

BY SAXON HENRY PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDMUND BARR PRODUCED BY HILARY ROSE


In the Wrigleys' dining room, a wood bench by Kandis Wrigley's San Juan Ventures anchors a triad of antique hand-pressed Italian leather panels—originally a single screen that Kandis cut into three. An ample mirror brings light to its corner of the room.

Right: Kandis relaxes on the reclaimed-teak bench while her cat, Cairo, goes off on a prowl.

Natural Wonder

Balinese culture resonates
with Kandis Wrigley,
who's made it her business
to spread the word.





Kandis Wrigley: Impassioned importer of gorgeous goods, guardian of the forest, single mother of three.

During her first trip to Indonesia in 2003, Kandis Wrigley was so moved by the Balinese culture and craftsmanship that she and a partner founded an import company, San Juan Ventures, to design, make, and sell reclaimed wood products created there. The firm now has facilities on two continents.

The reclaimed woods that San Juan Ventures uses are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, an international agency that promotes ecologically sound forest management. For Kandis, creating a company built upon sustainability was natural.

"I grew up in the Pacific Northwest," says the Seattle native, "and was raised 'organic' before the term was mainstream. We recycled and had a compost pile."

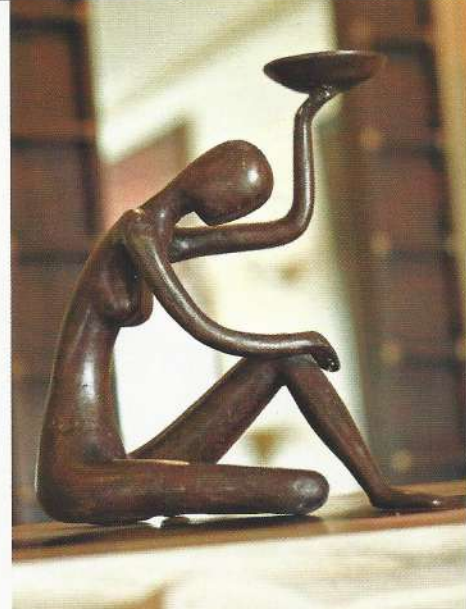
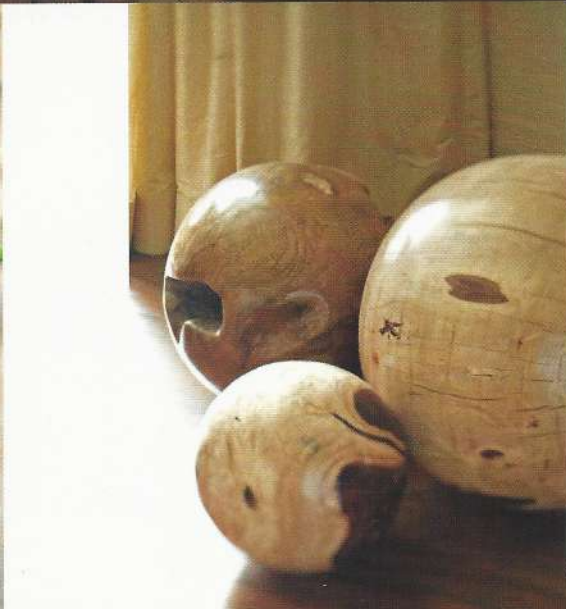
During renovation of her 1920s Mediterranean-style home that is tucked into a Chicago suburb, Kandis's passion merged with her vocation. The entrepreneur collaborated with designer Gail Plechaty to transform the house from dark and formal into light and serene for her and her children—Cameron, 13, Kristen, 11, and Travis, 10. "As we looked for furnishings, we were able to identify sources and fabricate pieces from a wide variety of unknown vendors and suppliers, which I was then able to use when we launched San Juan Ventures," Kandis recalls.

Reclaimed Balinese teak flooring, which is certified green, and furniture from fallen trees are among the company's offerings. Both made their way into the home during the update, which was largely cosmetic except for the reconfiguration of the master bedroom suite and the replacement of all flooring materials and exterior windows. Designer Plechaty says, "We never had to have a discussion about using sustainable products; my style is organic, so it was a given."

Top right: Contrasting the deep tones of the living room's reclaimed teak Balinese floors are pale seating options and lively spots of art. **Above:** Leather chairs surround the dining room table while antique Javanese chairs made of teak flank the bay window.

Bottom, left to right: A pair of bronze sculptures stand guard over the sophisticated living room. ■ Pert tulips nod toward a checkerboard living room. ■ Teak and Asem wood spheres are allowed to exhibit imperfections. ■ Yoga fan Kandis found this sculpture in Bali.



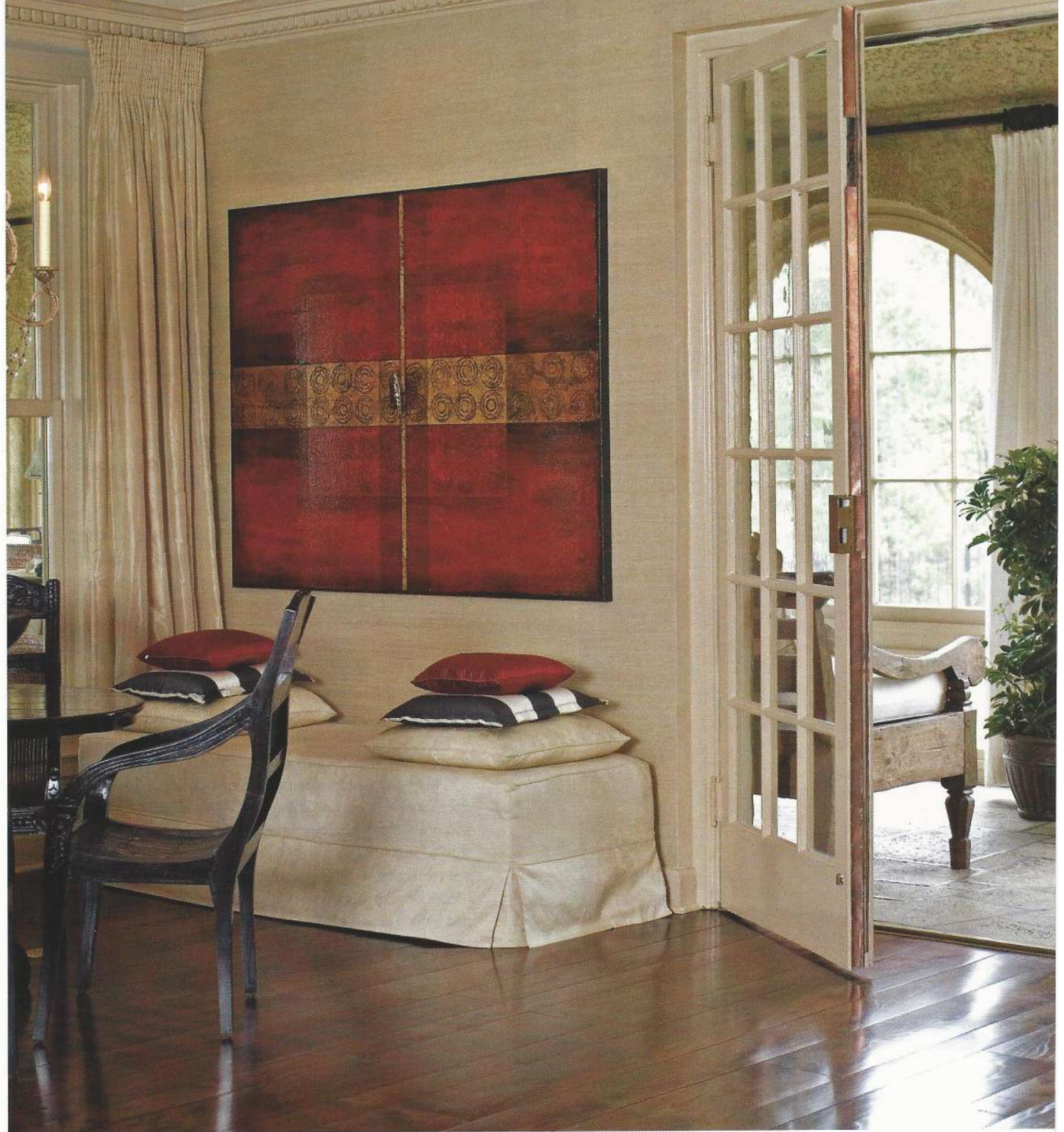




Translucent muslin draperies catch the light in the sunroom, where a yellow leather cushion adds comfort to a roomy chair. **Right:** Antique Javanese chairs occupy a corner of the living room. Pillows echo the red of the art above.

*I prefer to surround myself with things
that give me a sense of peace and serenity.*

—KANDIS WRIGLEY





into the woods

"Sustainability is a direction we all need to be aware of and progress toward," says Kandis Wrigley, who through her company, San Juan Ventures, supports Global Forest Watch, an initiative of the World Resources Institute that maps global forests. She also supports the Global Heritage Fund, which preserves or restores globally significant historical sites, primarily in underdeveloped countries.

"I envisioned San Juan Ventures as an import company that would source and export the best-quality exotic wood materials from the island of Bali but leave as few environmental footprints as possible. We continually remind ourselves of this mission statement in our regular, daily operations," Kandis says.

All reclaimed woods sold by San Juan Ventures carry the Forest Stewardship Council certification that the company's green materials are not mixed with uncertified wood. The company's logo, an elephant, is the symbol of Ganesh, a Hindu god representing strength and fortitude—qualities also inherent in the island's magnificent old trees.

"The Balinese work extremely hard and yet regularly weave rest and relaxation into their daily lives," Kandis says. "They are generally well-balanced people with an understanding of the value of tranquility, stillness, and inner peace—something we Westerners can stand to learn a bit more about."

For information, visit sanjuanventures.com.

Plechaty adds that the Indonesian furniture that Kandis brought to the interiors is the most stylish example of Asian design she's ever seen. She equally admires Kandis's connection with the Balinese. "Kandis had an intuitive response to the culture when she was there," the designer recalls. "She arrived home with an open heart and mind. She had found an inspiration that connected her to the raw material."

The Wrigley home's new interiors are dramatically different from the house's previous style. Starting over meant creating light, neutral spaces that were family-friendly—no "off-limits" rooms that would feel unlivable. In each space, Plechaty lightened wall colors and expertly placed chic upholstery, a sprinkling of European antiques, elegant draperies, and the array of Balinese pieces that Kandis was busily procuring, most of which the designer hadn't even seen until they were put into place.

"This was the most amazing design project I've ever done," Plechaty says. "While Kandis was in Bali, she would e-mail me not one but 30 pictures of tables and say, pick one!" Against walls tinted sandstone, champagne, and caramel, the expressive turn of twining legs complements delicate caning in boxy frames, the organic forms of rough-hewn teak, and the clean, simple, timeless lines of Balinese furniture.

"Gail did a phenomenal job of creating a backdrop without ever having seen the furniture," Kandis says. "In many of the pictures I sent her, the furniture was dingy and sitting on the side of the road or in the back of a little workshop. She created a setting that is serene and neutral, allowing the strong wood pieces to express their warmth and spirit." That spirit informs not only Kandis's home, but the way she leads her life. ■

Interior designer: Gail Plechaty

For more information, see sources on page 215.

Right: The design scheme for the master bedroom was defined by the 6-foot-tall oil painting of a horse, which Kandis found during an art-shopping escapade. Creams, tans, and whites swathe the room in serenity.

Above: Draperies in the powder room are as festive as the cheerful red fabric covering the John Hutton sofa. A large orchid plant lends an exotic touch.

