

FALL FASHION ISSU

OCT RIVE

September 2007

www.ocean



HEIDI KLUM

BEACH PATROL

The people who make Miami

ERIC SCHIGIEL

Bringing Wall-to-Wall Style to the Most Luxurious Homes

Six years after his company's inception, Eric Schigiel's success seems set in stone. The 29-year-old vice president and co-founder of Opustone Granite & Marble—an importer and distributor of travertine, marble, granite, onyx, limestone, coral and other unique stones—sells “top-of-the-mine” tiles, slabs, mosaics and medallions out of his Miami and Jacksonville warehouse and showroom spaces.

The Hollywood-born Schigiel spent two years working for his family's upscale home-construction business, Insignia Development, before delving into Florida's booming materials market. Today he offers individual stores, tile brokers, homeowners, architects and designers more than 100 containers of his product—imported from Italy, Turkey, Spain, Brazil, Egypt, Israel and Vietnam—every month.

“Miami used to be a place where you could put up a \$10,000 down payment on a condo, then flip it six months later for a \$50,000 profit. But now more of our customers are the end users, and they come to us because they want the best-quality product,” explains Schigiel, whose inventory includes everything from \$2 basic Saturnia to \$30 white Calacatta-marble tiles, and whose clientele includes luminaries from Billy Joel to Paulina Rubio. “As one of my customers once said, ‘Reputation remembered, price forgotten.’ I know what I sell. When you walk into your house, it's going to be beautiful.”

—Suzy Buckley

JUST THE FACTS

Best way to spend a Saturday afternoon: “I have a Harley that I take out for a ride as much as I can.”

Biggest turnoff in people: “Arrogance and ignorance.”

Pets: “My dog, Stogie, who is actually in one of my ads.”

In a decade, you'll be: “Still doing what I love, times 10.”

Now playing on your iPod: “Anything by Billy Joel—I supplied the tile and marble for his Miami Beach home.”

No one knows: “I like to listen more than talk.”

Next vacation destination: “Mykonos.”

Favorite Miami Beach nightlife hotspot: “Set.”

Languages you speak: “English and Spanish.”

The worst design trend you have seen all year: “Using engineered stone as opposed to natural stone when designing your home.”

The best design trend you've seen all year: “Granite countertops, although I may be biased. It has been the best design trend for many years!”

