



BEST OF THE CITY DESIGN

ARBITERS OF CHIC
Designers Synthia
Harris-Wendel and
Barry Darr Dixon

Designer Digs When word first went out that the Washington Design Center was reconsidering its Southwest location, the buzz was DC's interior-design devotees might have to look outside the city for their aesthetic needs. But after a yearlong search, the District's tight-knit design community announced they'd be back and better than ever—21 showrooms will make the move to their new downtown digs in spring of 2014, giving a boost to the city's burgeoning design district on 14th Street and offering a more accessible, light-filled space. "It's a shake-everything-up moment," says design superstar **Barry Darr Dixon**. "I start every project with what I find here." Interior designer **Synthia Harris-Wendel** agrees: "Moving is going to really refresh the center. There's such a hip, new vibe." 1099 14th St. NW, designcenterdc.com

Lauren's World Well-heeled Washingtonians who trek to Great Falls Village Centre now have another shopping lure—designer **Lauren Liess'** boho-chic interiors boutique and studio, which opened in December. Liess has since branched out from her decorating business into designing textiles and selling home goods that reflect her style sense. "It's a natural and casual look," she says of the contemporary feel. Her finds include a vintage "buttery leather" Danish chair, botanical specimens preserved under glass since the 1940s and undyed Turkish wool rugs. *Lauren Liess & Co., 776 Walker Road, Great Falls, Va., 571.926.7825, laurenliess.com*



DC designer Lauren Liess

TOP FIVE: Design Center Buzz



British fabric house Romo, which showcases contemporary looks, is new to DC.

1 Outdoor Chic—Designer **Bunny Williams'** first line of outdoor furniture will be on display at the Century showroom, just across town from husband John Rosselli's antiques shop. The 14-piece line channels the look of Treillage, Williams' and Rosselli's garden and antiques shop in New York.

2 NYC Connection—Designers don't have to travel up 95 to purchase from the venerable rug collections of **Doris Leslie Blau**, its first showroom outside New York. "DLB ventured to DC because of the overwhelming sophistication the city portrays," says Nader Bolour, DLB's president.

3 London Calling—British fabric house **Romo** is also a new kid in town, with its DC showroom being only one of seven outside London. Expect to see a jolt of color and contemporary design across the century-old company's five lines, which also include wallcoverings.

4 Alfresco Designs—Hungry? The **Brown Jordan** showroom will start offering the company's line of outdoor kitchens. From cabinetry and countertops to grills, fridges, sinks and bars, the collection will be displayed in a screen porch against a photo mural of the showroom owner's farm.

5 Color Me Barry—**Barry Dixon** is collaborating with Charleston metalsmith **Peyton Avrett** to combine glass, onyx and "heavy-gauge bronzes and irons" in the form of tables, chairs and lighting for the **J. Lambeth** showroom. Design inspirations include the magnolia pod and the shape of a mosquito's leg.