

RICH AND HEARTY

BY DENISE O'CONNELL // PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON HARTOG

THE PLACE: This massive off-the-beaten-track custom furniture shop serves to inspire anyone looking for unique ideas for their home. Hearty Furniture owner Simone Bii sees furniture like humans – each is special and has its own personality. In their shop you'll find endless upholstery, wood, granite and hardware samples. As Simone says, if you can dream it, Hearty Furniture can make it – in any size, wood, upholstery or finish – and affordably.

THE STYLE: The style is what you bring to Simone. Bring in a picture, or find inspiration from the unique and exclusive custom wood pieces in their showroom, spanning the contemporary to the traditional. For example, a metallic gold china cabinet with crystal drawer pulls says pure regality. As Simone divulges, "After 30 years in the business, we look at furniture differently. You can go shopping and find a piece that fits a space, but we want to help our customers design the perfect piece." Simone proudly declares that her furniture is top-quality. The misconception is that custom furniture is expensive, but Simone admits it's just as affordable as buying a similar piece from a furniture shop.

WHAT'S HOT: Tables and chairs are always functional, but Simone wants her customers to think outside of the box. "Instead

of installing fixtures, think of creating furniture for the space," she says. "We can create bathroom vanities that will match your bedroom dresser or a wall unit that will match your kitchen cabinets." Round dining tables are popular, allowing better conversation during dinner. Dark finishes are timeless and add a rich look to any room.

FAVOURITES: Simone speaks passionately about the unique solutions she creates. She prides herself on taking on any furniture dilemma or problem space. A headboard with built-in lighting is a hit with the condo crowd since they generally have little room for bedside lamps. She also recently designed a wall system that looks typical enough, but contains a camouflaged door to a storage room. It was made to match the cabinetry in the home perfectly, and made an awkward space much more functional. She also made that door extra-tall, just like her client. It's those little personal touches that make Hearty Furniture so successful.

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Simone Bii (left) shows off a custom wall unit that made an awkward space organized and functional.

