

GOING *Timeless*

Want rooms to look timeless but also feel wonderfully modern? Designer Lisa Bartolomei has ideas for spring.

By Jennifer Sergent // Photography by Greg Powers

Lisa Bartolomei didn't flinch when Tiago Pinto asked her and three local designers to create a furniture collection for his Atrium Interiors boutique at Tysons Galleria. It's something she's being doing for clients her entire career. "When I couldn't find the right piece to go with something the client selected, I designed it myself," says Bartolomei, who opened her Georgetown firm Bartolomei & Company (bartolomeiandcompany.com) more than 25 years ago.

She's well-versed in designing a table to complement the antique Russian dining chairs she and her client found in Paris, for example, or coming up with a plush, tufted headboard in the same fabric that covers the walls of a penthouse bedroom. "We're not reinventing the wheel—we're just making it more attractive," she says with a broad smile.

Bartolomei's passion for European fine arts informed the designs for her Atrium collection. "I spend a lot of time in Paris, so my pieces are heavily influenced by Parisian interiors from the '40s through the '60s," she explains. While the channel tufting of her lounge chair and sofa cushions exude deco elegance, the intricate, laser-cut brass cutouts on the bar chest were inspired by an Italian marble sculpture. "I adapted that motif with a thin brass overlay on the bar. You never know where your inspiration is going to come from."

The designer intentionally uses clean lines and neutral colors on her furniture, injecting color and movement through art, accessories and rugs. "No matter how modern it is, I want [furniture] to have a look that will last for decades," she says. "I look for classic lines in the major pieces, and then I add something unique, something whimsical and something earthy whenever possible. That gives you the cosmic mix that makes an environment look more collected than decorated." Here are Bartolomei's picks for ensuring your rooms are timeless.



Lisa Bartolomei at Tysons Galleria's Atrium Interiors, which showcases all of her new designs.



"This is very midcentury modern, but it has a lightness and a frivolity to it," Bartolomei says. "A lot of the globe lights that are coming out are very rigid and heavy, but this is light and airy." Dickinson large pendant, \$4,200, by Kate Spade at Circa Lighting, Georgetown, circalighting.com



"Simplicity is the hardest thing to do well," says Bartolomei. "You can hide a lot of sins when a piece of furniture is more complicated." Walker desk, \$1,199, modloft.com



"This is nice and graphic," Bartolomei says of the African mudcloth pillow. "Black and white really pops." \$89, pfeiferstudio.com

"I love this because you can put it on a bookshelf and plug it in, or mount it on the wall as a sconce," says Bartolomei. Flynn sconce, \$570, arteriors.com

"I'm not trendy. I'm classic," says Bartolomei. "This has a more refined look of a much more expensive table, and you can blend it well with other items." Hollis side table, \$900, arteriorshome.com



"This piece is an adaptation of a 1940s French chair," Bartolomei says of her new design. "Comfort is important, so I made sure the seat height is more comfortable for the average American—17 inches." \$2,750 or \$3,600 as shown in leather, Atrium Interiors, Tysons Galleria, atrium-interiors.com

"I encourage my clients to select something that's out of the norm for a more collected feeling," says Bartolomei. Butterflies for Brains sculpture, \$749, Theodores, downtown, theodores.com