DESIGN FOR LIVING

It's all in the details for the founders
of Dallas- and Aspen-based
firm Demesne.

By Rhonda Reinhart
Portrait by Billy Surface

Clockwise from top left: Whether in a city or country locale, Demesne's designs embrace the outdoors whenever possible; Demesne co-founders Richard Mullen and Jamie Olsen Ali.

If you hire Richard Mullen and Jamie Olsen Ali to design your kitchen, be prepared to cook them a meal. The managing partners of Demesne (demesne.design), a Dallas- and Aspen-based design firm, make it a point to fully understand their clients' lifestyles before they start a project. "Understanding how people use their spaces and inhabit their spaces is so important to making sure that the design is going to work for them," says Ali. "I tell customers: We don't want to work on your kitchen until you've made us a dinner and we can observe how you cook, your habits." Before founding Demesne in late 2016, Mullen and Ali followed similar career paths: They met in the graduate program at The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture, went to work for hospitality-focused design firms and eventually founded their own companies. Now, with Mullen in Aspen and Ali CONTINUED...
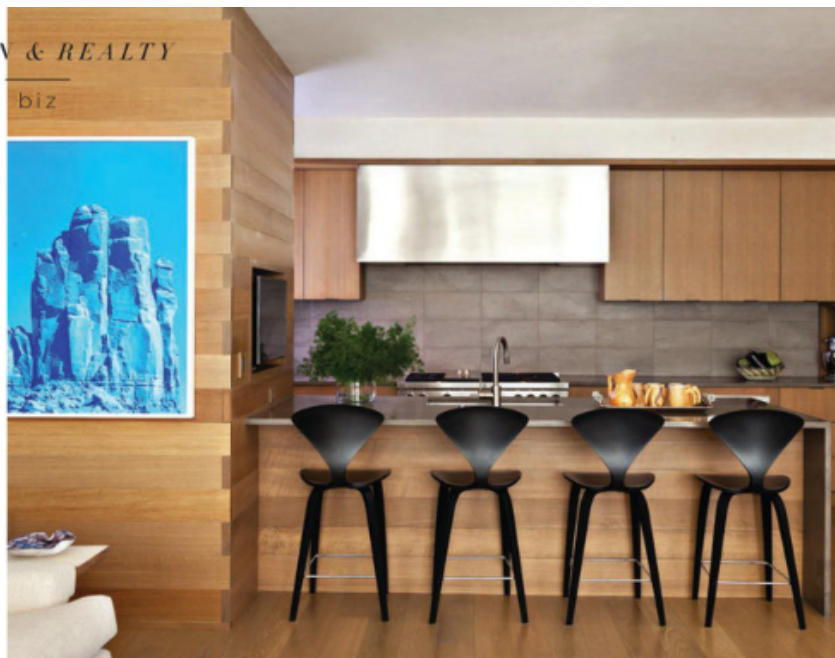
PROJECT PHOTOS BY EMILY MITTEN REDFIELD

...CONTINUED in Dallas, the two work together to create beautiful and functional residential spaces in both cities and beyond, including an in-the-works second home in Moab, Utah. Their favorite projects are ones for which they can develop both the architecture and interior design. "We're happy to work with designers, and we're happy to work with architects," says Ali, "but we're even more pleased to do it all." The duo also will design custom light fixtures and furniture for their projects. "Design is problem-solving," says Mullen. "The beauty of a project comes from the practical solutions to a specific problem— that's when I think things are truly gorgeous." ∎

Clockwise from top: A sleek kitchen from one of the team's Aspen projects; the living room of a modern farmhouse in Dallas; a cozy sitting area in another Demesne-designed Aspen residence.

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