at the Admiral Pub on the ground floor of the Mermaid Hotel on Sukhumvit 29 in Bangkok's Central Business District. Now we are adding the final touches to the 200-seat adjoining restaurant, including one of the deepest wine cellars in Thailand.

HENRY VAN ROOIJEN/VIEW TALAY 7, JOMTIEN BEACH



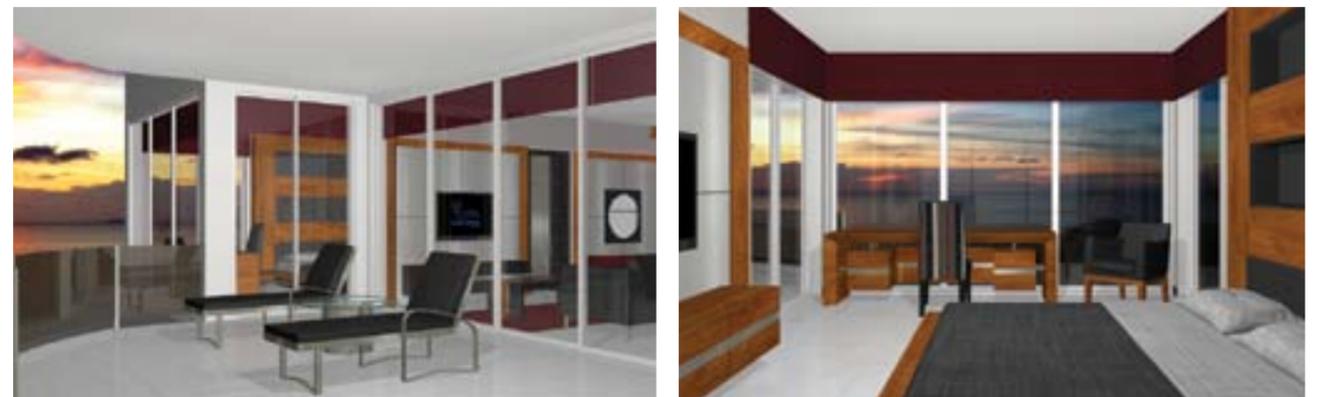
This spring Euro Design will unveil our take on the ultimate bachelor's palace. Long-time Pattayan Henry Van Rooijen came to us with a 145 square metre corner sea view bare shell and a headful of ideas. From the round bed with adjoining Jacuzzi to the cavernous walk-in, we are creating a pad even 007 would be proud to own.

GETTING SMALL



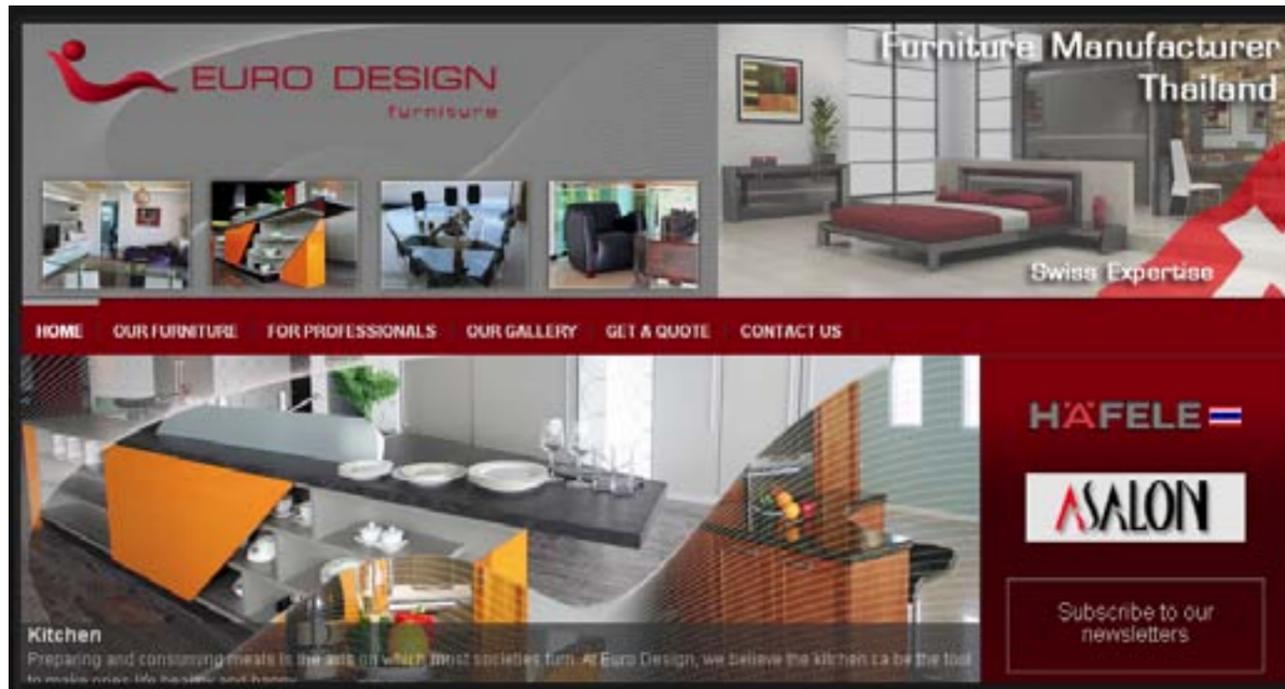
Just because someone purchases a small condo doesn't mean it can't be stylish. We'll feature several of our latest creations for one-bedroom and studio apartments. These units have been given our special form and function treatment, ensuring maximum space-saving features. See how we turn a diminutive space into a mini-palace.

PURE WATERFRONT, NA JOMTIEN



The Swiss developers of Pure Waterfront require Swiss precision when it comes to design and execution of their luxury resort near Bang Saray. We're confident the result will be something no one in Thailand has seen before. Follow us through concept design and implementation as Pure Waterfront raises the standard for all to follow.

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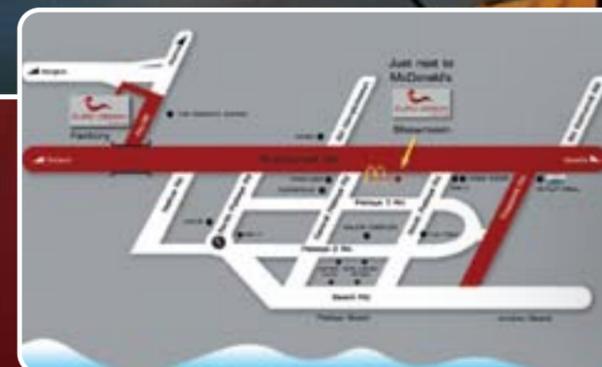
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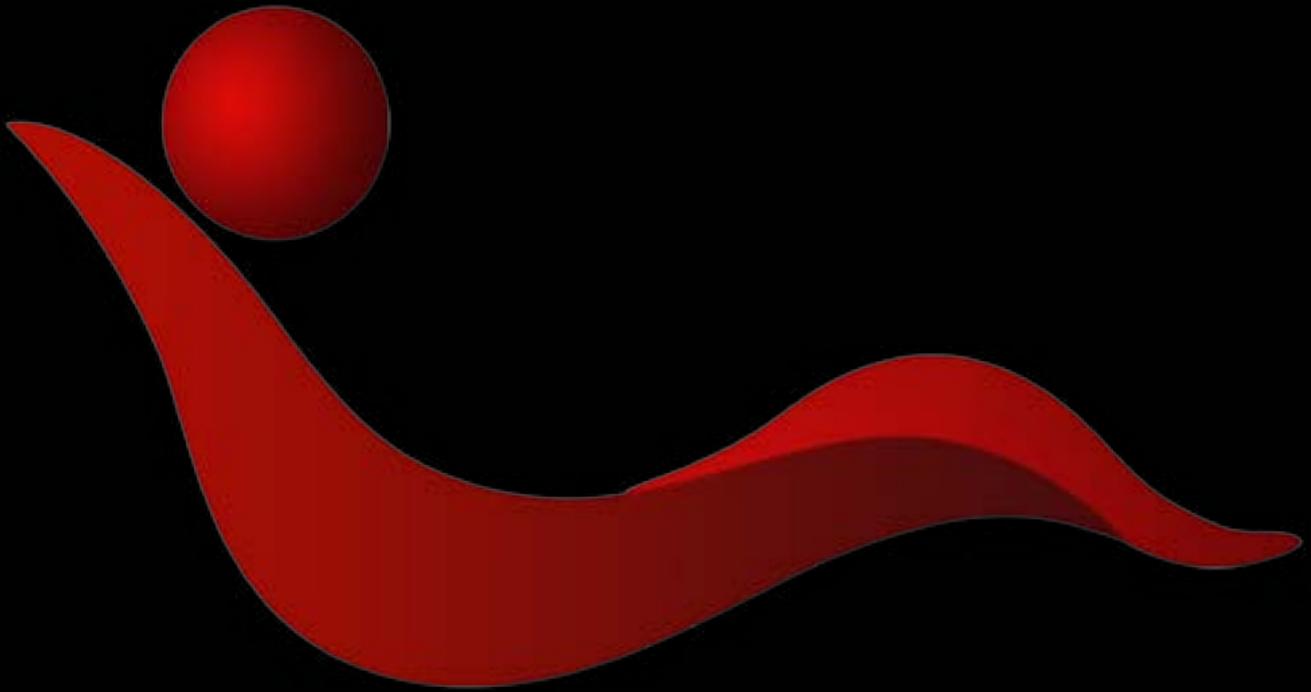
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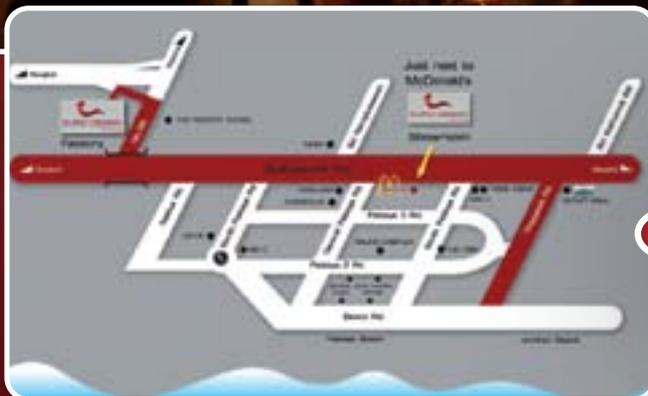




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