



WHAT MAKES A BAR OOZE STYLE? **KAREN FITTALL** STEPS INTO SOME OF THE BEST DESIGNER DRINKING DENS.

LYCHEE LOUNGE

The destination :: Brisbane The designers :: Freelance designers Nic Brunner, Carmel Haugh, Remo Vallance and owner Elie Moubarak. The vision :: "We wanted to create a sensory delight," says Moubarak. "We also knew we had to cater for Brisbane's West End market, which is geared towards a young arts scene. The venue had to be personable, ensuring every customer felt like it was their own watering hole."

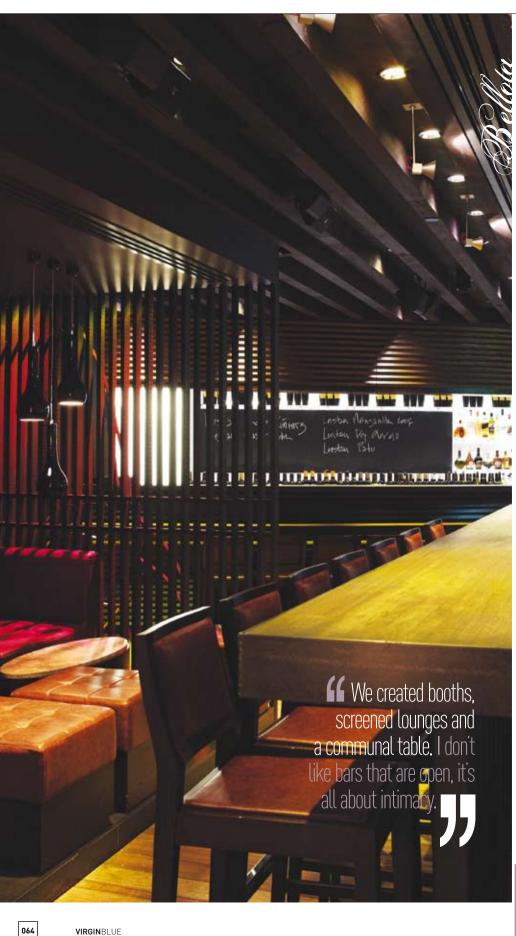
The reality check :: "Our vision grew as the project travelled to the build and install stage. It's rare for a design to be complete in the conceptual stage, though." The execution :: "Lighting was the most important factor in achieving our vision – in fact, I believe lighting is the single most important thing in any bar." The result :: "Lychee Lounge is a totally harmonious space. It's beautiful but unpretentious, and offers a high standard of product, service and atmosphere."

DESIGN DETAILS

The decor :: The glitzy gold instantly lets you know that you're someplace special. The details :: Check out the light fittings – there's even a chandelier crafted from Barbie doll heads. The damage :: Around \$5,000 per square metre. See it firsthand :: Lychee Lounge, 2/94 Boundary Street, West End, Brisbane. Call +61 7 3846 0544 or visit www.lycheelounge.com.au.







BELLOTA

The destination :: Auckland The designer :: Andrew Lister The vision :: "The client wanted to create a vibrant venue that could be used as an extension to the SKYCITY Grand Hotel, which had no bar facilities," says Lister. "They also wanted it to be a tapas bar, so people could sample celebrity chef Peter Gordon's food without having to book weeks ahead to eat in a more formal surrounding." The reality check :: "The space was pretty small, so a couple of things had to be changed designwise due to logistical reasons. We also made the decision to open up the wall, which faces the street, so that passers-by could catch a glimpse of the energy inside." The execution :: "We created four or five different types of seating booths for larger groups, screened lounges for smaller ones and a communal table for couples and singles. I don't like bars that are open, it's all about intimacy." The result :: "This is a stylish, comfortable venue with an ambience that was previously unavailable in Auckland's central city area."

DESIGN DETAILS

The decor :: The use of stone, wood, aranite, marble, steel and leather have resulted in a bar that's bursting with natural materials and finishes. The details :: To bestow the bar with that all-important intimate vibe, Lister boxed clever, employing a series of timber slatted screens to divide what was already a small space into a collection of nooks. However, because the screens are transparent, you still get a sense of space but are afforded a splash of privacy at the same time. The damage :: Don't ask - the client's lips are sealed. Find out more :: Visit www.andrew listerarchitect.com See it firsthand :: Bellota, 91

Federal Street, Auckland. Call +649 363 6301 or visit www.bellota.co.nz.