

Monarch Furnishings opens warehouse gallery

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Monarch Furnishings owners Tony and Karen Martin have added a second, warehouse location in the heart of Victoria's Design District.

Five years ago, the Martins arrived in Victoria with their sights set on wholesaling exclusive contemporary Indonesian furniture made from solid plantation timbers. However, the Vancouver Port strike of 2005 quickly quashed their business model, forcing the Martins to re-examine their options. Four years after establishing a Victoria presence with a storefront in the Mayfair area, they joined Victoria's Design District in 2008 and moved their boutique to Herald Street.

Most recently, however, Monarch Furnishings' warehouse concept has been realized by securing and renovating a Warehouse Gallery location at 1807 Store St., complete with a rare loading dock capable of handling the big shipping containers arriving every few months. "I've been looking for a place like this since I first arrived," says Tony Martin, predicting that the location will also attract more foot traffic for the growing Design District. The increased floor space should also allow Monarch to offer a wider range of furniture, he added. The couple also supports local artists by featuring their works in both stores.