

# UPfront

Notes from around the Minnesota business community

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## Bringing Europe Home

By importing furniture and antiques from Europe, EuroNest has an edge in quality home décor.

BY KATIE PELTON

WHEN PRESENTED WITH the opportunity to take over EuroPine Imports in Minneapolis four years ago, Liz Anderson went one step further.

"I watch trends and I see what's happening in the market and I knew there was just so much more that could be accomplished in [the EuroPine] formula," Anderson explains.

She transformed the nine-year-old pine import business into EuroNest, a cozy home furniture, accessories and antiques store with products imported from not only U.S. furniture markets but European outlets as well.

"There are inexpensive home accessory stores, but there's not nice, high-end quality that fits with the furniture merchandise," Anderson says. "What I felt needed to be done was the concept of nesting. People are staying home more and when you're home, you want to be cozy and comfy."

So how does she get a slice of Europe in her stores?

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—EURONEST'S LIZ ANDERSON

« Liz Anderson sits among her slice of Europe.

need of the store and the dollar value," Anderson says. "In 2008 we didn't go at all because the dollar was so bad. Not only are we hurting but the Europeans are hurting too, so there are some good buys to make."

When she does get the chance to cross the pond, she spends about four days in barns, antique shops, people's homes and antique dealers throughout

Holland, Belgium and France.

A professional then fills a container with up to 300 pieces of Anderson's finds, and three weeks later it arrives in Minneapolis.

European imports can get complicated, however, with the additional hurdle of customs.

One Friday Anderson started unpacking the container and distributing presold furniture. On Tuesday, a customs official called to say they

needed to check it again back in Toronto. "That's not possible," Anderson says. "It can never be repacked because the furniture fits a certain way with the help of the packer in Europe. That's a nightmare."

Despite the challenges, Anderson says there's definitely a demand.

"The eclecticism of old and new pieces we have sitting next to each other provides a feel that makes people come back." *mb*