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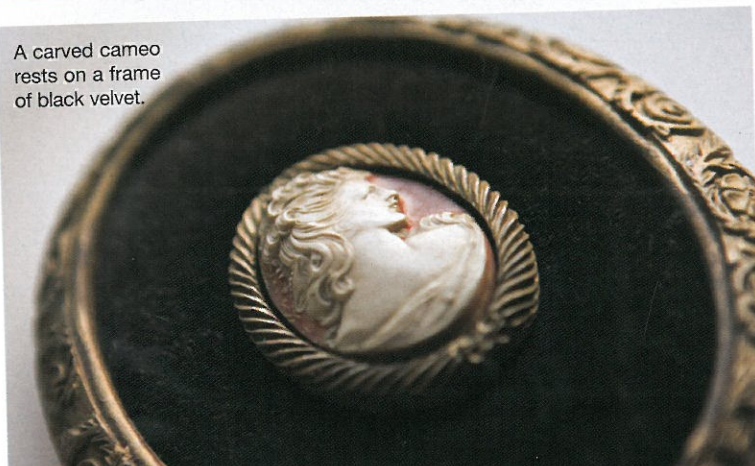
Air of Distinction

If it's one-of-a-kind finds you're after, hop over to Pasadena for an elegant afternoon of treasure hunting at Adesso. TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARYN R. MILLET



Adesso's Queen of Hearts chair; a parchment desk.

A carved cameo rests on a frame of black velvet.



A finial-topped form displays vintage French couture.

OPEN JUST A YEAR, Adesso has become a lure for top-tier designers across the country. Style-makers seeking that elusive one-off piece for a demanding, discerning client know their salvation lies in Adesso, which offers a well-edited, eclectic, and worldly collection.

After nearly two decades of living everywhere from Egypt to Argentina, collecting avidly as they went, owners Selma and Suad Cisic decided to settle in a vacation house they had purchased in Pasadena. But the Bosnia-born pair soon discovered they couldn't fit all their spoils into the California digs. And no wonder: The collective furnishings of their seven previous households filled two shipping containers to the bursting point with chandeliers, tables, chairs, mirrors, and accessories. In the face of this overabundance, setting up shop seemed a reasonable course of action, and the Cisics decided to launch Adesso.

The space they chose, in Old Town Pasadena, had originally been a stable. Now, its rustic exposed brick and vaulted skylight provide a dramatic backdrop for sleek signature pieces by such designers as Jean-Michel Frank, as well as elaborate 18th-century case goods. With their training in architecture (Selma) and engineering (Suad), the Cisics know a thing or two about proportion, and this expertise informs their own collection of singular pieces, which blend seamlessly with vintage furniture. Adesso's own Queen of Hearts chair in turquoise, for instance, is the perfect companion to an antique parchment desk.

As new containers arrive and new fans are won, the "sold" placards in the showroom are multiplying. So come quickly—and be prepared to fall in love with a piece of history. ★