



Photo by NINELLE FREMOVA

Avenue Interior Design Venice, California

Who: Andrea DeRosa and Ashley Manhan

When: DeRosa and Manhan worked together in 2006 at Design 360 Unlimited and knew they wanted to start their own business someday but first needed experience. Things came to a head in 2008 and 2009 when both felt the sting of the recession. Manhan lost her job at sbe, and DeRosa's firm, Shema Dougall Design Associates, was getting smaller by the day. "The downfall of the economy positioned us to reconnect," Manhan says. To establish themselves, they acquired business through a bartering system, offering to design office spaces in exchange for press.

Why: Having "so much passion and so much

faith in what we were doing," contributed to their perseverance, DeRosa says. Avenue started out of Manhan's home in 2009, with the two principals working on many projects for free. "No projects were too small for us," she explains. "They may not have been glamorous, but they provided material for our portfolio and connections to future clients."

Standing Out: When Avenue started out, design firms were often creating elaborate proposals with digital montages, PowerPoint presentations, and renderings. "It was a land of smoke and mirrors," DeRosa says. To set themselves apart, Avenue chose to adopt a simpler approach, putting together beautiful imagery and materials while also giving companies different design directions—a unique approach that now defines the company. "We really listen to clients and what they want. We don't have one style—we infuse our personality

with our client's properties," DeRosa explains.

Success Stories: The Avenue team quickly graduated from offering free services to being tasked with designing sbe's Redbury in Los Angeles. It was 2010 when they signed onto the project and immediately felt a connection to it. "It made us passionate about [our work]," DeRosa says, and when they saw the finished product, "we thought, 'We can do this. This is why we're doing Avenue,'" she recalls.

Projects on the Boards:

SLS Las Vegas
SLS New York
SLS Baha Mar, Bahamas
Amara Resort & Spa, a Kimpton Hotel, Sedona, Arizona
Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa, Atlantic City
Suncoast Hotel, Las Vegas



Photo by SBE/SKOTT SNIDER



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1. Avenue reinvented the historic building of the Redbury South Beach to reflect the original hotel in Hollywood.

2. The lobby of the Redbury South Beach highlights Miami's Art Deco aesthetic.