



SALSA TRADING COMPANY, INC.
a california home lifestyle store

THE SALSA HOME

Edna Hayes and Bruce Needleman, owners of Salsa Trading Company, a one-of-a-kind home furnishings/lifestyle store in Sonoma, California, searched Northern California for the perfect place to build their own home based on the design principals they advocate.

One perfect sunny afternoon they discovered a beautiful 10 acre home site in the hills which border the west side of Sonoma Valley - Jack London's famed Valley of the Moon. Native grasses, birds, and magnificent 100-year-old oak trees inhabited the site. "We knew instantly that this is where we wanted to be," Hayes exclaims.

Soon after purchasing their country property, Hayes and Needleman found the perfect place to open the Sonoma branch of Salsa Trading at the juncture of Hwy 12 and Old Napa Road just south of historic Sonoma Plaza. At the time their store was located in San Rafael, California.

They joined forces with architect Michael Baushke of Apparatus Architecture to design their 4,200 square foot hacienda style home and pool house, launching construction five years after they purchased the land. "We chose PISE, a type of construction derived from the rammed earth method," explains Needleman.

Construction workers sprayed a combination of soil and concrete against a form creating 18-inch thick walls, which provide excellent insulation and privacy. They then sandblasted the walls to achieve the home's authentic old world appearance. PISE is environmentally friendly and creates a presence and feel, which sets it apart from conventional construction, according to Needleman.

Hayes and Needleman designed their earth home with rooms leading to the outdoors through 13 sets of custom built French doors. They flanked doors and windows with workable shutters and surrounded the house with custom wrought iron lanterns to create ambient lighting for outdoor dinners and parties. "We love the deep veranda which encircles the house," says Hayes. "It provides shelter from our warm Sonoma summers and mild, but rainy winters."

"We wanted to keep the landscaping natural and rustic, with an organic feel," explains Needleman. "We planted seven hundred lavender plants and assorted succulents which complement the natural terrain surrounding the house."

Old world hospitality may best describe the sense of arrival at the Hayes/Needleman residence. Guests pass through hand-built rock walls and along a cobblestone drive, which leads from the country road to the house. "Artisans from Mexico chipped huge boulders we excavated during construction for two years to build the walls and the driveway," says Needleman, describing the painstaking traditional methods employed to accomplish their goal. "The walls and driveway were built in the traditional method with absolutely no mortar."

"We kept the interior design simple, with rich details including hand-waxed plaster walls, which add elegance to the rustic setting," says Hayes. "Interior doors are authentic 100 year old antiques we collected over many years from aged haciendas in Mexico and Spain. Our open floor plan creates a warm, welcoming and spacious living environment. And our large indoor and outdoor fireplaces provide ample possibility for romantic nights by the fire."

Niches built into the 18-inch thick walls display artwork, books and the couple's expansive collection of Native American pottery and Indian blankets.

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“Our kitchen is a home chef’s dream,” emphasizes Hayes. An eight by five foot island, fabricated from an antique bakers table, features a custom concrete top, and anchors the working kitchen. Two sets of hacienda doors serve as the kitchen’s pantry and storage for dishes and glassware. Cabinetry is sleek and contemporary, made of stainless steel, which complements the combination of old and new.

The home’s plaster walls became a natural backdrop, for the couple’s large-scale furniture. “We collected it over a period of years and used the pieces as an inspiration for the size and configuration of our rooms,” explains Needleman. “Our philosophy is that bigger is better and less is more. Our home is a living testament to our style. We often bring clients here to help them visualize how their rooms can work.”

All pieces in the Hayes and Needleman collection were handmade by artisans hundreds of years ago or crafted more recently utilizing recycled materials. Simple oversized sofas and chairs in distressed leather have a hand-worn feel, as well as comfort and style of a family heirloom. They were hand-rubbed to create the patina that would only come otherwise with years of living, according to Hayes.

Salsa Trading Company is located at 20490 Broadway in Sonoma, California. The store is open Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 6 pm; Sunday noon to 6 pm; and by appointment. Call 707-939-1710 to reach the store, or visit salsatrading.com for a visual tour.

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