

Heidi Mendoza

So, before we jump into specific questions about the business, why don't you give us some details about you and your story.

I was born and raised in Helsinki, Finland. After meeting my husband, I moved to California in 2001. I already had a career and established life in my native Finland, but my big move to US at the age of 31 presented me an opportunity to really think what I would like to do for the rest of my life. Design and Architecture have always interested me. Growing up in Finland means that design is woven seamlessly into everyday life and surrounds you wherever you go and this is why Finns grow up with a natural and strong sense of design. I started my design career by attending Interior Designers Institute in Newport Beach, CA. Upon graduation I also had my second child and my family had made a decision to move to Colorado. We decided to settle in Castle Rock, the small, beautiful town just 30 min. from Denver.

I did two internships, one with Model Home Merchandising firm and one with a firm that specializes in hospitality, before starting my own firm. I initially wanted to work for a firm for a few years at least before venturing out on my own, but 2008 recessions changed that plan. After ten years of being in business re.dzine now has projects ranging from small residential projects to medium commercial projects. I often collaborate with an architect/architectural firm, which is my favorite setting. I started very slowly working on just few projects per year and making sure I succeed as well as a mother of a small child.

This enabled me to take my daughter to daycare and then school in the mornings and be home when she gets home, be home for both of my children. Working around their schedule. Now that my son is 27 and my daughter is 13, I am picking up more projects and larger projects, such as renovations for Hotel and Spa, Casino and co-working spaces. My work has been featured in magazines here in US and also overseas, I was also featured in HGTV's House Hunters Renovation in early 2019 which was a fun experience and great exposure.

Overall, has it been relatively smooth? If not, what were some of the struggles along the way?

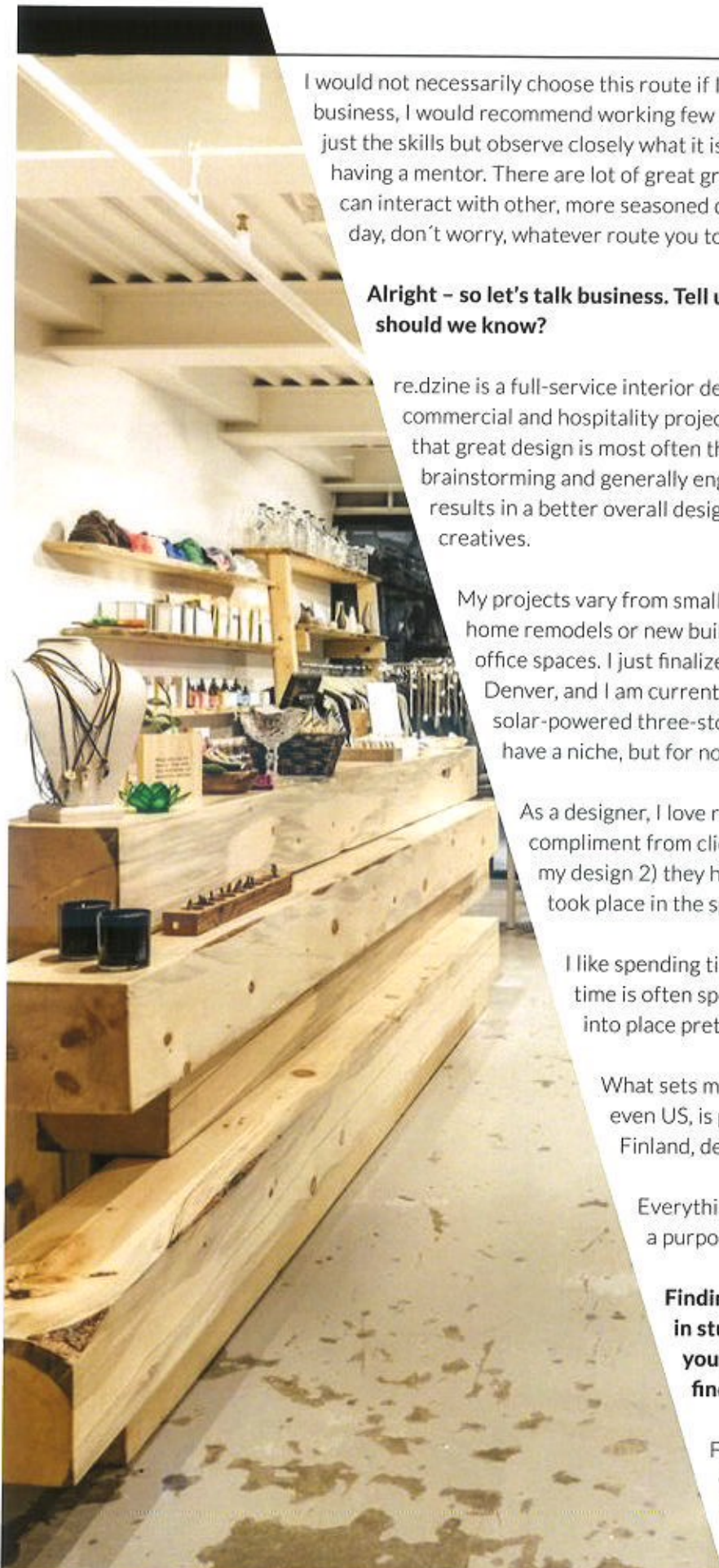
It has definitely been a roller-coaster. Especially due to the fact (mainly being 2008 hiring freeze)that I started my own firm so soon after graduating and just few internships under my belt.

Check out some of her work:

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Today we'd like to introduce you to Heidi





I would not necessarily choose this route if I had a choice. If you are planning to start your own business, I would recommend working few years for someone else in that industry to learn not just the skills but observe closely what it is like to run a business. I would also highly recommend having a mentor. There are lot of great groups for Interior Designers on facebook, where you can interact with other, more seasoned designers, to learn from them. But at the end of the day, don't worry, whatever route you took, it will all work out.

Alright – so let's talk business. Tell us about re.dzine, interior design studio – what should we know?

re.dzine is a full-service interior design firm. I can take residential, as well as small commercial and hospitality projects from concept to completion. I do strongly believe that great design is most often the result of a collaborative effort. The process of brainstorming and generally engaging in an interactive dialogue around a project results in a better overall design, which is why I like to team up with like-minded creatives.

My projects vary from small bathrooms to full-scale kitchen remodels, to full home remodels or new built-homes. From small retail store to large Casino's and office spaces. I just finalized a Penthouse project at Four Seasons Hotel here in Denver, and I am currently working on 8,000 sf office space as well as a solar-powered three-story residential project. I sometimes think I should have a niche, but for now, I love the variety of spaces I am designing

As a designer, I love recreating spaces and problem-solving. Best compliment from client is that 1) I was able to capture their wish list in my design 2) they have a hard time believing the transformation that took place in the space.

I like spending time analyzing the project. This is where most of my time is often spent. When the concept is ready, everything else falls into place pretty fast.

What sets me apart from other designers her in Colorado, maybe even US, is probably my Scandinavian heritage. In my native Finland, design is a way of living, for me it's woven into daily life.

Everything is designed, details are everything, everything has a purpose and functionality is as important as aesthetic.

Finding a mentor and building a network are often cited in studies as a major factor impacting one's success. Do you have any advice or lessons to share regarding finding a mentor or networking in general?

Find a person that you admire and can relate to. Great mentor is passionate about mentoring and there is a commitment from his/ her part. Anyone can answer questions.