

A Tale of Two Cities

John Wooden's home court advantage spans O.C. and L.A.

| By Carrie Storke Williams | Photography by John Gilbooley

His grandfather's "house," UCLA's Pauley Pavilion, may be under renovation until the fall, but John Wooden the interior designer—and descendant of the legendary basketball coach—will no doubt be unveiling several of his own completed projects before then. That's because this Wooden is a master of design and, with studios in Laguna Beach and Los Angeles, has established John Wooden Interiors (johnwoodeninteriors.com) as a successful collaboration with business partner and co-designer Dustin Dorr. Visiting his distinctly different ateliers gives one a sense that interior design in SoCal is a tale of two (or more) cities—one perhaps with a bit more swagger (we're not saying which).

It's no wonder that Wooden's talent defies boundaries—and county lines. Growing up in L.A. and O.C., with art education in Paris and San Francisco, and a good dose of Palm Springs vacationing thrown in, Wooden has developed a design aesthetic that speaks to where we've been and what we want today: luxe yet lived-in spaces that provide a beautiful and sincere backdrop to our daily lives among family, friends, art, heirlooms and treasured objects. His grandfather was often quoted as saying "make each day your masterpiece," and Wooden's interiors strive to help clients do just that—whether they desire his unique blend of crisp and classic coastal roomscapes punctuated by romantic flourishes of color and ethnic artifacts, or his swank, hipper-than-*Mad Men* spaces that gain street cred with vintage furnishings and come-hither lighting. Regardless of locale, Wooden's deft juxtaposition of the raw and the refined, his focus on custom-designing furniture and lighting for each space, and his commitment to using local artisans and craftsmen will continue to have us cheering from the stands.

MAN OF STYLE
Designer John Wooden is at home in his swank atelier in Sunset Plaza, where the interiors reflect his L.A. clients' affinity for modern glamour.



Wooden's World



Culture Crush

The Laguna studio, previously a potting cottage, mixes coastal décor with the ethnic touches (ikat's a fave) for which Wooden is known.



Mad Martinis

Vintage Dorothy Thorpe barware dresses up the sleek, sexy bar area in Wooden's Los Angeles office—paging Don Draper.



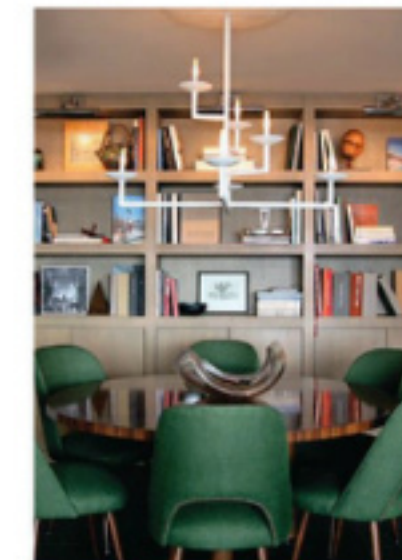
Thar She Blows

A former artist, Wooden encourages his clients to use art to create visual texture and history within their interiors.



See and be Seen

Another Wooden signature: statement lighting—often created by the designer using recycled or antique materials, such as this vintage Fantoni lamp (base seen here).



Gene Pool

Wooden stays true to his roots and to local artisans by designing custom furniture, like this table in his L.A. office, for projects and sourcing materials from the area.

Handiwork

A pottery lamp in the Laguna studio reflects the village's artistic heritage—and, like many of its oceanfront abodes, goes modern (like this streamlined shade).



Keeping Score

Splashes of color—thanks to fabrics and rugs—add eye-catching drama to Wooden's interiors. Take a card, and he'll make your home a point winner, too.

