

**FENDI**  
CASA

BeDesign's  
New  
Design  
Mecca

JENNY ANTELL CLIFTON



Molteni&C at BeDesign

**W**e've covered Adrian Dueñas and Marcelo Saenz's ascent in the interiors echelon ever since they immigrated to Houston a decade ago. With an international background that encompasses Latin America (Ecuador) and Europe (Spain), the partners have made a commitment to elevate the design language in Texas. In 2013, they acquired prime Montrose property minutes from The Menil Collection, then staged their first pop-up in 2014. In 2016, their first brick-and-mortar store opened: **BeDesign**, a sleek 5,000-square-foot showroom on West Alabama dedicated to leading European brands representing furniture, rugs, lighting, and wallpaper. Now they've taken the next step with a bold expansion that amps up BeDesign's square footage to 22,000, making the Houston showroom one of the largest and grandest design destinations in the country.

A dramatic new three-story space adjoining the existing building focuses on BeDesign's seven flagship Italian and French lines: **B&B Italia**, **Maxalto** (sister brand to B&B Italia), **Fendi Casa**, **Flexform**, **Ligne Roset**, **Molteni&C**, and **Paola Lenti**. Each luxury brand creatively imagined their own showroom within the space, while the overarching vision for the layout, doors, and facade was conceived by Dueñas and Saenz



BeDesign's Sorellina Rooftop with furnishings by Paola Lenti

and constructed by **Adel Sadek's Studio Five**. "We did not want the showroom to feel like a maze of furniture or to only showcase one chair from each brand," Dueñas says. "Instead, we honor the caliber and style of these amazing designers with spacious, striking displays." BeDesign will also become a flagship for tony Italian leather furniture manufacturer **Baxter**, and will continue its collaboration with Houston's **Art of the World Gallery** to highlight its international stable of painters and sculptors. The showroom is also the exclusive retailer in Texas for designer **Nina Magon**, whose furniture and accessories collection is also featured at Bergdorf Goodman in NYC. A delightful detail of the expansion is a new third-floor indoor/outdoor rooftop deck, christened **Sorellina** — "little sister" in Italian — it serves as a private event space for select rentals as well as a nexus for hosting the charitable evenings for which BeDesign is known, from supporting HIV healthcare to longstanding partnerships with the Houston Symphony and Houston Grand Opera.



Marcelo Saenz & Adrian Dueñas with a Shang rug by Paola Lenti

What's next: As brand ambassadors for the upcoming high-rise **Residences at The Allen** — where BeDesign's owners will soon reside — they have been busy creating custom Molteni&C closet systems, designing the lobby via their brand Fendi Casa, and collaborating with designer pal **Lucinda Loya** to outfit the pool oasis with Paola Lenti in a nod to the Monaco Yacht Show. "The dream has become a reality," Dueñas says. "As this point, we have expanded as much as the city needs, and now the real work begins: keeping up with new collections, friends, brands, designers, and, above all, providing exceptional education and service." *BeDesign, 2016 W. Alabama, be-design.us*. Catherine D. Ansporn