

salvaging the past

Even new and modern homes will warm up to antique elements and reclaimed fragments if given the chance.



exas creatives and "serial entrepreneurs" Kaci (left) and Robert Lyford launched their third small business in 2020. East End Salvage was their answer to "the life of our dreams," says Kaci. That's when they sold a successful business of 10 years to "go all in selling antiques and architectural salvage online and at pop-up markets," she explains. "We're also renovating two historic barns that are filled with our treasures. We love to work hard and play hard and are on a mission to

hike our way through all the National Parks." Sounds pretty dreamy to us.

Lyford has been selling antiques since 2006. "As an interior designer, I always incorporated an amazing piece of architectural salvage into my designs," she says. "I love the story of 'old things,' and I made it my mission to take old house parts and significant European antiques and save them by showing my clients how we could use them in a modern home." In their new business, they work together in saving, selling and curating antiques and salvage full-time.

Give us a glimpse of life before East End Salvage.

Robert is a chef and we owned Patina Green Home and Market, a sandwich shop and real food-retail market on the historic downtown McKinney square. I designed the restaurant space using salvage and antiques. Everything in it was for sale. Sometimes one of our antique dining tables would sell during the lunch rush and we would put a sold tag on it while customers were eating! Food Network named one of his sandwiches "Best in Texas." It was fun, but after a decade, we wanted to do something different.

Who shops your space at the markets?

Texas real estate is booming right now. At our last market, many customers were either building or remodeling. They were searching for unique old house parts (doors, shutters, mantels) that they could incorporate into a modern build. Because we are primarily an online shop and open only for special events and pop-ups, everyone who walks through our



doors is really excited about our inventory. Our customers know that our collection is highly curated. They come to see us to get that one special piece they can't find anywhere else—even if their home is already fully decorated.

How can someone with a modern home incorporate antiques and salvage?

Switching out new doors for antique ones makes a big impact. Pantry, bathroom and office doors are good places to start. In the kitchen, using an old, workbench or French table as a kitchen island is always a win. Large architectural pieces, such as pediments hung as art, can be dramatic, bringing texture and instant history. My friend used a piece of salvaged French millwork as her headboard. So beautiful! Recently, I sourced four European stone troughs that were once used to feed horses in a barn. They all sold to clients who use them as bathroom sinks.

Any tips for doing so on a budget?

It's nearly impossible to find a salvaged door the same size as your



PRO TIP Small pieces of architectural salvage pop on a dark modern wall, whether alone or grouped together.



PRO TIP Seek original finishes on antiques and salvage. Where would it have worn? If you can see the patina from years of use, there's a good chance it's the real deal.

door frame, so it's more cost-efficient to put the door on a slider than hire a team to reframe and finish out an existing door. Also, don't turn away from old house part fragments, such as decorative broken pieces. Display them as art by mounting them onto stands or easels or hanging them up. If you have stairs, switch out a modern newel post for an antique

one. And don't paint it; leave it chippy and worn. It will make you happy every time you go up the stairs and will add character to the space.

Best way to add Old World charm to a brand-new home?

If you're building from scratch, find the most beautiful pair of antique French doors and have your builder fit the door frame around them. You can also replace modern stair spindles with a vintage set. (They're hard to find, but well worth the search.)

You also love an "unfitted kitchen"?

Yes! Where all storage pieces are freestanding. I love to see someone skip the built-ins (or tear them out) and outfit an entire kitchen with antique European commercial pieces. This can mean furniture hutches used for storage, metal wall plate racks, potter's boards for open shelving, rustic corner cupboards, baker's work tables and benches, store counters, French pastry cases or a pair of English baker's tables used instead of built-in cabinets. I am always searching for and bringing these in.

What catches your eye as buyers?

In curating a collection of antiques and European architecturals for our clients, we're always looking for those special pieces with a story. We also love to shop at the source. As travel becomes more accessible, we want to offer guided buying trips to our favorite antique markets in Europe.

And if we happen to be in Texas?

We'll be hosting a winter market at our historic barns in downtown McKinney later this year. Come join us!

For salvage inspo and pop-up dates eastendsalvage.com;

@eastendsalvage on Instagram