



# Club Med

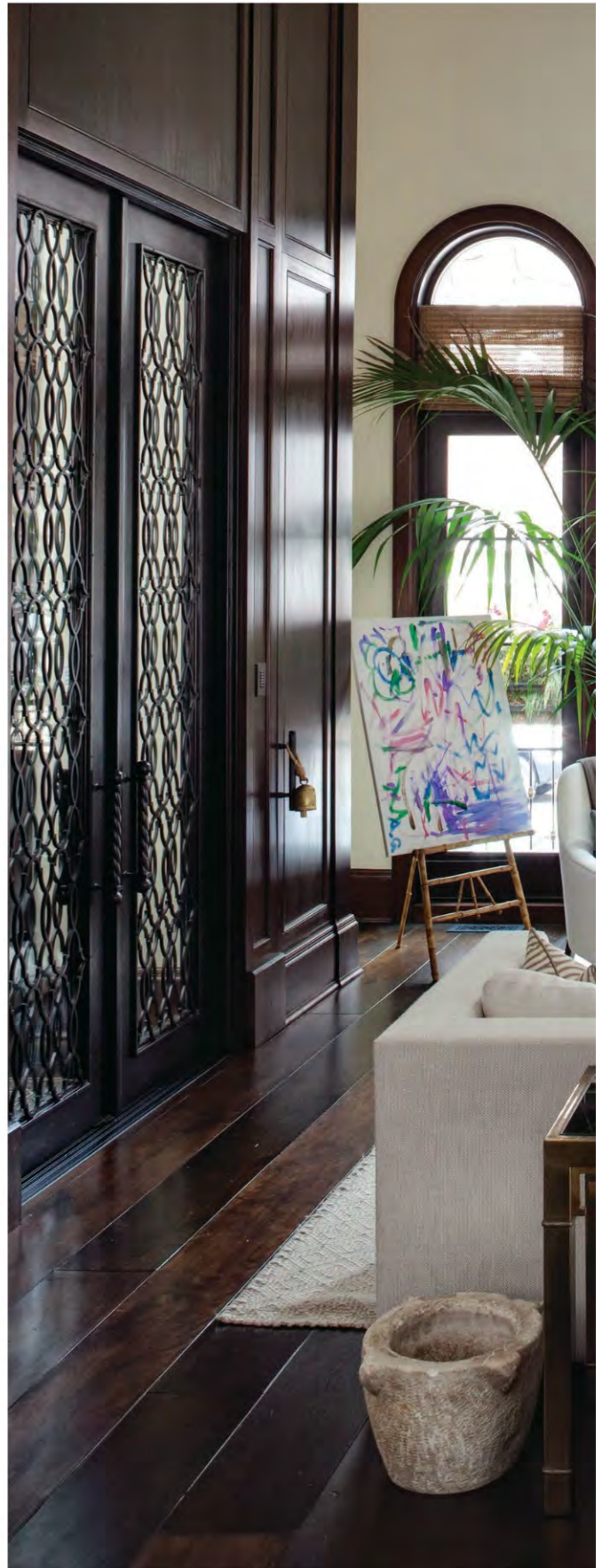
Two interiors enthusiasts officially get in on the act after unveiling their first Mediterranean-inspired collab.

By Barri Leiner Grant  
Photography by Eric Hausman

**TWO'S COMPANY**  
Melissa Lewis (seated) and Cari Giannoulis in the Gold Coast project they just wrapped. Right: The oversized seating makes living room gatherings easy around the oil-rubbed bronze fireplace. The room is dotted with family heirlooms from Greece, like the worry beads that dress the antique brass coffee table.

Sure, there have been plenty of famous partners throughout history. The comedic pairs who play foil to a straight shooter, superheroes with trusty sidekicks and composers whose melodies count on a wordsmith pal. But in the world of design, duos are something of a rare breed. Enter Melissa Lewis and Cari Giannoulis—a relationship that is turning out an inventive blend of livable luxury.

Lewis, a high-end residential designer, was on her way up to a Gold Coast project she had in the works when the elevator opened and Giannoulis stepped into her world. The two had many mutual friends in common, but had never met. Easy banter—and a quick















**COMMAND CENTRAL**  
A De Giulio-designed kitchen with deep quartzite countertops and backsplash hosts three toddlers day in and out. Custom barstools were replicated to mimic those seen in a Paris bistro; vintage leather seating scored at a Paris flea market pulls up to the built-in banquette.

conversation about the urban Mediterranean home Giannoulis was building right across the street—led to Lewis coming on board as co-pilot for the project. The imminent partnership was recently made official as Lewis Giannoulis Interiors ([lg-interiors.com](http://lg-interiors.com)).

Outside of the work they've been taking on together since last year (custom builds from the ground up and complete gut rehabs that speak to their aesthetic), an honesty and straightforwardness between them has translated into a keen selling point to clients. There is a palpable comfort and trust between the two, and just meeting them is like getting in on the fun.

How do they get the job done? Lewis' design-build expertise creates the technical, more macro view to Giannoulis' micro view for the details. "I am the outfit," says Lewis, "and she is the hair, makeup and jewelry of a project." "And the shoes," adds Giannoulis, who easily finishes Lewis' sentences. Many of their clients are nomadic, with multiple homes, and want to feel comfortable wherever they are staying. This ideal lends itself to the way they outfit all of their spaces—to fit the lives of their clients.

If the Giannoulis name sounds familiar, it may be because she married George, the older brother of former Illinois state treasurer Alexi Giannoulis. "My husband is the middle child, the tallest... and the most charming," boasts the doting wife. She moved here from Los Angeles, where she helped Danny DeVito with his record label Jersey Records, managed the English punk





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band the Sex Pistols and served as senior vice president of marketing at Universal Pictures. As a creative for more than 15 years, she always had a "behind-the-scenes" passion for design. "I have a colorful past," Giannoulas says, "but it's all in the film and music world."

The 8,000-square-foot home she built—with Lewis as her right-hand woman—is movie-set dreamy and grand (cue the elevator), with nothing precious or unlivable in sight. The duo's inventive eye for fabrics, statement lighting at every turn and an artful sense of scale are ever-present throughout the Gold Coast home.

The five-story limestone facade invites guests from the sidewalk into the grand 16-foot-high vaulted ceilings of the living room and dining areas. The largest windows they could possibly source were installed to let the light fill the front of the space. Personal details, from her 4-year-old daughter's large-scale oil painting stately set on a corner easel to family heirlooms like enormous strands of worry beads, hand-painted

ceramic urns and fantastic silver pieces from Greece dot the room (many such treats were passed along from her mother-in-law). Dueling benches—side tables in a past life—were reimagined by the pair. An Indian water pot was craftily reworked as dramatic lighting over the dining table, and the oil-rubbed bronze fireplace surround—with a rescued barn wood beam as mantle—adds drama and comfort to the substantial scale of things.

There is family life on display all around the home. In the living room, a guitar rests in its stand and neat stacks of baby cups and cutlery are piled in the glass-front kitchen cabinets amidst the china and glassware. This is signature Lewis Giannoulas Interiors, who vow never to design rooms you can't actually live in. They build and design much of their own furniture, hunt vintage shops, haunt antique and vintage lighting sources and seek workhorse fabrics—all in the name of luxury that is still livable.

**BUSINESS CLASS**  
Giannoulas' husband works at home in custom leather seating she designed specially for him—a more modern nod to the traditional woodwork. Right: A custom dining table was fabricated by Dao Home in Los Angeles, set off by LGI-designed plasterwork inspired by research on a vintage overseas hotel.









**SHOWER POWER**  
The master bath is outfitted with dueling Dornbracht rainshowers, a Duravit tub and sinks, and enormous travertine marble slabs. Rohl and THG fixtures and Murano glass sconces act as accessories to the well-outfitted room. Left: The penthouse powder room walls sport natural rock-face tile and a sleek Duravit sink and toilet.

Upstairs, floor-to-ceiling closets were outfitted with envious details and storage precision, and bath fixtures, pulls and knobs were all chosen with care and craft. Three sets of washer-dryers help get the job of the family's toddler trio done on every level. The ornamental plaster ceilings, enormous travertine slab walls in the room-size showers and custom sofas for the top-floor family room spare no expense. The roof deck with open windows acts as a welcome outdoor invitation for family gatherings. It's the thoughtful detail behind every personalized choice that makes it a place people want to spend time.

Do they have a favorite room in the house? For Giannoulas, it's the media room, which pays homage to her film-centric past, and is one of the coziest areas of the home. The gray baby alpaca-covered chaise seating was custom-built with storage beneath for holding throws and toss pillows, and cabinetry was crafted to house their extensive media collection. A 1,700-year-old tree stump plays butler to popcorn and cocktails. The room can host sleepovers too, which comes in handy for frequent overnight guests.

So, what's next for the talented twosome? "We rage through Glencoe frequently these days," says Lewis of their newly formed familiarity with the suburban surroundings of their latest projects. City families that move from downtown are inspired by their urban sensibility and hip factor. From a cool lake house in Wisconsin and a suburban estate on the North Shore to a contemporary single-family in Lincoln Square and a coffee shop for a soon-to-be downtown hot spot—Lewis Giannoulas Interiors is definitely a duo in demand. ■















**MASTER MIND**  
The master bedroom boasts a custom bed upholstered in Threads "Aspen" fabric from Lee Jofa, "Cavallini in the Wild" cowhide rugs from Edelman and "Berber White" paint by Benjamin Moore.

## Design Details

**TYPE** Single-Family Home

**LOCATION** Gold Coast

**INTERIOR DESIGN**

**Lewis Giannoulis Interiors**

**RESOURCES**

**Benjamin Moore** Paint throughout

**Carlisle Wide Plank Floors**  
Walnut flooring throughout

**Chris Gentner** Custom mirror in the foyer and custom oil-rubbed bronze surrounds in living room

**DAO Home** Custom table in dining room

**Debra Weninger** Side table in home office

**De Giulio** Kitchen design

**Edelman** "Cavallini in the Wild" cowhide rug in master bedroom

**Jayson Home** Brass and antique console in living room

**Jonathan Adler** Jute rug in kitchen

**Lee Jofa** Threads "Daze" area rug in living room, Threads "Aspen" custom upholstered bed in master bedroom, St. Remy textured custom upholstered chairs in dining room, Osaka area rug in home office

**Lewis Giannoulis Interiors**  
Custom furniture throughout

**Mulberry Home Leather**  
Upholstery on the chairs in home office

**Plantation Los Angeles**  
Maddox pendant fixture in home office

**TC Donobedian San Francisco**  
Copper timpani drum light fixture in kitchen