

Curious George

Designer George Esquivel works hard, but also finds time for a little fun and good food. << By Jocelyn Anderson

George Esquivel has high hopes for 2010.

Last year, the primarily men's shoe designer introduced a women's collection. Starting with spring '09, Esquivel expanded upon styles he had already been producing on a custom basis, with a flat oxford as the signature style. Satine in Los Angeles and Hirshleifer's in Manhasset, N.Y., have already picked up the collection (Odin in New York and Blackbird in Seattle are among his men's accounts). "It's really taken off," Esquivel said of the oxford. "It's a classic shoe, not trying to be too sexy or wild, but with a feminine touch."

The 2009 CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund nominee also saw his by-appointment L.A. store, Esquivel House, open up for walk-ins. "It got to the point where people were just showing up, and we weren't there," he said. "So we changed [the by-appointment] policy."

Esquivel will next present his footwear Feb. 16-18 at the trade show he founded, Guild, at The Palms Place in Las Vegas. Here, he talks with *Footwear News* about living in Los Angeles, being a foodie and why he no longer stomachs rice and beans.



Worst habit:

"Dessert! Who doesn't love chocolate cake at night before they go to bed?"

I wish I knew how to ...

"Speak like six languages or be a speed-reader."



Favorite L.A. hotspot:

"I like to go mountain biking in the hills in Southern California. That's my getaway from the world."

Music my kids love:

"I just took my oldest to a No Doubt concert, which was cool because I've made shoes for them for years. She got to meet the band."



When we're dining in ...

"I like when [my wife] makes American comfort food, like tuna casserole, meatloaf, steak and potatoes. I'm Mexican and grew up on beans and rice."

When we're dining out ...

"I love the new restaurant Philippe. They have one in New York and just opened one in Los Angeles. The food is so amazing there."



I never leave home without ...

"It's the Crack-berry, as they call it. I love it, and I hate it."



Favorite hotel:

"For business, it's the Palms Place in Las Vegas. In New York, the Ace Hotel is really cool."



Recent celebrity clients:

"I get the big basketball players. I usually don't give names out, but I'll say the Cleveland Cavaliers."