

## >>> Hill Associates, Santa Fe, New Mexico PHOTOGRAPHY BY WENDY MCEAHERN

If you've ever dined at elegant Frasca in Boulder, stayed at Denver's Hotel Teatro, reveled in the food at Geronimo in Santa Fe or took in the luxurious charms of the Westin Kierland Resort in Phoenix, you've encountered Hill Associates.

The manufacturers' rep puts interior designers, architects, chefs, banquet managers and other in-the-know members of the hospitality trade in touch with the best lines of tableware, furnishings, linens and amenities—right down to menu covers—to create just the right look for restaurants and hotels.

The firm, run by the husband-and-wife team of Larry and Maggi Hill, relocated from Maryland to Santa Fe in 1998. Larry Hill's family has a long history in restaurant and hotel supplies. "When we first moved to Santa Fe, we discovered that there was a hunger for alternatives to standard restaurant and hotel offerings here," explains Maggi Hill. "We were able to bring in higher-end, fashionable tableware and furnishings."

With their area of coverage now including Arizona and Colorado, Hill Associates represents lines such as

Rosenthal USA's trend-setting dinnerware, Two Zero Six designer seating, and Frette fine bed linens and terry bathrobes. "We don't do hotel room beds or armoires," says Maggi, "but we'll do bedding, shampoos and even task chairs and patio furniture."

For years, the Hills worked the business out of their home, but more recently moved into a showroom near Santa Fe's downtown plaza. "One day we had an executive chef down in our basement looking at \$25 dinner plates," recalls Maggi with a laugh. "And we have a cat. And the litter box is in the basement. It wasn't necessarily the best presentation."

The Hills enlisted the aid of Santa Fe interior designer Heather Van Luchene, ASID, principal of HVL Interiors and a frequent collaborator on hospitality projects, to help them design their new space. "It's small," says Maggi, "so we knew we needed good design help to make the most of it."

"Our goal was to maximize the space," says Van Luchene of the 640-square-foot office condo, "and to showcase Hill Associates products." The showroom, at the

Below: A wall embellished with words that state Hill Associates' mission and products greets visitors in the showroom, which was designed by Heather Van Luchene of HVL Interiors. Cabinetry and tables display products. Opposite page: A conference table is another showroom product, highlighted by forks embedded in resin.



front of the space, is highlighted by a wall done in a green vinyl wallcovering embellished with words, spelled out in differing fonts, explaining the showroom's offerings. Van Luchene specified Chilewich Plynyl flooring, a product line the Hills represent, albeit in placemats and table runners. She also had a conference table made by Design Works, another of their lines, featuring a custom epoxy resin-coated table top, embedded with a curved sweep of forks from represented lines. Cabinetry, shelving and display tables show off other products. A curtain panel separates the showroom from the private office, a mail room/kitchen and bathroom at the back of the space.

"I know the Hills' personal aesthetic is a mix of both modern and vintage, says Van Luchene, whose four-person firm includes business partner Steffany Hollingsworth, ASID, "and I tried to achieve that with colors and accessories."

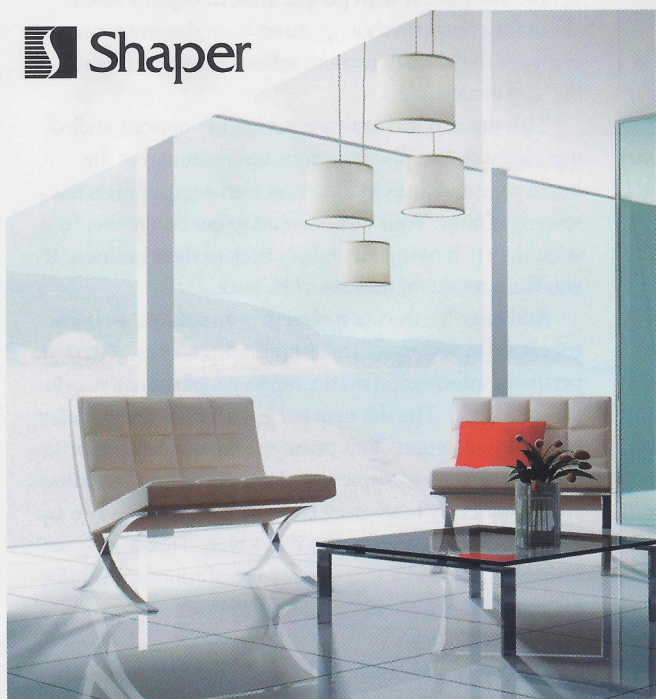
The completed showroom provides a comfortable, stylish space in which the Hills can meet their trade clients and work their business. "Heather did a great job for us with the showroom," says Maggi. "It's a great statement of our business, and reiterates our mission, which is taking care of clients and standing by our products."

In the meantime, though, Hill Associates is busy supplying great tableware, seating and more to several new projects, including the Santa Fe Capitol Grill, designed by Van Luchene, and Encantado, an Auberge Resort, also in Santa Fe. ■

Hill Associates, 1925 Aspen Dr., Suite 201A, Santa Fe, NM 87505; (505) 982-4505 or [www.hillco.net](http://www.hillco.net).



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