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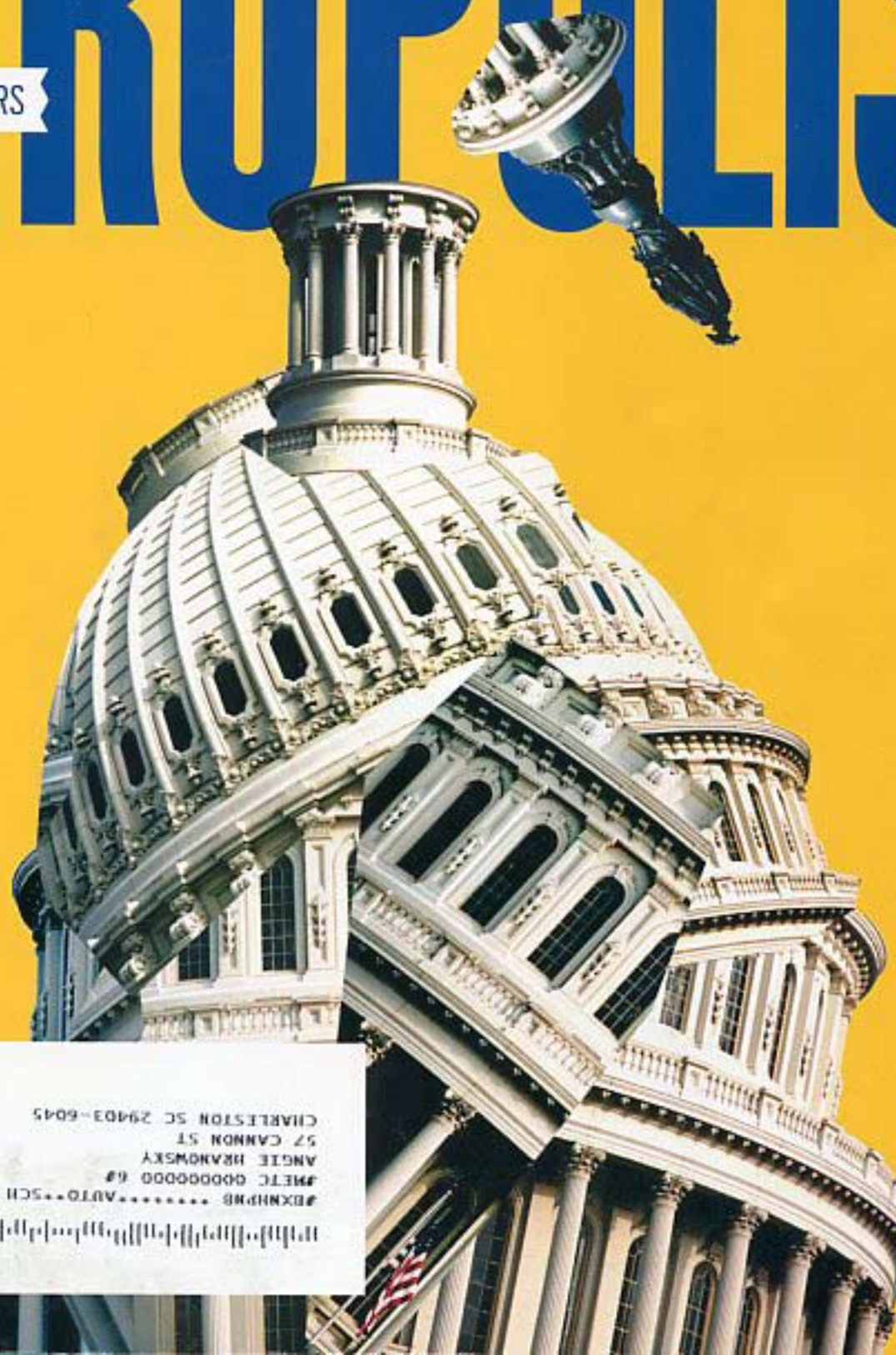
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PROJECT
Enoteca
18 Percy Street

Charleston,
South Carolina

"I've worked with enough interior designers to know that they tell you one thing," Vedrinski says, "but then you get a bill that's over budget."



Design on a Dime

For her first commercial interior, Angie Hranowsky pulls off big style on a shoestring budget.

Summers slow to a crawl in Charleston, South Carolina, where the days routinely turn as hot and steamy as a boiling pot of pasta. While the beaches fill up, business opportunities tend to thin out. Curiously, that cultural inertia landed the interior designer Angie Hranowsky her first commercial project, an Italian wine-and-cheese bar called Enoteca.

Since opening in downtown Charleston two and a half years ago, chef Ken Vedrinski's Trattoria Lucca had proven so successful that it was losing customers. "It's busy all the time, but it's small and there was nowhere to wait, so people were leaving," Vedrinski says. Last June, when his landlord offered him rental of a 500-square-foot space four buildings down, Vedrinski decided to open a bar to accommodate Lucca's overflow. But he had only \$30,000 to spare for the project.

The architect of Lucca was leaving town for the summer, she recommended Hranowsky, who had developed a following for her vibrant residential designs. Hranowsky's office is two blocks away, so she was able to walk back and forth to the site as needed—which was often. "I was the designer, the contractor, and the cleaning person," she says.

Wearing multiple hats saved money, as did Hranowsky's nose for deals. "I wanted Enoteca to be cozy, kind of like a living room, so I had to find a sofa," she says. She hit up a favorite antiques store for a settee, saying, "It's probably not

going to be on the floor, because then I won't be able to afford it." The dealer Capers Cauthen, in the store at the time, had one in his warehouse for \$150. Plus, Hranowsky learned that Cauthen builds furniture, so she hired him to reproduce some too-pricey marble tables and to construct frames for the cube stools she had upholstered in the same cotton as the settee's.

Vedrinski, meanwhile, imagined lots of old wood: "I wanted to replicate the *enotecas* in Italy," he says. Much of the budget went toward the pine ceiling and the black-walnut bar top. "To get walnut with a live edge from a tree would have cost like \$5,000," Hranowsky says. Instead, she found a supplier who'd gotten the wrong shipment and he let her have a few pieces for \$835. Worried she'd have to use new wood on the ceiling, Hranowsky reached out to Carolina Lumber. "The guy called me two days later and said, 'I'm standing in a farmhouse in the middle of South Carolina. I can pull off the wood if you want it.'" In the midst of his own summertime lull, the installer of the ceiling was willing to work cheap.

Vedrinski appreciated Hranowsky's discipline. "I've worked with enough interior designers to know they tell you one thing, but then you get a bill that's over budget," he says. He also admires how Hranowsky married her more glamorous style with his rustic vision. "The love seat looks more Victorian than Italian," he says, "but it grew on me." ■

The interior of the new Enoteca bar is designed to look old, "to replicate the *enotecas* of Italy," says the owner, Ken Vedrinski. He adds that the project's slight cost overruns were "because of things I wanted."