

# Robb Report

MAGAZINE FOR THE LUXURY LIFESTYLE™

## Bring Some Rio Home

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Legendary Brazilian modernist Sergio Rodrigues opens his first U.S. store in decades.



Diz Chair

As if it weren't enough to host the World Cup and the Olympics in coming years, or to spawn the world's best supermodels and street artists, Brazil also happens to be an international design mecca. Only one problem: Its greatest designer, legendary 84-year-old modernist Sergio Rodrigues, hasn't had a store in the U.S. in 40 years. Until now.

Rodrigues has just opened a 2,000-square-foot furniture showroom in the basement of the lush Tribeca store **Espasso**, which specializes in Brazilian design. "This was the perfect partnership for me," says Rodrigues. "A space with a real Brazilian spirit." The designer's most iconic pieces—like the draped leather and jacaranda wood Mole chair, which inspired its own book—are available here, along with newer creations.

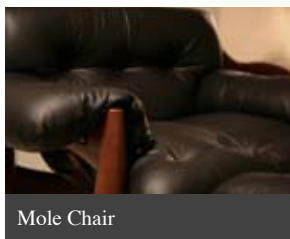
"It's sort of like an education, because a lot of people here have never heard of Sergio before," says Espasso owner Carlos Junqueira, a São Paulo native and former coffee importer. He took us on a guided tour of some of Rodrigues's greatest pieces in the new store.

### Sergio Rodrigues Kilin chair

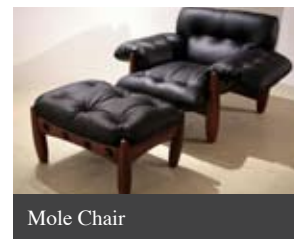
"Every piece has a name and a story. 'Squirrel' in Portuguese is 'esquilo,' and Sergio calls his wife esquilina. It's a diminutive, and the name of the chair came from the middle of the word."

### Sergio Rodrigues Oscar chair

"Sergio did that chair for the Jockey Club in Rio, and they refused it. They didn't want it for some reason. For a year it sat in Sergio's store, and nobody cared—until the



Mole Chair



Mole Chair



Diz Chair



Oscar Chair



Kilin Chair



Chifruda chair

architect Oscar Niemeyer bought two for his daughter for her wedding. Sergio was so happy that he honored the chair with Oscar's name."

### Sergio Rodrigues Chifruda chair

"You know what this means? Originally this chair was called *Aspas*, which means 'quotation marks,' but a guy was giving this chair to his lover, the wife of another guy, and the mistress we call a *chifruda*. We launched this chair here three years ago. It's an edition of 40, and 17 have sold."

### Sergio Rodrigues Mole chair

"This is Sergio's chair. It's his signature. I have one in L.A. that I don't sell."

### Sergio Rodrigues Diz chair

"This is new, designed for the Fasano Hotel in Rio. Every room has one on the terrace."

**Espasso:** 38 N. Moore Street, 212.219.0017