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Designing Dignity: How Remsen is Redefining Senior Living

WLW speaks to the founders of Remsen to understand how the power of thoughtful design can change the lives of an overlooked population.

WORDS Elissa Rose

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In an industry often skewed toward youth, New York-based lifestyle brand Remsen is shifting the narrative. Founded by a creative duo with architectural backgrounds, Remsen's mission is clear: to reposition the conversation around aging by creating premium, thoughtfully designed products for a demographic that the design industry often overlooks. The need for well-designed products catering to older adults is only growing. Currently, over 17 percent of US citizens are over the age of 65, and this figure is expected to rise to 23 percent by 2050. Despite these demographics, apart from a few exceptions, the senior market remains largely underserved in terms of design. Disruptors in the market, Remsen's core belief—that beauty and good design should be for everyone, regardless of age—guides their entire process, resulting in elegant, functional products that enhance the lives of older adults.



Sam Zeif and Spencer Fried, founders of Remsen in Brooklyn.
Photo courtesy of Remsen



Co-founder Sam Zeif with his grandmother Gloria. Photo courtesy of Remsen

Remsen's story is deeply personal. The inspiration of founders Sam Zeif and Spencer Fried comes from their own experiences caring for elderly family members during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Spencer and I were both fortunate enough to grow up surrounded by multiple generations of family, and we saw just how overwhelming the products our grandparents needed and used every day were," says Sam. As they spent more time with aging relatives, they noticed that many products designed for seniors—such as shower chairs, pill organizers and

noticed that many products designed for seniors—such as shower chairs, pill organizers and walking aids—were not only utilitarian but often unattractive. These objects seemed to prioritize function at the expense of design, leaving their elderly family members struggling with or underutilizing these essential items.

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SPENCER FRIED

As Spencer says, "instead of celebrating age, these objects tended to be sterile and cheap; medical devices, not designed objects. Remsen intends to shift perspectives on aging through the design of these everyday goods. We believe that as you age, you should want the things you need. Getting older shouldn't mean changing who we are." This realization sparked Remsen's commitment to creating products that people want to use, offering comfort and dignity through beauty and functionality. Spencer studied at the Yale School of Architecture and became immersed in hospitality design, which gave him a lens through which he was focused entirely on the end user. This informed how he approaches the products they create. At its heart, Remsen's approach is about more than just design, it's about creating products that improve quality of life. "People are not patients, and we are past seeing age and disability as something to fear or solve for," says Sam. While Remsen's items are visually striking, their ultimate purpose is to make a meaningful impact on everyday life. Their product range spans a variety of essential items, from canes to pill boxes and fluted nickel grab rails. What sets these products apart is their ability to transcend age barriers.



Remsen's Pill Container. Photo courtesy of Remsen



Remsen's Playing Card Set includes a pack of cards designed for legibility and pair of card holders. Photo courtesy of Remsen

The studio prioritizes designing with longevity in mind, ensuring that their products are durable and sustainable investments. For Remsen, sustainability is not just a buzzword but an integral part of their design process. By creating items that last and are built with high-quality materials, they promote responsible consumption and discourage the disposable culture that permeates much of today's market. Spencer tells WLLW, "Producing products is energy-intensive no matter which way you look at it, but the choice to make products out of long-lasting materials so they don't need to be replaced and are never made obsolete—that's responsible." Regarding minimizing the company's carbon footprint, he continues, "Right now, we're so small that we don't have much of a footprint to begin with! But there are lessons in operating a small, tight ship. We're always asking ourselves how we can remain resourceful and mitigate waste as we grow slowly. There's virtue in slow growth. It can be indicative of and insightful for a considered and sustainable future."





Remsen's Key-turn provides a larger surface to grip reducing the effort to hold and turn a key. Photo courtesy of Remsen



Remsen's Cane with a turned walnut foot and handle. Photo courtesy of Remsen

Remsen's commitment to craftsmanship is evident in every detail of their work. They use premium materials such as teakwood, aluminum and walnut. Each material is carefully chosen not just for its aesthetic qualities but also for its durability and sustainability. According to Spencer, they "stand by a philosophy and approach to design that prioritizes durable materials. Besides their inherent characteristics that beget beauty and utility, they also inspire users to care and maintain objects of such materiality." Teakwood, for example, is known for its resilience and longevity, while aluminum offers a lightweight yet sturdy option for essential items like canes and grab rails. Walnut, with its rich, natural grain, adds warmth and elegance to objects often perceived as purely functional. Spencer continues, "Products composed of quality materials tend to be cherished, celebrated, and passed down from generation to generation. That idea fundamentally inspires us and our designs." By positioning their products as essential for maintaining both functionality and beauty in later life, they are leading the charge in transforming how we think about aging and design. Through these choices, Remsen creates products that are not only built to last but that can be cherished for years to come.

Discover Remsen products at the [WLLW Shop](#).



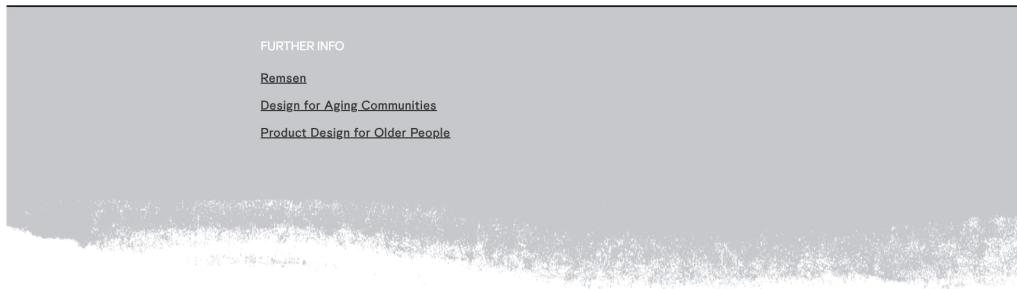
Remsen's fluted Grab Bar with a polished nickel finish. Photo courtesy of Remsen



Remsen's Shower Chair designed as a piece of furniture and crafted from teak. Photo courtesy of Remsen

Feature Image: The Pill Container. Photo courtesy of Remsen

Photography: courtesy of Remsen



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