



dine with design

We all like to eat out - but can restaurants offer inspiring and practical ideas for your home? Our experts serve some food for thought WORDS LEE TRAN LAM



MATT WOODS, MATT WOODS DESIGN

Restaurant interiors can be very creative. What are some details you've used in your design projects? I like to play around with matte and gloss paint finishes to create variation and movement on what would otherwise be an unbroken stretch of wall. It's a cost-effective way to inject graphic originality into any room.

What aspects of restaurant design could people translate into their homes? Unique elements that will create conversation points, such as a single material or colour throughout; or multiple materials and highlight finishes, which ensure the eye is constantly on the move.

What are key things people often overlook when thinking about kitchens and dining areas? Lighting, lighting, lighting!

Dimmable, dimmable, dimmable! I've seen refurbishments that lavish attention on finishes, form and detail then stuff up the lighting. I specify all my light fittings as warm white (no more than 3000 K [kelvin]) and have a dimmer installed. Lighting levels change throughout the day, so you need control over the output of your lighting.

Budgets can be tricky to deal with, so what's worth spending money on? Some cheaper yet durable finishes can be used on cabinet doors, splashbacks and hardware if these are complemented by quality furniture and lights. In restaurants, you can spend less on finishes if you nail the lighting. The same can be said for residential projects.

Are there any restaurant designs you're inspired by? Gazi by March Studio in Melbourne. I'm enamoured with the repetition of I-don't-know-how-many suspended terracotta pots to create a big and bold statement. Stunning.

For more info on Matt Woods Design, visit killingmattwoods.com.



PHOTOGRAPHY (OPPOSITE, CHI AND CO. CHIANDCO.COM.AU) SAM ALL (THIS PAGE, TOP: PRAHRAN HOTEL, PRAHRANHOTEL.COM) PETER CLARKE (FAR RIGHT, WOOLWICH PIER HOTEL, WOOLWICHPIERHOTEL.COM.AU) MICHAEL WEE



JUSTIN NORTHROP, TECHNE ARCHITECTS

Restaurant interiors can be very creative. What are some inventive details you've used in your design projects? At Prahran Hotel (left), we designed private dining booths that sit within the facade, formed by sections of stacked concrete pipes. At Tonka restaurant, we collaborated with artist Naomi Troski who designed a whimsical cloud-like mesh installation for the ceilings.

What restaurant design elements could people translate into their homes? Different types of seating to suit different styles of dining, as well as more atmospheric and theatrical lighting.

What are key things people often overlook when thinking about kitchens and dining areas? Functional flow; placement of the refrigeration to suit the kitchen user and other occupants of

the house; and entertainment areas should be closely connected to the space.

Budgets can be tricky to deal with, so what's worth spending money on? Prioritise. Hugely expensive appliances can be overrated; you may be better off putting your money into the finishes. Spending on the best-quality kitchen and associated areas (dining, living, entertainment) is key. These are the most public parts of the house and areas in which occupants spend the most time.

Are there any restaurant designs you're inspired by? Melbourne has so many great examples, from the classic design at Pellegrini's to the way Six Degrees Architects influenced hospitality design in this city.

What's your own kitchen like? My own kitchen is fairly simple, but robust. I like the modest butler's kitchen for hiding the mess and the convenient connection to the herb garden. As an architect, being your own client is difficult; however, working with your own budget forces you to focus on the most important features.

For more details on Techne Architects, visit techne.com.au.



STUART KRELLE, LUCHETTI KRELLE

What restaurant design elements could people translate into their homes? The coving of your floors to meet the kitchen joinery. It's required by the health code for all commercial kitchens, and makes complete sense when cleaning your floors.

Budgets can be tricky to deal with, so what's worth spending money on? I'm always confused when people will spend upwards of \$400 on clothing that will last a season but not more than, say, \$150 on a piece of furniture that can last for a very long time.

What's your own kitchen like? My family and I have recently moved into our first home. We're thinking of using the galley kitchen with our dining table straddling the benchtop in the kitchen - with the dining table hopefully ageing gracefully from its secondary use. →

For more info on Luchetti Krelle, visit luchettikrelle.com.





KOICHI TAKADA, KOICHI TAKADA ARCHITECTS

What elements of restaurant design could people translate into their homes?

The set-up of a commercial kitchen teaches us efficiency. Also, functional design

features - dishwashing showers, under-counter fridges - give us many good practical inspirations.

Budgets can be tricky to deal with, so what's worth spending money on? We tend not to compromise in the design of kitchens. However, you may be surprised to see the quality of laminated panels these days, or quartz-based reconstituted stones that look exceptional and come with great cost savings for your budget.

What's your own kitchen like? I designed a seven-metre-long galley-type kitchen; everything can hide behind panels, so the kitchen becomes part of the wall. It made a small home feel bigger. For more info on Koichi Takada Architects, visit koichitakada.com.



CHRIS WILKS, GIANT

What elements of restaurant design could people translate into their homes?

I love the use of wrap-around banquette seating in the living or dining room, and the creative display (with good lighting) of crockery and glassware, rather than having it all hidden away.

What are key things people often overlook when thinking about kitchens and dining areas? I love using mirrors to create extra depth or a visual effect. In a tiny cafe, Cuckoo Callay (above), we installed a giant feature light over a mirror-clad central wall. The wow factor is evident on all the faces reflected within.

Budgets can be tricky to deal with, so what's worth spending money on? Good lighting. While you don't need to seek out the most expensive brands, you want to have all the best features of halogen lighting: warm colour, the ability to dim, directional light and an attractive fitting to look at when the light isn't on.

Are there any restaurant designs you're inspired by? I tend to be drawn to spaces that contrast quality finishes and fine detailing against rustic backdrops; spaces that are beautiful as well as comfy. The Apollo in Sydney's Potts Point is a gem. For more info on Giant, visit giantdesign.com.



DAVID LOVETT, UCCELLO

You work as head chef of Uccello restaurant in Sydney. What are some of the elements

from commercial kitchens that you've translated into your own home?

Organisation is key - whether it's the way you stock your fridge or the layout of your kitchen bench and work space. Having your tools and equipment all out and easily accessible is so important. Just as it is in my kitchen at work, I make sure that at home almost everything is at arm's length from where we stand; pots, pans, tongs, knives and chopping boards are all a half step or turn away.

Budgets can be tricky to deal with, so what's worth spending money on?

A large, good-quality frying pan and pot with a nice thick bottom and plenty of space. You can cook for one or two, or even five and six

in a large pot and pan, but not in a small one. A top-of-the-line benchtop mixer makes life easier and will pay for itself with light, fluffy sponges, giant, silky meringues, and well-kneaded pasta dough. A decent gas cooktop and oven are also worth their weight in gold when it comes to cooking.

What do you look for when you walk into a restaurant and what are some restaurant interiors that inspire you?

I like the interior to work with the food being served; food that is not overworked or complicated needs a clean, simple room as if to act as the canvas for the plates of food; case in point - Fergus Henderson and Trevor Gulliver's St John restaurant in London. In Sydney, the simplicity of places like Bodega or Sagra work perfectly with the food, while there's the more elaborate and grander rooms of Icebergs, Mr. Wong or Portefino. Catch David at the March Into Merivale Food & Wine Festival at Uccello, Level 4, 320 George Street, Sydney, which runs until April 11. For info, visit merivale.com.au/uccello.



DANA TOMICH HUGHES, YELLOW TRACE

You designed the Gumtree Garden laneway pop-up bar in Sydney (right), furnishing it with items from

the classifieds site Gumtree. What should people source from sites such as Gumtree, and what might be better saved for an investment buy? I've always been a great believer that good taste and style have nothing to do with designer price tags. At times, it's almost easier to bring a space to life, inject it with personality and take it to the next level by cleverly mixing the old with the even older - particularly when the budget is tight. Vintage pieces really can layer a space with very special richness and soul. Having said this, it's really important to assess every

piece for comfort, structural stability and longevity. Most vintage furniture pieces were built to last, although - for example - the comfort level of some second-hand chairs may not be what you're after in your own home. This is entirely personal, so it's important to test things first. I would also pay close attention when selecting second-hand lighting - in some cases, the wiring could be severely out of date and become a potential fire hazard.

What elements of bar design could people translate into their homes? In the past few years, there's been a huge movement in bars, restaurants and hotels being designed to feel like "home" and vice versa. It's not uncommon for my clients to ask for their home to feel "resort-like" or have "some theatre". The key things we can adopt from hospitality venues is the approach to lighting, layering of patterns and textures, and choices of furniture.

For more info on Yellowtrace and to visit Dana's blog, head to yellowtrace.com.au.



PHOTOGRAPHY: (OPPOSITE) TOP: CAVE RESTAURANT SHARRIN REES. (KOICHI TAKADA PORTRAIT) SHARYN CAIRNS. (LEFT, GUMTREE GARDEN & DANA TOMICH HUGHES PORTRAIT) NICK HUGHES FOR YELLOWTRACE.COM.AU. (THIS PAGE) TOP: CUCKOO CALLAY. (02) 9557 7006. AND CHRIS WILKS PORTRAIT) ANDREW WORSSAM

