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### SPOTLIGHT PATTERN – NORA FLEMING MINIS

NORA FLEMING is celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> year since founder Nora Napientek had the clever idea to affix MINI *objets* to serving pieces, creating tableware to suit just about any occasion.

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### BY DESIGN – WAYLANDE GREGORY

Waylande Gregory was a mid-century sculptor of large scale designs, revolutionary in the studio glass movement, and renowned for his glazing and processing methods. Now great-grandnephew Bryan Downey is bringing his uncle's designs to U.S. retailers along with original pieces inspired by Gregory's work.

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### VISTA ALEGRE @ 200

VISTA ALEGRE, the beloved Portuguese brand, honors its 200<sup>th</sup> birthday with an inventive array of tableware – many numbered and in limited editions – that exemplify the history and heritage of this illustrious enterprise. Vista Alegre remains modern and relevant through collaborations with artists like Christian Lacroix and Oscar de la Renta, and a range of innovative and imaginative designs that continue to thrill. Feliz Aniversário!





Add a pop of color to your summertime serving

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THE TABLEWARE SOURCE

JUNE/JULY 2024



We have you covered from East to West

**ANDMORE**

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**COVER:** Build your business at **ATLANTA MARKET** or **LAS VEGAS MARKET** where you'll find the resources and inspiration you need to succeed. Both markets offer thousands of cross-category resources, including the leading brands in tabletop, housewares, and gourmet foods. Learn more and choose your perfect market: **ATLANTA MARKET**, July 16 – 22, [atlantamarket.com](http://atlantamarket.com); **LAS VEGAS MARKET**, July 28 – August 1, [lasvegasmarket.com](http://lasvegasmarket.com).





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## FROM THE EDITOR

### THE SWIFT GENERATION by AMY STAVIS



I'm going to presume you know Taylor Swift, the pop superstar with widespread public appeal and a vast fan base, who has in-

fluenced not only the music industry, but popular culture, politics, and economics. Her recent \$5 billion Eras tour had a fiscal impact greater than 50 countries. The Taylor Swift economy has reached every town in America, measured in national retail sales figures, global inflation, and municipal economic bumps where concerts were held. The Swift microeconomy reaches all corners of the country and cuts across age groups, particularly her Millennial followers.

Millennials were once derided as the generation that spent too much on avocado toast to be able to afford a home. While there was some truth to that, many Millennials were hindered by fundamental economic disadvantages, like stagnant wages and housing affordability that their parents never had to contend with. In fact, Millennials' homeownership rates have accelerated the last five years, surpassing Baby Boomers to become the largest group of home buyers.

So many *Peak Millennials*, those born in 1990 and 1991 (two birth years that represent the peak of America's population) means a lot of competition for housing, jobs, and other resources. (How could these 'very special' kids of bulldozer parents be so special if there are millions exactly like them?) While this group has an outsized amount of economic power, the sheer volume of them (almost nine million) makes up a sizable chunk, 13%, of the generation marketers have been trying to woo for more than a decade. Their vacationing and dining habits – remember the

**Millennials have become a majority-homeowner group. The share of millennials owning homes increased to 51.5%, even in expensive metro areas like New York and Los Angeles. Now it's up to tabletop brands to help furnish those homes.**

experience economy? – have been accused of killing McMansions and formal dress codes while fueling the rise of tiny homes and athleisure.

Like the Boomers before them, because there are so many of them, whatever they're buying, a lot of people are buying the same thing. That economic influence, much like Taylor's, extends well beyond day-to-day consumption. When they went to college in 2009, the enrollment spike was so significant, community colleges, once welcoming to all, turned away applicants. After graduation, they moved for jobs, increasing the population of metro areas, leading to fierce fights for a limited supply of apartments, resulting in a re-urbanization boom. Now, at 33 and 34, they're leaving cities, starting families, and buying houses. Millennials snapped up houses in 2020 and 2021 when the Fed cut interest rates to near-zero.

In recent years, Millennials seem to be finding their economic and financial footing. Wealth holdings for people under the age of 35 have picked up notably, helped along by rising home values and higher stock prices. Our industry needs to take advantage of this direction and help Millennials furnish their homes. After all, Taylor did sing in one of her many relationship songs: *"This is our place, we make the rules."* Let's help them be *Fearless* filling their *Blank Space* with *Style*. (Taylor fans get it!)

*Amy Stavis*

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THE TABLEWARE SOURCE  
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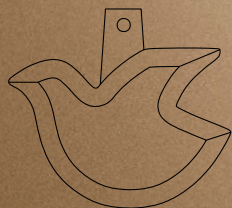


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**minis**



## NORA NAPIENTEK

—that's her on the right—  
has great reason to be  
in a celebratory mood.

**NORA FLEMING** — the company  
she founded in 2004 —  
is celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> year  
since she had the clever idea  
to affix *mini objects* to  
serving pieces, essentially  
creating tableware to suit  
just about any occasion.

[www.norafleming.com](http://www.norafleming.com)















The first ten Minis, from top:  
 PARTY HAT; PUMPKIN SPICE;  
 FROSTY PAL; SPOOKY SPIDER;  
 SHOWER ME UMBRELLA;  
 VICTORIAN BLUE SHOES;  
 AUTUMN LEAF WITH ACORN;  
 BLUEBIRD OF HAPPINESS;  
 CHRISTMAS TREE;  
 EASTER EGG.

Many of these Minis are still  
 in the line 20 years later.

## LET'S GET THE COMPANY NAME OUT OF THE WAY.

Yes, it's nora fleming (the lower case is correct), but it was founded by Nora Napientek who wanted to pay homage to her great-grandmother whose name was, yes you got it, Nora Fleming. "She was a great cook and loved to make people feel special," says her progenitor. The lower case was a matter of aesthetics. "I just love the way it looks," enthuses Napientek, "and it also sets us apart. We're not a proper name, but a lifestyle, and the lower case helps capture that." With that housecleaning out of the way, nora fleming is celebrating its 20th anniversary for a product that has turned into way more than a one-trick-pony. (Alas, no ponies in the collection, but there is a *Party Animal Piñata Mini* which sorta looks like a pony.)

The newly-minted college grad was a young bride and interested in starting a business that allowed for flexibility for when she started a family so she opened a pottery studio in Naperville, IL. "Women would come in to paint platters for all different occasions," she says. "I thought about all the stacking and storage issues that so many different platters meant and I thought I could streamline the process." That AHA moment inspired her to create a decorative ceramic insert that could be attached to a platter by drilling a hole in it. "My figural 3D Minis could switch out, instead of having to paint different holiday motifs on different pieces," she says. That basic prototype was made of clay and while it was a bit wobbly customers loved the concept. Napientek was 25 when she start the company. "I was so young that I didn't know to be scared. I really had nothing to lose, and a lot of people who believed in me."

One of those people was her brother, Jon Neidlinger, who partnered with her after he graduated from college. That was a relief to Napientek; Neidlinger handled operations freeing his sister to create Minis. It was Neidlinger who had the idea to make the Mini more sturdy after he was influenced by how finials attached to furniture. He went to China to find a factory that could produce Minis with tapered silicone stems that could pressure fit into the platter; these replaced the ceramic stems that didn't fit as securely. The siblings unsuccessfully made the round of banks to secure a loan to cover a steep initial order. Their grandmother agreed to bankroll the fledgling company, liquidating a \$30,000 nest egg. The siblings' first \$1,000 order was shipped from the family garage and convinced the duo they were on to something. They spent the next



**band together**  
with nora fleming

four years selling the ware, mostly at local craft markets. While this period represented a huge step forward in the company's trajectory, Napientek says it was not without its challenges. "Moving from handmade to mass production proved really hard to give up control over every piece."

It was at one of those craft fairs that Napientek met Janice Christensen, who was peddling her own art, handmade stationery. "I loved Nora's product," she says. "The beauty of the company is how simple the concept is. You switch out a Mini for a completely new presentation." The two were simpatico — moms with drive, creativity, and passion — and Christensen became the company's first employee. (Fast forward 16 years, just for a moment, to reveal that Christensen was named president in 2022.) "Nora is so creative. I understand her mindset," she says. "But I'm also drawn to numbers and logistics and I knew I could help her out. We became friends and colleagues." The emerging operation started with ten Minis (see page 27), many of which are still in the line. Each Mini is numbered in order of launch. Among the first ten is a bluebird, which is also the enterprise's logo. "The bluebird represents happiness and contentment, perfect for all seasons and occasions," says Napientek. The bluebird turned out to be a perfect portent. Over the next two decades, there has been steady, deliberate growth, some years double digit. For ten years, nora fleming was a fixture at the Atlanta temp markets. "We were so successful there we never wanted to move to a permanent showroom," says Christensen. But in 2018 they did, followed by a Las Vegas showroom the next year, and a Dallas showroom in 2020. "Three years, three showrooms," Christensen says. "Our showrooms have cemented community relationships with retailers and have become a gathering place where we can connect. They were great investments."

The sudden death of Jon Neidlinger in a 2019 car accident devastated the company. "Nora was the face of the brand, but Jon ran the business," says Christensen. "We had to pull together and keep going, and we've come out the other end stronger." For Napientek the loss, of course, was far more than professional. "I miss everything," she says. "Mostly I miss the laughter and knowing my brother always had my back." Napientek acknowledges "some restructuring since Jon's passing." She says: "We had to put a strong ops team together as that was his strong suit."





*"We deeply appreciate nora fleming and its family of customers who have shown us that tiny collectibles can make a big difference, no matter the occasion," says Richard C. Shadyac Jr., president and CEO of ALSAC, the fundraising and awareness organization for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. "Since 2018, the nora fleming family's partnership, generosity, and mission-centric commitment have helped St. Jude provide care and improve survival rates for children everywhere, making a difference in the lives of families here and around the world."*

One project that may have helped in the healing is the partnering with acclaimed children's hospital, St. Jude. The collaboration started in 2018 with a single Mini, a bear and red wagon (below left) inspired by the red wagons that patients ride in at the hospital, and grew to include nine pieces over the next six years, raising \$1.3

million. "We've made a huge impact," says Christensen. To coincide with the 20th anniversary, the collection will be completed with the last St. Jude's Mini, *Color Me Happy*, along with a keepsake box that can house the entire nine-piece series. (Shown above.) "It's amazing to see what we can achieve together, focusing our efforts on a cause that touches many, including some of our own team members who have been affected by childhood cancer," says Christensen. "This has been a fulfilling journey, demonstrating that even small teams can make a significant impact." Echoes her boss: "It's by far the part of the business that brings me the most joy and satisfaction. Building a community of kindness has been my life's mission." And she's not stopping now. The latest initiative is *band together with nora*

*fleming* (above left). Here, nine colorful silicone bands affixed to melamine serveware are targeted to various charitable causes: the pink band, for instance, donates proceeds to breast cancer; green is for forest preserve; black for suicide preservation. "It's simple and each color represents a special local charity," says Christensen. Each band retails for \$20; the pinstripe chip 'n' dip and divided dish are each \$56. Says Napientek: "These projects allow customers to support meaningful causes while enjoying our products."



The nora fleming assortments include 340 Minis that attach to ivory-colored stoneware and melamine serving platters and home décor. More than 1.5 million Minis are produced annually; new figurals are often retailer requests. "I always fear I'll run out of ideas, but we never do," says Napientek. "Holiday specific ones are always the top sellers (about 25% of sales). And many customers have multiple base pieces so they're always in need of more Minis for larger gatherings." All Minis are \$16, except for the licensed college football helmets, \$17. Pinstripe serveware is \$38 to \$68. The company only sells to independent retailers. "They took a chance on me from the start," says Napientek. "It's right to support the people who first supported me." To open, stores must take the minimum 20 Minis. "They buy all seasons at once," says Christensen. "If they don't have breadth they won't be successful. There's a basic kit of 20 Minis, a spinner display, and an assortment of bases in wood, stoneware, and melamine. They can't take away from the starter kit but they can add to it." Most stores end up carrying upwards of 100 Minis. "We've stayed true to the small mom-and-pop boutiques which has really set us apart from other brands," says Napientek. "We chose our lane and stayed in it. That decision has given our brand a voice that only a small, intimate store can provide."

As her 21-person team celebrates the company's 20th year, Napientek has a variety of emotions. "It's been an intense, emotional, and heart-wrenching few years," she acknowledges. "I made a promise to myself and my team that I would turn my grief after Jon died into something beautiful and that's what I try and live by everyday. We're a family and we look at everyone who has a piece of our art in their homes as a true blessing. Minis represent the best of life moments. The line is a legacy of celebrating times together and I'm happy that I can facilitate that."



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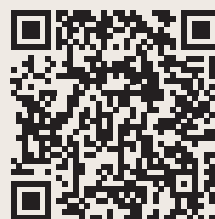
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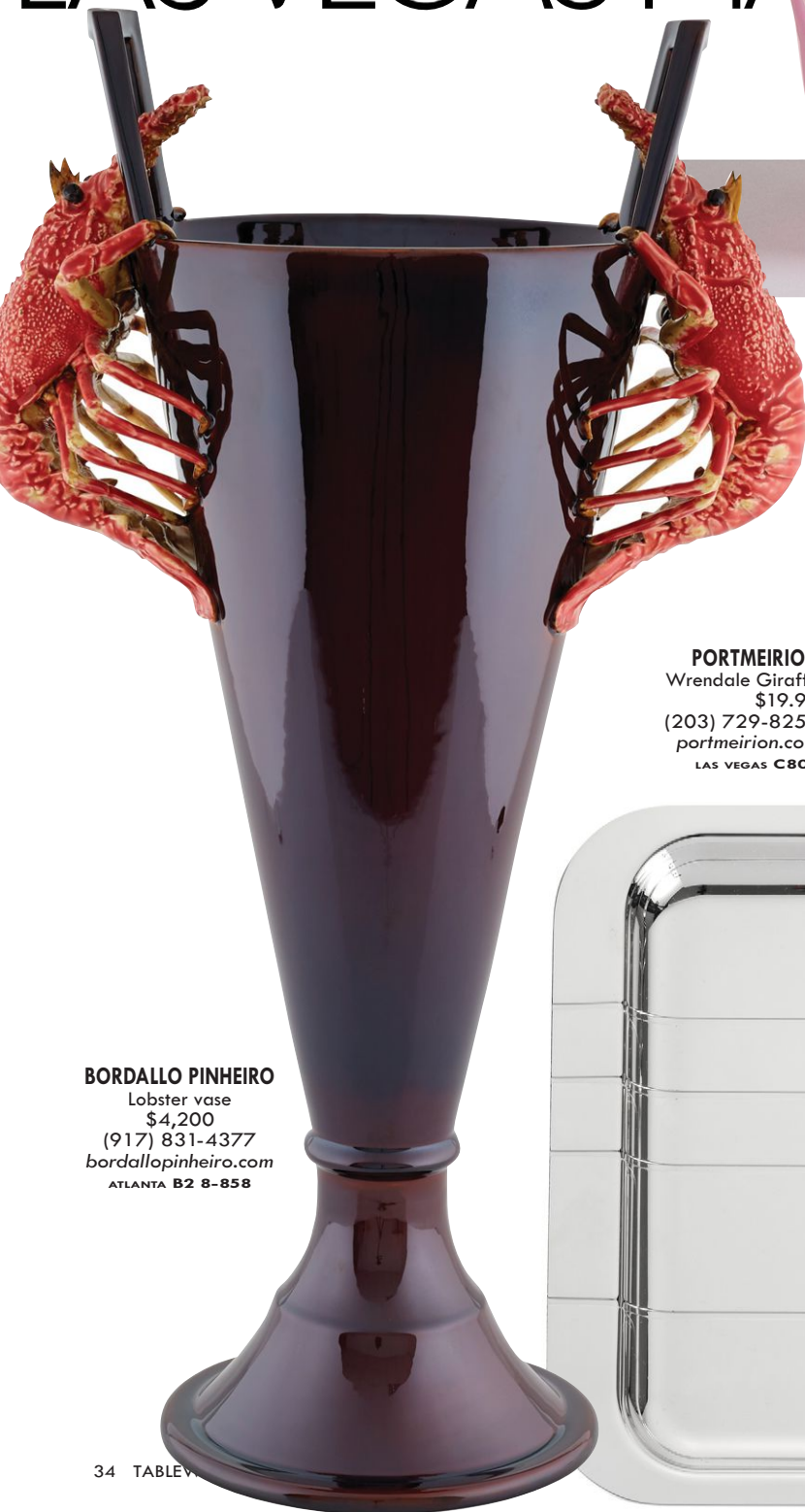
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JULY 16-22

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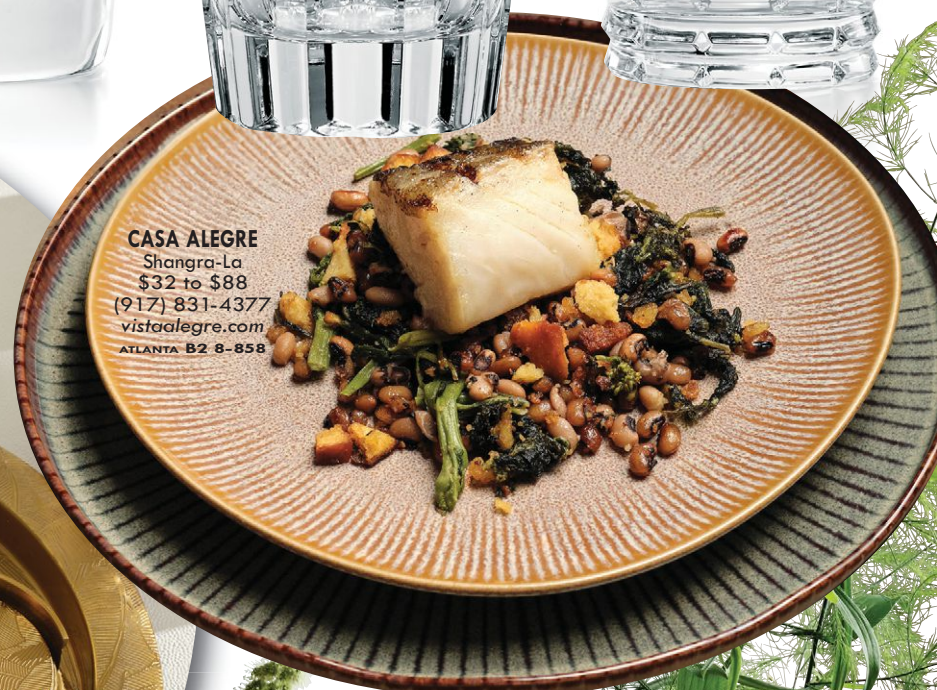
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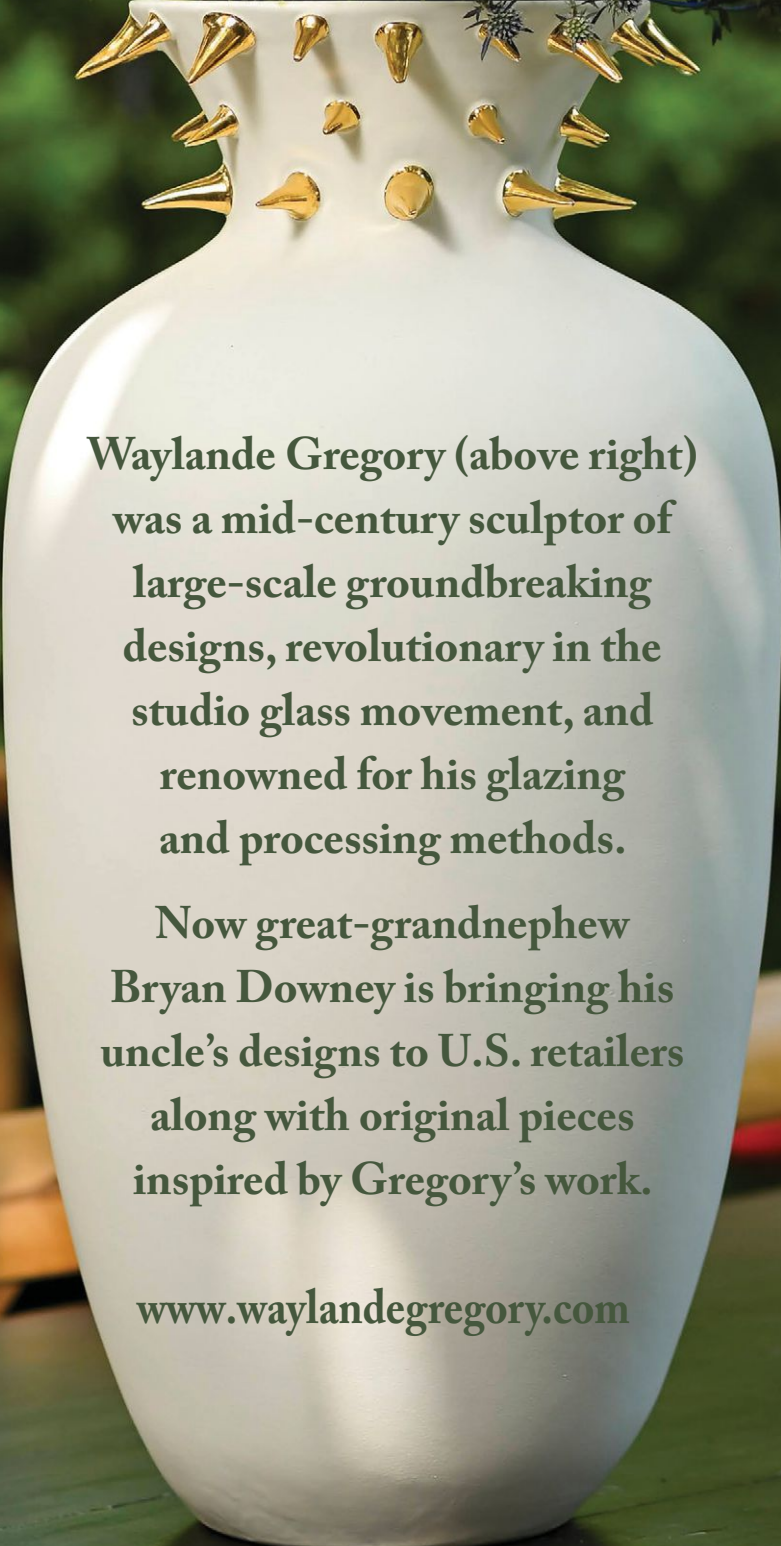
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Waylande Gregory (above right) was a mid-century sculptor of large-scale groundbreaking designs, revolutionary in the studio glass movement, and renowned for his glazing and processing methods.

Now great-grandnephew Bryan Downey is bringing his uncle's designs to U.S. retailers along with original pieces inspired by Gregory's work.

[www.waylandegregory.com](http://www.waylandegregory.com)







## BRYAN DOWNEY, WITH A RICH FASHION BACKGROUND

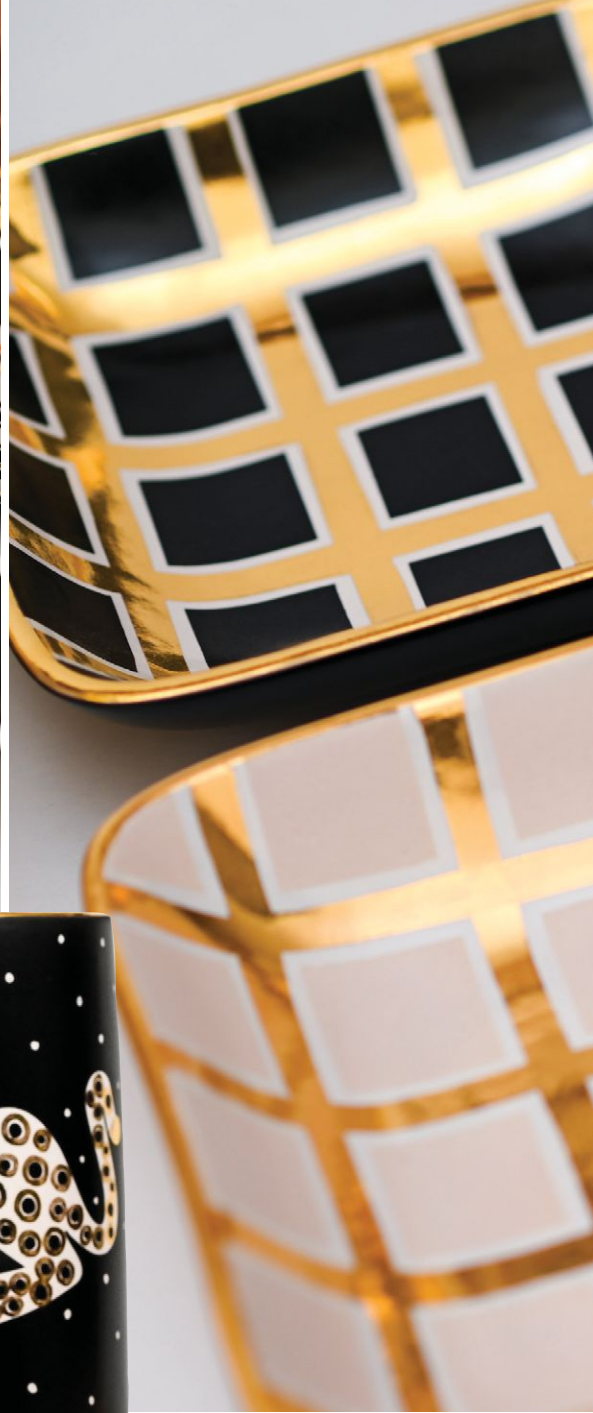
on both the wholesale and retail sides, jumped at the chance to launch a ceramics company based on his great-granduncle's portfolio of sculptures. "After 25 years fashion had run its course for me with margins that made it impossible to be competitive after the dollar dropped significantly against the euro. I have a big art collection and vintage pieces of my uncle's work – the breadth of his work was amazing – and I thought his designs could find new life in today's market."

While Downey had never met his uncle (Gregory died in 1971 when Downey was a little boy) his shadow loomed large. "He was a big deal in our family," shares Downey. "I always knew about him. After I started the business a lot of people who knew

him got in touch to tell me what a wonderful person he was. He had famous friendships, with people like Henry Fonda, Albert Einstein, Dorothy Draper, and Frank Lloyd Wright." Gregory met Einstein at the 1939 World's Fair where he created the groundbreaking *Fountain of the Atom*, a series of sculptures depicting fire, earth, air, and water, surrounded by eight electrons, four male and four female (left). "They struck up a friendship. My uncle did











a bust of him,” muses Downey. Throughout the mid-century, his most fertile period, Gregory influenced the direction of figurative art in ceramics with monumental-sized sculptures. [Fun fact: Gregory collaborated with NASA to develop ceramic heat shields for lunar exploration.]

In the latter part of his career, Gregory moved to functional decorative ceramics, selling to top merchants like Tiffany’s, B. Altman, Saks Fifth Avenue, Lord & Taylor, and Neiman Marcus. Despite all his success, Waylande Gregory is not a household name, even with his work displayed in the Metropolitan Museum, The Whitney Museum of American Art, the Smithsonian Institution, and a long and distinguished list of awards and prizes, here and abroad. Gregory’s vast career spanned five decades across a wide spectrum of disciplines and decorative styles.

He transformed the decorative ceramic movement with iconic imagery influenced by nature, abstract, and geometric motifs, and a dynamic sense of line, form, and color. His brilliant and elegant combinations of matte glazes, 22k gold, and unique color palettes demonstrate his success in defining an aesthetic uniquely his own, one that remains strikingly contemporary. Gregory never used factory-made glazes, grinding and mixing it all himself. In 1942, Gregory filed a patent for his inventive process of fusing glass to ceramic. “He should be more known,” affirms Downey, “which is why the company is named for him. This collection is him. He was a creative genius and his work has stood the test of time. It’s a pleasure to create

my company in his honor.”

Waylande Gregory, the company, came to be after Downey’s tenure in fashion, a particularly challenging industry, he says. He started in retail in high school before becoming a rep out of the Dallas Apparel Mart in his early 20s. He opened a women’s clothing store in Houston, selling chichi and





*“Waylande Gregory leads the way for designers and manufacturers to think out of the box,” says Jeanette Lamont, of the almost 80-year-old William Lamont Dallas showroom which represents elite tabletop brands. “He truly was a master ceramicist and innovator. I’m proud to work with Bryan because he’s dedicated to preserving his great-granduncle’s legacy as well as taking the designs to the next level, making them relevant to today’s culture. Bryan brings energy and enthusiasm to the line and makes it easy to embrace it.”*

of Waylande Gregory, in 2009. They figured fusing fashion backgrounds could be a powerful launching pad; there was some initial success with their re-editions and modern interpretations of Gregory’s work. “We used our fashion connections and launched the brand in the penthouse of powerhouse fashion showroom AEFEE in NYC,” says Downey. “We were able to make strong appointments and found ourselves very gratefully in the windows of Bergdorf Goodman two months later. We were doing really well.” But Rosmarin’s sudden death just a few years later, in 2016, had Downey so bereft he ceased production. “Mickey was my mentor,” he says. “I decided not to move ahead.”

During the pandemic Downey reconsidered that decision, especially after spending years zeroing in on the right workshops (in Peru) to work with and the eagerness of retailers to see a return of the brand. “I took a break to re-energize and after five years dormant relaunched the brand with a new spirit last year,” he says. “We have an amazing library of things to work with and a fabulous supplier in Peru where I am most of the year working on product, keeping an eye on everything. I knew this go-round would be a bit different with an evolving, bigger variety that’s fun and gives customers pieces that don’t exist in the market, curating collections that are different, like our Leopard bowls, which we freshen up with new colors. It’s our most iconic design and we’ve produced it in multiple iterations. In fact, we offer every style in all of our colors, made-to-order, so every client can create a presentation uniquely theirs.”

That’s precisely what drew Jeanette Lamont to showcase the brand in her Dallas showroom. “The colors make you smile and the shapes make your eyes open wide,” Lamont says. “I appreciate that it’s still made by hand, offers impeccable quality, and by choice of color and design a person can create their own collection.”

Waylande Gregory’s 100% handmade

edgy brands. A neighbor in the shopping center was Tootsies, an ahead-of-its-time, multi-unit, sophisticated specialty store with carefully curated merchandise from European and American designers. Owner Mickey Rosmarin was a fan of Downey’s eye. “He loved my vision and hired me to bring young forward designers to Tootsies.” The two even started their own enterprise distributing Paris brands which was highly successful. “I traveled overseas, developed and designed product, learning all sides of the process and getting an education on the business and creative sides.” The partnership was so productive Downey and Rosmarin linked hands to start the initial incarnation















stoneware and porcelain are crafted using signature ultra-matte glazes with accents of 22k gold; designs come from the archives of the artist's work as well as from Downey's interpretations of modern art, fashion, and travel. "It's all art – art that's fresh and new," he says. "Retailers love curating their own collections. Not one store has written a similar order to another." That means keeping things current, changing colors each season.

Retails range from a \$125 tray to a \$1,500 vase. There are 100 available pieces, including bath accessories, vases, bowls, trays, covered boxes, and figural items, across a 14-color palette that includes cream, gray, stone, seafoam, wine, mocha, aqua, green, orange, navy, olive, lavender, black, and white/gold. Black and cream are the most popular. "Our glaze looks just like suede," Downey enthuses. "Waylande always used a lot of gold. I love gold; next to our ultra matte glazes gold is the perfect combination." The chubby Leopard bowl is the best selling piece. "Anything with animals does very well. Some stores only buy graphics; others only animals. One store buys just lavender; another only black. That's the beauty of the line. We're much more involved with our stores this go-round.





I know them better. I listen to them. Our customers are special and we make special products for them. We've only tapped the surface of our reach, and with the expansion of our look and the addition of new categories, we'll continue to grow."

There's so much more on Downey's agenda to accomplish in the coming seasons. "I've begun work on a furniture range with ceramic details which will be something new and fresh to give our longtime clients as well as reach a new audience to keep people engaged and excited about the brand," says Downey. "You'll be sure to see new serveware (like charcuterie boards, dip bowls, salt and peppers, and trays) sometime this summer." He's also eager to explore Gregory's technique of fusing glass onto ceramics – "This is not an easy process," he sighs – not just on furniture but giftware as well. And he wants to further explore the *sgraffito* technique (produced by applying layers of color or glaze and then scratching off parts to create contrasting images) which Gregory mastered. "Production is a bit complicated because we offer so many pieces and so many colors," Downey acknowledges. "But this go-round people understand the brand much more. People are ready to be creative with their homes. We're an elevated product for an elevated customer. We're special in a world of mass-produced things. We're making this for you. It's been a total labor of love. I'm really happy with how everything has gone. So far it's been smooth sailing."

Tt



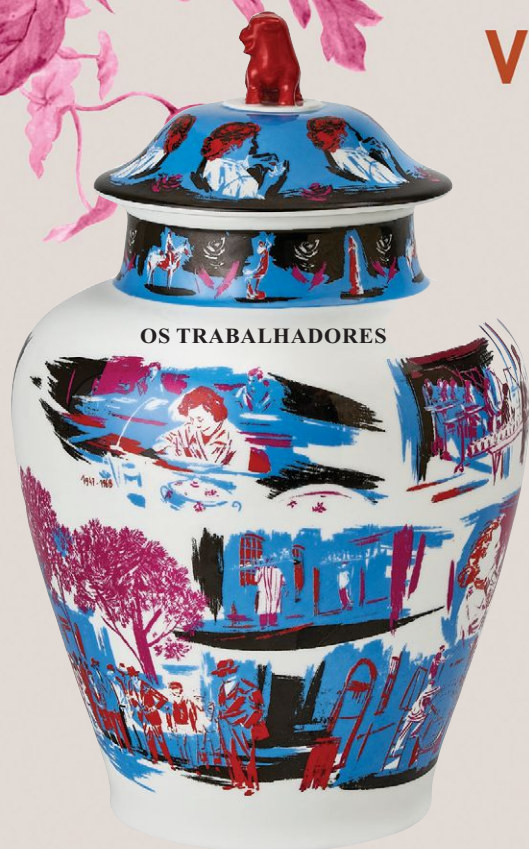






# VISTA ALEGRE

1824



200 ANOS

**VISTA ALEGRE**, the beloved Portuguese brand, honors its 200th birthday with an inventive array of tableware – many numbered and in limited editions – that exemplify the history and heritage of this illustrious enterprise.

**VISTA ALEGRE** remains modern and relevant through collaborations with artists like Christian Lacroix and Oscar de la Renta, and a range of innovative and imaginative designs that continue to thrill.

**FELIZ ANIVERSÁRIO!**



HOMMAGE



# A BICENTENNIAL BOUNTY



LES DISCIPLES  
DE ROUSSEAU

## A BICENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY REPRESENTS REMARKABLE LONGEVITY AND VISTA ALEGRE IS TAKING FULL ADVANTAGE

of it with dozens of new pieces created specifically to commemorate the 200 anos occasion. “It’s a very important milestone and a time of reflection to see how far we’ve come and where we want to go,” says Daniel Silva, who helped bring the brand new luster here since he started the American subsidiary in 2012. Nuno Barra, Vista Alegre product development director and board member, agrees: “It’s truly an incredible milestone. We’re fortunate to be able to take part in this celebration and contribute to the legacy of the brand. It marks 200 years of historical achievements and collaborative growth with everyone who has been involved in the journey of this institution. This narrative can only be fully understood by remembering those who



### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

The Os TRABALHADORES pot is the brainchild of French comic book artist Cyril Pedrosa. Here, he pays tribute to the generations of craftspeople who have worked in the Vista Alegre factory, inspired by photographic archives. LES DISCIPLES DE ROUSSEAU honors French romantic painter Victor Rousseau, who introduced innovative techniques and decorations to the factory, starting in 1826. The detailed painting emphasizes techniques characteristic of the Vista Alegre school of painting. 200 ANOS combines elements from different eras in the brand’s history with various scales in corrugation and fluting, which change from piece to piece, bridging past and future. Each piece sports Vista Alegre logos through the years. Complementary fluted and gold ribbon crystal is detailed with the Vista Alegre insignia. HOMMAGE is a three-foot-high neoclassic twisted fluted crystal vase with a neck and base in satin-cut black glass emphasising the contrast between gloss and matte.





HERANÇA



HERANÇA



1824





have played a role along the way.” Adds Silva: “All of our 2024 launches are a reflection of our 200 years and all of those who have been responsible for our success. You may have noticed the new 200 logo (far left) is an infinity symbol, which implies many more years of great design to come.”

We initially spoke to Silva more than a decade ago when he was a fresh-faced neophyte to tableware, just a year into the job as president of the American arm, in 2013. He had enterprising plans then and is pleased to report he delivered on them. “We definitely built brand awareness, not just among professionals, but among consumers. And we continually make progress with more audacious and exciting products. We’ve evolved to a lifestyle brand with a fantastic in-house team of designers and great partnerships, adding categories like textiles and home fragrance, and in Europe we’re launching furniture. I may have told you a decade ago we were hitting our heyday, but that was premature. It was just the beginning.”

While that fecund period may have marked Vista Alegre’s rebirth in

LEFT: HERANÇA porcelain is inspired by Vista Alegre’s first decorative works, in 1835, with expressive and colorful decorations, bouquets of flowers, garlands, and floral entanglements in a cheerful and soft color palette. The crystal is inspired by the same decorations, hand-painted in gold, combining multiple complex techniques, including the cut stem with a button engraved with the Vista Alegre crown.

BELOW LEFT: The 1824 decanter, honoring the company’s origin, features several elements alluding to the history, starting with the neck engraved in gold and indicating the 200th anniversary. Another element that stands out is the first Vista Alegre logo, engraved in bas-relief on the top of the stopper. On the perimeter, each of the ten cut segments corresponds to a period of 20 years. The decoration reinterprets motifs found in the Vista Alegre Museum, created by master painter Gustave Fortier, known for his delicate designs, in the mid-1800s.

RIGHT: The iconic bestselling BICOS glass (available in myriad shapes and colors) now has a gold version, BICOS OURO. The original clear glass model has been given a generous gold band as part of Vista Alegre’s 200th anniversary celebration.



**BICOS  
OURO**



**HERANÇA**





TALHA 200



POP ME UP





SÉC. XVIII

the U.S., the company had produced an impressive fandom in Europe over the course of its two-century storied chronology. It was in the summer of 1824 when visionary entrepreneur José Ferreira Pinto Basto – who amassed his fortune trading tobacco and soap, and shipbuilding – opened a crystal and soapstone factory on the banks of the Aveiro Lagoon, which provided a much needed transportation route. Wheels were set in motion the previous decade when Pinto Basto acquired land and a local chapel where he would build the factory, not just as a smart business move but to make a difference for the local population, mostly poor fishermen accustomed to sailing to the far north in search of cod.

In 1824, at the age of 50, Pinto Basto submitted a request to the king, was granted a royal license, and opened for business. He recognized that an able workforce was critical for success so he built a neighborhood for them. He also started a school where factory workers and their children could learn to read, write, draw, paint, and play music. There was a health center, a community farm, a workers’ orchestra and choir, chapel (that’s it today, at right), theater, and a private fireman corps.

[Fun fact: this was Portugal’s first fire brigade and since it still stands its oldest too; that’s the brigade in 1880, right. Fun fact #2: Pinto Basto’s great-grandchildren were responsible for the introduction of football to Portugal; the first match ever played in Portugal, in 1886, was at the Vista Alegre Sporting Club, which still stands.]

The ahead-of-his-time, socially responsible entrepreneur was eager to bring porcelain to Portugal, but the area lacked kaolin. His son traveled to Sèvres where he studied the composition of the paste; while there he discovered that there were large kaolin deposits just to the north of their home

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:  
Séc. XVIII (translation: 18th Century), known as the century of enlightenment, is inspired by 18th-century music halls with crystal clear acoustics and luxurious sophistication. POP ME UP glassware’s innovative dance of colors, shapes, and textures uses various artglass techniques demonstrating the skill, imagination, and knowledge of Vista Alegre’s master glassmakers. TALHA 200 is an almost seven-foot monumental amphora reinterpreting a decoration by master painter Joaquim José de Oliveira. The piece emanates lightness and joy with luminous yellow, orange and violet, applied with a gradient effect. The matte finish keeps it fresh, symbolizing the tradition and innovation that defines Vista Alegre. The ARGYLE whiskey glass was developed for the recent film of the same name whose lead character has a penchant for whiskey. The diamond cut glass appears throughout the movie.

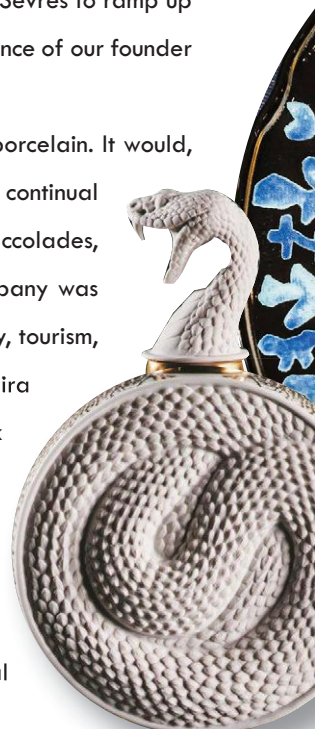


base in Ílhavo. His father invested a small fortune in unearthing the clay deposits and recruited workers from Sèvres to ramp up porcelain production. Pinto Basto died in 1839, 15 years after he founded the concern. “The spirit and persistence of our founder was crucial to the foundation and success of this risky industrial enterprise,” says exec Barra.

The push into porcelain was so successful glass production was halted, in 1880, to concentrate solely on porcelain. It would, perhaps, give short shrift to skirt over the next sesquicentennial (world wars, social unrest, global expansion, continual reinvention and modernization, acquisitions, philanthropy, high-profile collaborations, numerous awards and accolades, and museum exhibitions), but we could be here forever charting an auspicious 200-year timeline. The company was bought by Visabeira (an international conglomerate with interests in telecommunications, construction, industry, tourism, real estate, and service industries) in 2009. “There have been amazing investments in the last decade by Visabeira leading to our 200th anniversary,” says Silva. “They’ve been a great partner with a wonderful team to work with. They have nothing but respect for the brand. We all share that respect and responsibility.”

Board member Barra echoes that emotion. “The brand’s DNA embodies an evolutionary spirit. At our heart, we specialize in tableware, giftware, and also art, design, special editions, along with hotelware. However, we’re progressing toward a lifestyle focus and offer a range of home cosmetics, textiles for home and personal use, cutlery, and a selection in home decoration. This expansion reflects the dedication of our exceptional in-house teams, as well as ongoing collaborations with incredible artists and brands. We’re a brand and an institution committed to continual growth and innovation.”

Alda Tomás is the company’s award-winning creative director. “Each new product launched on the market is a great responsibility,” she says. “It has to respect our heritage and, at the same time, be part of our















“The mid-20th century was a period of great achievement for the company,” shares Filipa Quatorze, coordinator of the Vista Alegre Museum. “Although the historical and economical context was difficult, it was a period of intense collaboration with artists, an effort to bridge industry and design, and materialization of a new line of artistic porcelain that still identifies the brand today. It was also a period of experimentation, following the influences of European artistic movements, such as art deco and modernism, breaking with the more traditional trends. It was a crucial time to assert the brand’s identity.”





contemporary life. We're well-informed about fashion trends, although they don't always serve as guidance because it's crucial all Vista Alegre collections are timeless. Having a good story to tell that serves as inspiration is usually our starting point. We often visit and revisit our archive in search of interesting elements that can be reinterpreted and transposed to our time. During the creative and development process, countless meetings are held between the design, marketing, and technical teams until we're sure that the final product has achieved the best result."

This year's Collection 2024 (shown on pages 52-57) are 24 breathtaking *objets d'art*, inspired by the archive, master artists, and even today's assortments, \$185 to \$160,000. "All the collections launched in 2024 are dedicated to the celebration of the bicentenary," says Barra. "We've looked at the extensive collection at the Vista Alegre Museum, selected pieces with historical relevance and reinterpreted them, giving life to tableware, decorative pieces, new items from the textile segment, beautiful crystal sets, and contemporary pieces crafted by outstanding artists and personalities. These incredible pieces are destined to win international design awards and delight our customers and partners. We're going to have a year of celebration, surprises, new pieces and many moments where we'll have the opportunity to tell more about our extraordinary Vista Alegre."









# APPRECIATIVE FANS FLATTER

Vista Alegre's ability to bring unique, playful, and thoughtful designs to market makes them a trusted source for newness. Aside from the product, their commitment to the entire process, from product design to quality of materials and beautiful packaging, makes them stand out.

**VANESSA BENDY**  
GUMP'S, San Francisco

As we celebrate Vista Alegre's remarkable 200-year milestone, we're honored to have been part of this partnership for over 20 years. Vista Alegre tableware and giftware is the definition of beauty and luxury. Their use of the finest porcelain and crystal makes it quite an appealing brand for a vast variety of customers. Vista Alegre is such a well known brand that it basically sells itself! Our journey together has been enriching and we eagerly anticipate continuing to collaborate and represent this prestigious, globally recognized brand in the years to come.

**ROSA MOCREIA**  
PORTUGALIA SALES, Newark

Vista Alegre is a brand that brings out childhood memories in many of us; it's that familiar feeling of being home. Their quality and innovation have made them a household name and assures a bright future. We were lucky enough to visit Vista Alegre's factories with Daniel and part of his team a few years ago which gave us a new understanding of their craftsmanship and the pride they put into each piece.

**BEATRIZ & ANA ARISMENDI**  
The Island Shop, Key Biscayne

It goes without mentioning that staying in business for 200 years is a milestone in itself. I'm pleased to offer Vista Alegre products at my store not only under their brand name but under so many other labels as Vista Alegre produces for several manufacturers we carry. It's quite common you may be eating or cooking on their product and never even know it. The company remains a high quality manufacturer producing quality product with cutting edge design.

**LAURA MAY**  
IVY HOUSE, Dallas



It's difficult to convince my customers that Vista Alegre is so old; they perceive the company as a much younger one due to its dynamic, fashionable, and salable brands. When it comes to product development, this double centenarian is probably the most innovative in the industry right now, recognizing what is exciting enough to compel today's consumers to buy.

**CHARLIE BRESLIN**  
CHARLES HOWARD, Glen Ridge, NJ

Congratulations on the 200th Jubilee for a great brand! Not very many companies have been around this long, and Vista Alegre continues to innovate and be as relevant today as they were in 1824.

**TOM BLUMENTHAL**  
GEARYS, Beverly Hills

We met the Vista Alegre manufacture through the French designer Sam Baron more than ten years ago and it was love at first sight! For a French Maison like Christian Lacroix, it may seem a little extravagant to have chosen a Portuguese company to craft our tableware, but it isn't when you discover within a house like Vista Alegre a prestigious history, know-how, and, above all, a desire to write an even richer and imaginative future of porcelain. Our meeting was a revelation and the adventure still continues.

**SACHA WALCKHOFF**  
CHRISTIAN LACROIX MAISON, Paris

We have valued our collaboration through successes and sometimes great challenges. The skill level at Vista Alegre is one of the highest in the world. One walk through Vista Alegre's magnificent museum shows the observer that this institution is a giant in the world of decorative arts. I have great appreciation for all Vista Alegre continues to do for our mutual success.

**WENDY KVALHEIM**  
MOTTAHEDEH, Cranbury, NJ

Vista Alegre is continually relevant because the brand creates modern designs rooted deeply in their creative past. In every new collection, the Vista Alegre DNA shines through with authenticity. This is how a brand becomes and remains aspirational for 200 years. I am proud to be partnered with them.

**MICHAEL BREZICKY**  
MORE THAN A REP, Columbia, SC

As we celebrate Vista Alegre's remarkable 200th anniversary, we commend its enduring legacy in the world of porcelain and crystal. This milestone not only underscores Portugal's rich craftsmanship and cultural pride but also emphasizes the significance of the homeware industry to Portugal's economy and cultural identity. As a global leader in homeware, Vista Alegre exemplifies Portugal's commitment to excellence, innovation, and craftsmanship, further strengthening ties between Portugal and the United States. Vista Alegre, Made in Portugal, Naturally!

**MÁRIO QUINA**  
PORTUGUESE TRADE & INVESTMENT AGENCY, Chicago

Wishing you a happy 200th anniversary and continued success! On this momentous anniversary, we want to thank you for providing beautiful quality items with absolutely amazing customer service. Looking forward to many more successful years.

**DEBBY HIRSCH**  
DECODINE, Brooklyn



Over the centuries, Vista Alegre has striven for artistic brilliance and has maintained an unwavering commitment to crafting beautiful quality porcelain and crystal of the highest caliber made in Portugal. Their collaborations with world-renowned designers have brought vibrant, unique, eye-catching tableware into homes, echoing the vibrancy of its home country. We're proud to have such a great brand as Vista Alegre as a tableware partner. As Vista Alegre celebrates its 200-year anniversary, we extend our congratulations on this milestone and warmest wishes for continued success!

**CLAUDIA TRUCHAN**  
WILLIAM ASHLEY CHINA, Toronto

Vista Alegre has been the perfect partner for Arte Institute. With its undisputed European ceramic culture, Vista Alegre is a source of joy and inspiration. For more than 200 years, it has combined tradition with innovation and beauty with emotions. With the support of Vista Alegre, Arte Institute is proud to promote Portuguese culture and art through its global program.

**ANA VENTURA MIRANDA**  
ARTE INSTITUTE, New York

I'm excited to commemorate Vista Alegre's 200th anniversary, symbolizing two centuries of craftsmanship and innovation. This milestone underscores its alignment with our portfolio, particularly in the foodservice and hospitality sectors, where Vista Alegre's legacy of excellence seamlessly integrates. From white tablecloth establishments to middle-market segments, the range of dinnerware offered by Vista Alegre holds immense appeal, providing establishments of all calibers with a touch of timeless luxury and sophistication that elevates the dining experience.

**VINCE RAMOS**  
TABLETOP GENERATION REPS, Irving, TX

One of the great joys in life is doing what you love and have a passion for, and I love great product. I have had the pleasure of working with Vista Alegre for more than a couple of decades starting with selling at Gump's, moving into the buying office, transitioning into independent sales representation, and now working on the wholesale sales side with Vista Alegre. Great product from Vista Alegre has been with me, every step of the way.

**JOHN WEETH**  
VISTA ALEGRE, New York

From the very inception of Maison de Carine, Vista Alegre has played an integral role in our company's journey. Their adventurous approach and skillful craftsmanship consistently inspires us to push the boundaries. It's always a pleasure collaborating with their team. Congratulations to Vista Alegre on reaching this incredible milestone!

**CLARA KNUTSON**  
MAISON DE CARINE, Washington, DC

Vista Alegre's core values tout its rigorousness, sophistication, and versatility. I know the product will be of the highest quality as they have 200 years experience perfecting it. The discerning guests I serve day in and day out deserve the best and I have relied on Vista Alegre to back me in my pursuit of service excellence. The fine pieces Vista Alegre sculpts and produces will always be a staple in any of my operations and they will always be a valued partner.

**ROBERT ASH**  
STEPSTONE HOSPITALITY, Providence

Congratulations on this remarkable achievement. Two years is a challenge, 20 even more so, but 200? That's truly incredible! Vista Alegre proves to be an outstanding partner by consistently stocking a wide range of products, innovating to meet our customers' demands, and providing exceptional service and logistics. Here's to another 200 years of success!

**JACOB COHEN**  
IL ARGENTO, Aventura, FL

Vista Alegre's collaboration with renowned artists, iconic designers, and acclaimed chefs from around the world have proven their ability to relate to all generations and continue as one of our industry's most significant leaders for 200 years. Every piece of Vista Alegre I acquire always leaves me wanting more!

**KRISTI FORBES**  
41 MADISON AVENUE, New York

What an epic milestone for Vista Alegre. For a heritage brand to endure for two centuries and remain so relevant with customers is a true feat. Our clients love the artisanal nature of their creations and the whimsy of iconic pieces. The lines work well in both traditional and more modern settings.

**LANCE LAWSON**  
SPACE 519, Chicago

We've had the privilege of working with Vista Alegre for over eight years. Their product range, level of professionalism, and, ultimately, their customer service is second to none.

**JOSH PERRIN**  
CASA DE PERRIN, Los Angeles

Vista Alegre tabletop is rich in design, chic, and are items that can last a lifetime.

**JOSEPH RASERO**  
SCULLY & SCULLY, New York

Vista Alegre remains a vital partner for their simple, elegant, and beautiful collections that cater to a wide range of clientele. The brand has remained versatile through the years by designing patterns that are contemporary, while others are classic, designed by the likes of Lacroix, de la Renta, and many others. Their ability to adapt and stay true to their Portuguese values is amazing.

**ALEJANDRO MIRANDA**  
AMUSESPOT, Henderson, NV

Happy 200th anniversary to Vista Alegre! Although we're relatively new retailers for this prestigious line, our customers and employees realize and appreciate the quality and craftsmanship of the fine crystal products we carry. Vista Alegre has become a special partner and we wish them many more years of success.

**TERRI BENEAR**  
BC CLARK, Oklahoma City

As Vista Alegre celebrates this significant milestone, it continues to shine as an invaluable partner for retailers. With a legacy of excellence in craftsmanship and the understanding of evolving consumer preferences, Vista Alegre remains at the forefront of design innovation, providing retailers unmatched quality and sophistication to enhance their offerings and captivate customers.

**ROSEANN FERRER**  
VISTA ALEGRE, New York





In that spirit, Vista Alegre has embarked on a year-long initiative asking customers around the world about their experiences with their cherished Vista Alegre tableware. “Our brand is deeply intertwined with the history of Portugal and the rest of Europe,” says Silva, who himself has a rich history with the brand thanks to his Portuguese parents. This cooperative project – an open invitation for consumers to share their love of the brand through personal stories uploaded to the site – is meant to “intellectually enhance and promote ceramic culture.” A series of events (mostly in Europe) will be staged throughout the year. “It’s a celebration that shows not only

how far we’ve come, but also, very importantly, all that we still want to build from now on,” says Barra.

One Vista Alegre staffer who intimately understands the history of the brand is Filipa Quatorze, who for the last 23 years has been the director of the Vista Alegre Museum (the façade is shown at the bottom of page 64). The museum, which opened in 1964, aims to inspire and motivate visitors to become acquainted with ceramic culture, with a collection that bears witness to a rich heritage. “When we look at Vista Alegre’s history,” says Quatorze, “what resonates is how it respects a line of temporal continuity, keeping permanent links with the brand’s past while being able to innovate and create new objects and experiences, looking toward the future. This is Vista Alegre’s identity, resiliency, and creativity, and we see this spirit reflected in our contemporary collections. When we look at the Vista Alegre objects, we see not only function and beauty but also boldness and art.”

Today’s assortments are the reason Vista Alegre has boasted one record year after another. “And there’s still much more room to grow with a brand as exciting as Vista Alegre,” says Silva. When reminded he had an ambitious agenda after he set up the subsidiary 12 years ago, he notes that the team has surpassed every one of those goals. “After Spain and Brazil, we’re the largest subsidiary, and Brazil has been operating for 20 years,” Silva crows. “In the last decade we set up distribution, opened a New York showroom, and opened hundreds of accounts. We set up an entire infrastructure to deliver our products. Logistics is continually adjusted and fine-tuned. It’s been a very productive learning experience and as we grow we meet greater challenges. We have an efficient subsidiary that satisfies consumers directly, each of whom have unique and specific needs.”

While creative director Tomás doesn’t develop collections specifically for the U.S. market, “When a collection is well designed, it works well in practically all markets. Our product development endeavors to be global, respecting our identity, culture, and brand identity. In a collection, we develop specific pieces for particular markets; for example, in the American market, mugs and cereal bowls are larger in size than the European market. The American market is very important to Vista Alegre and we’re very proud of our presence in New York.” Adds her colleague Barra: “Every market holds significance; however, the U.S. market shows particular relevance due to our historical connection, demographic dimension, and cultural habits, which are deeply intertwined with home





Vista Alegre creative director Alda Tomás is jubilant about the bicentennial. “It’s fantastic. The last two years have been quite intense preparing the news and events that we’ll present throughout the year. In the first days of January, we began the celebrations with impactful interventions, and more moments will occur through the year. I feel privileged to be at Vista Alegre on this important date. It will take a few generations to celebrate a similar date again.”

Filipa Quatorze oversees the Vista Alegre Museum. “The 200th anniversary feels like a challenge, sometimes an overwhelming one. Such a long chronology of 200 years makes us feel part of a broader history, deeply enmeshed in a collective movement that goes beyond our individual work and brings together time, people, and space for a memorable Vista Alegre celebration!”

and décor. Through the Vista Alegre showroom at 41 Madison in New York and through our U.S. team, we collect data that helps us understand the market and present the most effective items in our portfolio. Each market possesses its distinct requirements and expectations, and the pathway to success lies in our ability to address those needs effectively. Embracing a culture of evolution, of genuinely understanding and responding to the demands of our clients, whether in hospitality or retail, is what shapes our future.”

Responding to demands to shape the future is emblazoned in the Vista Alegre DNA, since Pinto Basto’s philanthropic endeavors for his burgeoning workforce. Today, the factory (where 1,200 workers create functional works of art and has been in the same site for 200 years) invites artists from around the globe to offer their takes on porcelain and crystal. The residency program can run up to three months and allows artists to learn about and design ceramics or crystal and create collections for sale; hundreds have participated. It’s just one of the many programs which foster camaraderie, working toward a greater good, and a more beautiful product. “The entire team has that feeling of pride belonging to this institution,” says Barra. “It’s a privilege to be part of the story. It has been a huge responsibility to maintain quality, to respect the brand’s values, to continue what all those who built it over 200 years have left us. But there’s also the responsibility to continue the brand for at least another 200 years.” Silva couldn’t agree more. “I’ve been very grateful and proud to be part of Vista Alegre’s history and to be here to help celebrate the 200th anniversary. It’s a tremendous milestone that’s worth talking about and we look forward to planting more seeds for another 200.”

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## THE LAST WORD

### THE POWER OF BRAND BUILDING by KAREN OLSON



Brand strategy is one of the most powerful initiatives an organization can undergo. It's an opportunity to evolve a company's mission and value

proposition based on current and future customer needs with the result being a purpose-led, customer-centric road map to create enhanced value for customers. ANDMORE recently completed this process as we rebranded from International Market Centers (IMC) last year. ANDMORE is more than just a new name and logo, it's a framework for how we will live into our mission and vision and create more value for buyers and sellers.

The focus of this transformation process was to create a powerful brand that would resonate with our community of buyers and sellers and open new opportunities as we innovate and drive positive business growth and change. We were guided by the understanding that the most powerful brands aren't just a beautiful logo and a catchy tagline. They have a well-defined, authentic ethos that guides customer interactions, product presentation, visual identity, community relations, and more.

Successful brands create an identity that informs every decision a company makes. They have a clearly defined mission and purpose rooted in extensive research and customer feedback to create a brand identity that resonates with audiences. ANDMORE emerged from our rebranding efforts as an "omnichannel wholesale marketmaker, fueling opportunities for wholesale buyers and sellers to connect, grow, and prosper." Like other strong brands, our identity is a guiding principle and aspirational vision that helps us set priorities, maintain focus, and make important decisions about our business.

The ANDMORE brand strategy gives us the space and flexibility to expand the ways in which we connect our wholesale buyer and seller communities to create even more opportunities to connect with the right business partners, at the right time, in the right way – providing new tools and experiences that enhance and extend our physical event offerings.

The ANDMORE brand ethos encourages us to extend business opportunities for our customers in interesting and exciting new ways, including the recent successful extension of Shoppe Object, a NYC-based home and gift trade show, into High Point Market as a home-centric, designer-focused satellite event. Our brand promise to seamlessly connect wholesale buyers and sellers through physical and digital platforms was furthered by the 2023 launch of the new @Market app. True to our brand strategy's customer-centric approach, we will persistently solicit customer feedback to refine and innovate to add more value to the product sourcing experience.

An updated visual identity is a key element in ANDMORE's brand transformation. The new organizational focus is visually manifested in the look and feel of our new corporate logo, which features a fresh and contemporary form, with strong visual memorability and utility. The open parentheses (which appear in place of the 'O' in the **ANDMORE** name) add an interactive element providing a canvas to visually showcase the hallmark elements of our brand – products, categories and experiences – and reinforce our brand promise of always adding more value. New colors, fonts, and design style visually tie our markets together while indicating that ANDMORE has entered a new era.

Customers began to experience the ANDMORE brand at the summer 2023 markets as our physical campuses and marketing communications – websites,

*A well-defined brand allows for differentiation in the marketplace through a unique value proposition and distinctive visual identity. The look and feel of a brand sets the tone for the organization's unique offerings. Instantly recognizable logos, messaging, and styling are visual representations of the experience the brand offers.*

guides, advertising, emails, signage – took on our new look and feel. The ANDMORE brand provides the common thread that ties all markets and products together, so buyers and sellers understand the full breadth of our offerings.

Brand equity doesn't happen overnight and takes a very deliberate and coordinated approach. Great brands are brought to life through usage by an organization's team members, customers, and community. As such, maintaining and promoting the brand is not just the work of marketing and communications teams, but the whole organization. To ensure the successful implementation of the new ANDMORE brand, we hosted a series of internal workshops to educate the entire organization on the brand identity and the proper usage and messaging associated with it. Our creative team developed brand guidelines and templates to demonstrate how to use the brand elements correctly and consistently.

As we celebrate the first anniversary of the brand launch, it's gratifying to see the broad awareness and adoption we've achieved in just one year. Like all great brands, we continue to evolve and grow guided by our ANDMORE ethos. As our name implies, we will maintain our brand promise to bring more and more to our buyers and sellers.

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*Karen Olson, executive V.P./CMO for ANDMORE, has a more than 25-year career in wholesale marketing and business strategy. Since joining ANDMORE in 2011, she has made an indelible imprint on the company's marketing for High Point, as well as its expansion into Las Vegas in 2011 and Atlanta in 2018. [www.andmore.com](http://www.andmore.com)*





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