

# Meet **Diana Mausser**

Ceramic Tile Artist/Designer & Founder

SHOUTOUT LA



*Today we'd like to introduce you to Diana Mausser.*

**Hi Diana, what role has risk played in your life or career?**

I think risks are tied to your vision of where you see your business evolving or growing. I always imagined or dreamed that I would own the building where my business resided. I imagined/visualized my business in a house with a detached garage with property around it where we could function as an indoor/outdoor studio. This set up is ideal for tile making and healthy as well. I wanted a garden and a few cats to create a comfortable homey environment. I was forced to move from my first studio location because they were turning the property into a parking lot. After an emotional and tedious search, I found my dream property and it was for sale. The big problem was that I had no money to buy it. I had to take a big financial risk to take this step. Everyone thought I was being foolish. I listened to myself, believed in my strong work ethic and went for it. Having the dream in the first place was the key. Believing that I could pull it off and the perseverance to make it happen resulted in one of the best decisions I have made since starting Native Tile.

**Alright, so for those in our community who might not be familiar with your business, can you tell us more?**

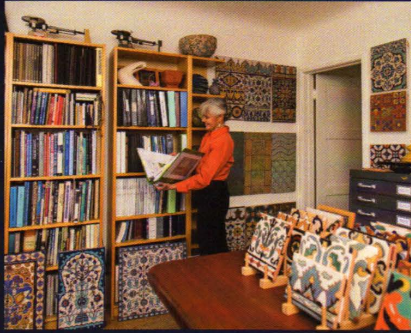
Our tile transforms spaces from just normal to spectacular and personal. This is what keeps me at it after 30 years. I started the business with just enough money for a kiln and the first month's rent on a small shed in a boat yard. I had zero contacts and no business experience, just a love for ceramics, a desire to use it to make beautiful things and a need for income to support myself. The style of tile I was attracted to when I first started Native Tile was rooted in the history of California tile making. There is a very rich architectural and tile making history here in California.



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When you see historic buildings that still contain their original tile installations you can't deny the importance the tile represents and how it enhances the beauty of the architecture. The impact can be tremendous and I wanted to create tile that elicited the same reaction. The challenge in the beginning was aligning with showrooms and clients who shared my same vision and aesthetic. To keep the doors open we had to make some tile in color combinations that were not necessarily in keeping with my personal aesthetic and that was frustrating.

My justification was that "this tile, even though I don't love it, is making the client happy and that's ok for now." My dream and goal was to get to the point where I was proud of every piece of tile that left the studio. This would mean being financially secure enough to be able to say "no" to a job that did not fit my standard of aesthetic or to have enough influence to convince the client to trust me and incorporate my advice and creative experience into the project. There have been rough patches throughout my 30 years in business but over time we have connected with some wonderful clients who have the same vision as I do and together we have used my tile to beautifully transform hundreds of historic and new construction properties.

**Any places to eat or things to do that you can share with our readers? If they have a friend visiting town, what are some spots they could take them to?**



When my close friends and family come from out of town the first thing we do is take a walk on the beach and if it's warm enough we jump in the water. This serves as a kind of cleansing of the travel weariness and stress and is always a welcome beginning to a fun week ahead. While they are here we would eat a lot of good home cooked meals that include fresh eggs and vegetables from my Native Tile studio chickens and garden. Some of the day plans would include a visit and tour of the historic Adamson House <http://www.adamsonhouse.org/> and the Serra Retreat property and a day spent in Malibu. We would most definitely take a drive up the coast to Ventura to visit my friend Dee Fisher's antique store, The Old California Store followed by a tour of my friend Cristi Walden's Santa Barbara palm farm, Sea Crest Nursery. <https://www.seacrestnursery.com/> While in Santa Barbara we would tour the historic SB Courthouse <https://santabarbaraca.com/businesses/santa-barbara-county-courthouse/> among other sights in town. The drive alone would be an enjoyable experience. The trip wouldn't be complete without a couple of visits in DTLA and Hollywood. Hopefully there would be a good music act performing at the Hollywood Bowl <https://www.hollywoodbowl.com/> and if so we would definitely try to include that in our plans. There is something so magical about listening to good music in the moonlight and seeing the band framed in the brilliance of the Hollywood Bowl arches. While in Hollywood we would stop by the Smart Residence <https://nativetile.com/?portfolio=smart-residence> in Echo Park to experience Native Tile integrated beautifully into a prime example of an historic 1930's Spanish Revival bungalow. There my friends Michael Uhlenkott <https://www.spoonflower.com/profiles/muhlenkott> and Alan Smart [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan\\_Smart](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Smart) would welcome us into their home and offer some of Alan's tasty original beverage creations in their spectacular and uniquely crafted tiki bar. These are some of the things we would do during a week spent in beautiful Southern California.



**The Shoutout series is all about recognizing that our success and where we are in life is at least somewhat thanks to the efforts, support, mentorship, love and encouragement of others. So is there someone that you want to dedicate your shoutout to?**

It's difficult to choose just one person or entity that has contributed to the success of my business. I was just telling one of my vendors that they are part of the Native Tile family. I feel that about so many people and businesses that provide their particular service to make our products come to life. Today I'm feeling especially grateful for my dear friend Dee Fisher of The Old California Store. She turned 87 today and is an amazing woman who has been an incredible source of support and encouragement for many years. Her strength and creativity inspires me every day.

