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Bari Designs Ltd.

Written by Libby John

Bari Design – a high-end custom furniture manufacturer in British Columbia – prides itself on always being able to meet its customers' specifications. "We are like suit tailors," owner Giovanni Pavone describes. "We can build to whatever dimension you require. With a new 32,000-square-foot building, there is no project too big or too small to take on."

Bari has completed projects all over the world including Tokyo, Hawaii, Los Angeles, New York, Toronto and London. The company provides freestanding furniture for hotels, restaurants and display suites, as well as private residences. It primarily manufactures upscale products for high-profile clients and projects.

Its most recent hotel project was the 60-room renovation for Laurel Point Inn in Victoria, British Columbia, that included more than 1,000 pieces of furniture. The project scope included night tables, dressers, headboards, desks, leather chairs, loungers, sofa beds and even dog beds. Bari also supplied the dining chairs, tables and booth seating for the hotel's restaurant and all outdoor patio furniture.

All prototypes were made in-house, approved by the designer and sent over to its affiliate manufacturing facility in Indonesia to fast-track the project for completion within 90 days.

It was able to finish the project on time because the company has an active partnership with a manufacturing facility in Indonesia that builds products for large orders. "The offshore location makes our company expand from 34 to 1,000 employees," Giovanni explains. "The offshore location is great for repetitious work."

"The project went smoothly; we had to stay on top of every aspect and look over everything very carefully," he notes, adding that he was actively involved in overseeing the project.

Cost Competitive

The partnership with the Indonesian company – which is going on three years – allows Bari Designs to be cost competitive and perform larger projects.

"The Indonesia facility purchases material from the U.S. so [the products] meet expectations for quality," he adds. "The quality is the same – the wood is the same."

"Before we were limited to 34 employees," he says. "That limited us to bid on smaller projects, and we could not attempt a 100-room hotel."

The 1,000 people employed at its Indonesia facility changed that. "Now we can do any sized project and are proud that not one piece was damaged or returned, still to this date," he says.

Staying Updated on Trends

Bari Designs talks regularly with designers and attends trade shows to keep the company updated on the latest trends and styles. Recently, Pavone attended a trade show in Europe. "We got to see what's coming out next year, and we will jump the gun by showing the trends to designers and see if they gravitate to it," he explains.

A recent trend Pavone has noticed is that clients prefer darker woods with lighter materials. For example, dark stained wood with crème Napa leather. "It's quite the combination," he says. There has also been a trend of high-gloss lacquers with more colors, and satin and chrome



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detailing, he adds. "This trend has been quite popular for restaurants and clubs or lounges that want a risky, yet chic look," he says.

Full-Time Hobby

Pavone initially started the company as a hobby, he recalls. "I was doing upholstery out of my garage to supplement my income and I would sell products to designers," he says. "I used to work for Canadian Airlines as an interior mechanic and in my time off, I would design pieces."

He invested in the company full-time in 1996. The company grew from one employee to 12 in 2000. "It was just basically because of good quality and our associations with interior designers," he says, that the company was able to grow quickly.

Today, Bari Designs is well suited for tomorrow's clients. The new agreements signed last year proves the company has the ability to provide its customers all types of furniture, he says.

"Now, Bari is also complementing its line with outdoor teak and resin furniture, whether its custom or out of our catalogue." Pavone says.

For example, Bari supplied more than 300 custom pieces to a large restaurant chain that were distributed across Canada and the western United States. It also has restaurant table bases to complement their tabletops and chairs.

"We have high-quality poly-resin furniture from Italy that can be used in food courts, restaurants and as outdoor furniture," Pavone notes, "At the Seattle Design Show, we also introduced the best patio umbrellas in the world that we distribute from Belgium."

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