

Chris & Kristian Birchby

Bonsall, CA

New Sensations

It's incredible
what kind of
work can get
done when the
home office is
in your own
backyard.


vineyard vines®
Every day should feel this good.

CHRIS IS WEARING: **SURFSIDE PLAID MADRAS SHORT-SLEEVE
MURRAY SHIRT** 1W0263 blue heron 1404 \$79.50. 100% cotton.
Imported. KRISTIAN IS WEARING: **TOKENEKE MAXI DRESS**
2Q0085 vineyard navy 410 \$135.00. 100% cotton-poplin. Imported.

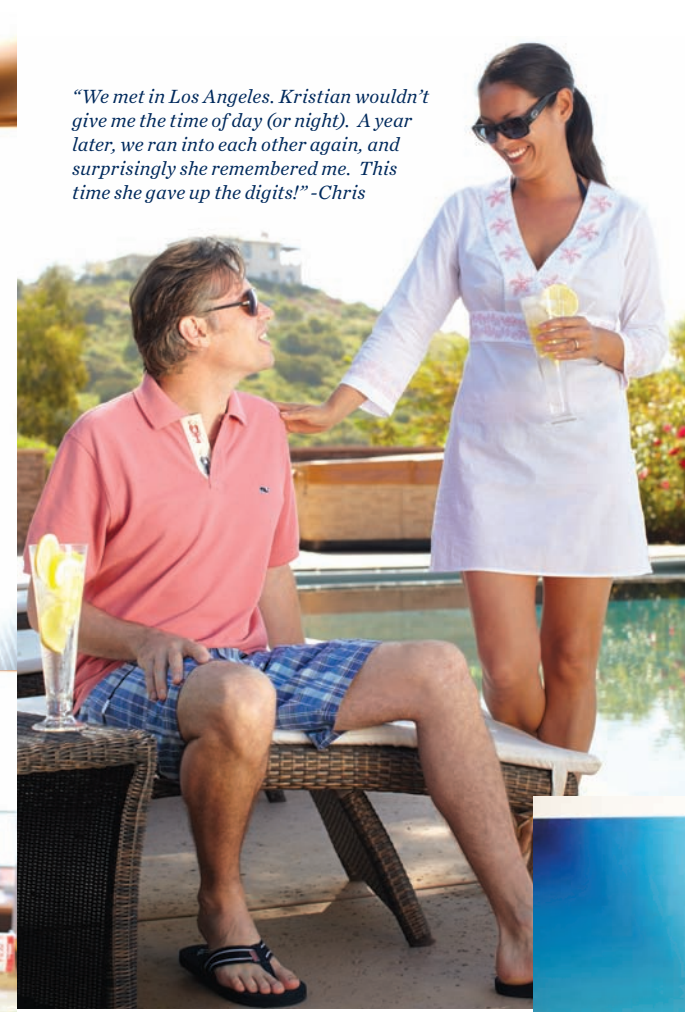




What's it like being in business with your spouse?

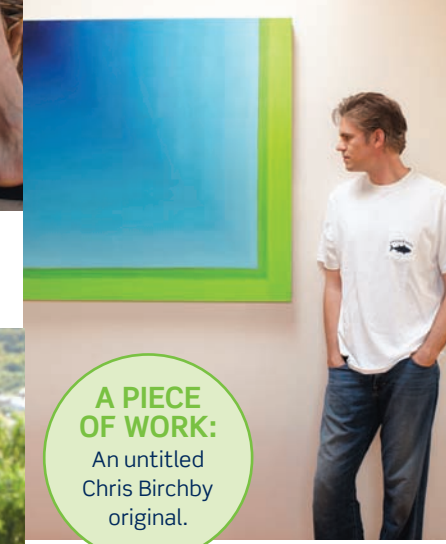
"It really helps you become a better communicator in all aspects of the relationship."

"I agree with my wife."



"We met in Los Angeles. Kristian wouldn't give me the time of day (or night). A year later, we ran into each other again, and surprisingly she remembered me. This time she gave up the digits!" -Chris

INTERESTED IN HORSE-RIDING LESSONS? Kristian recently became certified as a CHA level 1 instructor.



A PIECE OF WORK:
An untitled Chris Birchby original.

PET PROJECTS: Not only do the Birchby's live in an equestrian community; they have 2 horses, 3 cats and 3 French Bulldogs.



A couple of cool facts about COOLA:

- Hours are 8-5 pm
- They believe in Fundays, kicking off each week with Formal Mondays. Last year it was Hawaiian Shirt Fridays.



CHECK OUT COOLASUNCARE.COM

The best advice

we have for people who want to start their own business is to find something that inspires them and the rest will fall into place. Case in point: Chris and Kristian Birchby, the powerhouse team behind COOLA, an environmentally conscious line of organic skincare. Once upon a time, Chris, a college buddy of Ian's and an artist with his MFA in Studio Art, was a professional poker player whose final tables include both the World Series of Poker and World Poker Tour Championship (needless to say his poker face is quite impressive); Kristian, a former fashion model, was making a name for herself in the commercial production industry. However, in 2002, after facing melanoma scares on both sides of their family, the Birchby's were inspired to create a line of skincare that is actually good for people—all COOLA products are filled with natural elements, organic extracts and plenty of vitamins. Chris and Kristian were kind enough to give us a peek behind the curtain of the COOLA offices, which also happens to be their home. When we say that everything on the property is green, we're not just referring to the breathtaking California landscape their home is situated on—we're talking about well water, recycling and composting. Plans are also under way for eco-certification. We're pretty green-behind-the-ears when it comes to those things, but it sounds like COOLA is destined for a moment in the sun.

THE BIRCHBY'S ARE WEARING:
THIS PAGE: CHRIS IS WEARING: **LOBSTER PLACKET POLO** 1K0117 \$69.50. **LONG BOARD PLAID BOARD SHORTS** 1M0032 \$79.50. **ON THE WATER SHORT-SLEEVE GRAPHIC T-SHIRT** 1V0037 \$28.00. **SURFSIDE PLAID MADRAS SHORT-SLEEVE MURRAY SHIRT** 1W0263 blue heron 1404 \$79.50. 100% cotton. Imported. KRISTIAN IS WEARING: **3/4-SLEEVE CLEARWATER COVER-UP** 2M0001 \$145.00. **NEW CLASSIC POLO** 2K0092 \$65.00.
OPPOSITE PAGE: CHRIS IS WEARING: **NEWHALL GINGHAM MURRAY SHIRT** 1W0241 \$98.50. **TIKI HUT PRINTED TIE** 1T0167 \$75.00. **TWILL CLUB SHORTS** 1H0017 \$69.50. KRISTIAN IS WEARING: **FENWICK DRESS** 2Q0087 \$98.50.

CHRIS & KRISTIAN BIRCHBY

Q&A

We quizzed this West Coast team on all things COOLA (and a few things not). Here's what we found out:

Where does the name COOLA come from?

KB: I decided to Google "sun myths" and up came a very cool legend that originated from the Bella Coola Indians about a mother and her son whose father could never visit (the sun) because he would get burnt! So I dropped the Bella and COOLA stuck.

Where do you see the company in 10 years?

CB: The same employees, some new employees and a new office, but still in San Diego! Full international distribution and about 50 new products. Also, time for a vacation would be awesome.

If you weren't running COOLA, what would you be doing?

KB: Hopefully raising children and animals and learning how to garden so I could feed the entire family from the land!

CB: I'd be back in the studio full-time making paintings and playing a lot more poker.

Best part about working from home?

KB: I get to be with my family every day and I don't have to fight my way through traffic.

CB: Waking up, showering, making coffee, taking the dogs out and still getting behind my desk within half an hour. And then spending time all day with our animals.

Your previous jobs were not typical 9-5; what's the biggest adjustment between those gigs and owning your own business?

KB: Well, now we are responsible for other people's livelihood.

CB: I agree. Being responsible for the livelihoods of several other people is a big obligation. Painting and poker were much more self-indulgent and solitary pursuits.

You have a very green-minded approach; why is that important to you?

KB: We live like this and try our very best to keep our interests and day-to-day lives as in sync with nature as possible. We also feel we have a responsibility to leave something good behind for future generations.

What are some of your other passions?

KB: I love horses and gardening. They help keep my stress levels down!

CB: Painting and poker. And travel when possible.