

## TRADITIONAL CHIC

## Merging past and present

The Home Drug Co. opened for business a few years after the 1906 earthquake on the corner of Union and Hyde streets.

In the nine or so decades that followed, three generations of pharmacists — most descendants of Merle "Doc" Smith — mixed arsenic, cocaine, cyanide and other prescriptions of the day by hand, and delivered them to their San Francisco customers.

So when interior designers Martin J. Scott and Richard Bohonsky moved into the vacant apothecary last year, they expected a bit of backlash from Russian Hill residents who had grown accustomed to the corner pharmacy and the personal attention doled out by its longtime tenants.

Instead, "people in the neighborhood have been so welcoming," says Scott, who along with Bohonsky own the aptly named **Martin Richards**, a European-inspired housewares and interior design business.

In-house accounts, personal deliveries, one-of-a-kind furniture and housewares, and an obvious respect for history are just a few of old-time perks and practices that have garnered a loyal following for the young business.

Granted, the men replaced the Victorian-style shop's familiar white walls and fluorescent tube lighting with mustard-splashed walls and elegant chandeliers, but they left intact the building's original stained glass "HOME DRUG CO." sign and opened up a once-cluttered window to reveal a postcard view of the cable cars rumbling up and down Hyde. Then there's the inventory — everything from "luxury staples" such as Diptyque candles, to turkey feather dusters with jeweled handles, "for the maid who has everything," says Scott, who worked at Sue Fisher King prior to teaming up with Bohonsky, a 12-year interior design veteran.

The shop is believed to be the



sole San Francisco distributor of Signoria di Firenze linens, which have been woven at a family-owned business outside Florence since the 1930s. A set of pillowcases will run you \$75, while a queen-size duvet costs \$285.

The men also make it a point to carry the work of local designers, including the swirling glass vases and bowls of Bay Area artist Parker Harper (shown below, \$85 to \$250). Still other items at Martin Richards include handmade sterling silver martini picks by Janet Torelli (\$90 a pair), and a collection of black and white photographs that Scott shot in Paris over the past 15 years (shown at top, \$125 each).

But our favorite find in the sun-filled shop were the elegant wine glasses (shown above) and other glassware from Kikatsu. Each piece (\$45 to \$95) is hand-etched by artisans in Japan and based on the classic, antique shapes coveted by the high-society hostesses of the 1920s and '30s.

*Martin Richards is located at 1200 Union St. (at Hyde). For more information call (415) 885-5922 or visit [www.martin-richards.com](http://www.martin-richards.com)*

— A.P.

HOME & GARDEN

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