

Kreiss — Back To The Future

He represents the fourth generation of a successful furniture family that helped define the California look — laid back yet luxurious, comfortable and classic, stylish but not stuffy. To La Jolla Loren Kreiss, his family sells not so much furniture, but an indoor/outdoor lifestyle that is quintessentially Californian. “If you had to sum it up in two words,” says Kreiss, “you would say casual elegance. That’s the Kreiss look.”

the story of an American family. Kreiss’ grandparents, Norman and Eileen, who were passionate travelers, began bringing furniture and accessories home to Los Angeles from their trips to Italy and Asia. Eileen loved to entertain, and party guests soon clamored for “the look,” reminiscent of fine hotels around the world. The company is still family owned and operated by the Kreiss’ three sons,



Loren Kreiss

Springsteen. Last year Kreiss opened showrooms in Las Vegas, Newport’s Fashion Island, Boca Raton, and Denver. This year, the company expanded to San Jose and Florida, and is discussing locations in Texas.

Design decisions remain a family affair, which means much compromise. Each family member has his own slightly different taste, including Loren, who is inspired by a “retro California look: old Palm Springs in the ‘60s, Los Angeles in the ‘80s” as well as style icons Tom Ford and Michael Taylor. So where will the Kreiss brand evolve next? “I think we’re going back to our roots,” predicts Loren. “That doesn’t mean we’re recycling designs. We want to re-invent and re-invigorate the California look. It starts with classic silhouettes, classic shapes, and classic designs, making them relevant to today.” ANDREA NAVERSEN



Design by Kreiss

Pointing to the off-white couch in his office as the perfect example, Kreiss notes that the cushions are knife-edged instead of boxed, proportions are generous, colors neutral, textures natural — wood finishes, stone, and iron create a multi-layered look. But the personality of a Kreiss room — art, pillows, and other accessories — he insists, comes from the client, not the company. “We try not to impose too much personality on your home,” Kreiss explains. That philosophy, still evolving, is really

Mike, Bob, and Tom. Loren, Mike’s eldest son, is managing director, and at just 30 years old is truly junior, he says wryly, to most of the company’s employees.

Initially sold in design centers to the trade only, Kreiss eventually opened retail showrooms in L.A., San Francisco, Laguna, La Jolla, and other upscale locations, and added design staffs. The company has completed more than 5,000 projects, including homes for Janet Jackson, Magic Johnson, and Bruce



The Kreiss family —
Norman, Bob, Eileen,
Tom, and Mike c. 1974