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INSIDEOUT

Cayman's Home & Living Magazine

The cool summer living issue



The colour purple

House with vibrant hues

Tropical beach garden

Plants in the sand

Bertrand Marson house

Historic Brac home

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COMPLIMENTARY

Linger longer

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InsideOut looks at two commercial spaces with interior design to whet your appetite.

It was once the case that items on a restaurant's menu were far more interesting than the surroundings in which the food was served.

Now, however, there has been a move to make dining areas as creative and attractive as the dishes being offered.

Business owners are beginning to realise they need to lure customers by ensuring that interiors are interesting and inviting, with cutting-edge design to tempt guests to linger longer.

Creating a legend

Fast paced, down to earth and sports-focused, Legendz on West Bay Road has been a firm favourite of residents and visitors for more than 18 years.

Trends change, however, and owner Jan Alexander felt the sports bar concept needed an overhaul.

"Even though we serve moderately-priced food, why can't people sit in a gorgeous room?" she wanted to know. And so, at the end of last year, she engaged the services of Michelle Butler and Dave Wilson of The Design Studio, and Phoenix Construction to plan and execute a complete renovation of the venue.

It was a tight timeline, says Dan Morisseau of Phoenix Construction, so having everyone, including electrical, plumbing and air conditioning teams in place as early as possible was imperative. In just two months Legendz reopened with a fresh, elegant new look.

It was out with the traditional pub-style, wood-panelling and heavy sports focus, and in with something glamorous and contemporary.

"The name and the whole legends concept

– Marilyn Monroe, the Rat Pack, rock 'n roll – was a good starting point for the design and it lead to some really fun elements," says Michelle.

The walls around the raised seating area are covered in a funky white and silver patterned wall paper, while large circular ceiling lamps hang low over tables. The booth seating is upholstered in a metallic-look fabric and old black and white movies play silently on a loop on TV screens overhead.

"We kept the elements that worked, and changed those that didn't," explains Michelle. The upper level seating area used to be customers' last choice when they entered the restaurant, she says, so they redesigned the area to make it more inviting. An aluminium coil curtain now creates a semi-partition between the entrance and dining area. While one can see through the chain links, it creates the impression of a division.

Now, Jan says, it's customers' first choice of seating and is popular for private functions.

The booths, on the other hand, were always popular, so they stayed, albeit squared off to eliminate some awkward angles.

Televisions behind the bar continue to broadcast sports, but don't intrude on customers just wanting a relaxed dinner.

"The upper level is more of a lounge area now, the lower level is the action zone," explains Dave. "It's painted red, there's a larger than life mural on one wall and we've included a dance floor."

Jan is excited by the possibilities the new design offers and is planning martini nights, rock 'n roll dance classes and more. Ultimately, they have created a venue that invites guests to sit back, relax and enjoy.

"For me, when I come in here, I love every space," she says. "It's just a pleasure to be in here."



Colonial elegance

No expense has been spared to recreate colonial-style elegance and comfort at the recently opened George Town Yacht Club at the end of North Sound Road, at The Barcadere marina.

Neville Scott's unique vision, the skilled craftsmanship of the team at Phoenix Construction and meticulous sourcing of the finest materials have combined to create a space that embodies Caribbean history, local maritime heritage and the sophistication of present-day Cayman.

Inspired by the Great Houses of Jamaica, and Pedro Castle, the building which houses the restaurant, bar and clubhouse, replicates many of the design elements of historic properties in the region.

Having long been fascinated by the history of architecture, especially in the Caribbean, and having worked for Chalmers Gibbs Architects before joining his family business (Scotts Marine), it was only natural

that Neville, as one of the developers of the multi-faceted Barcadere project, should take on the design of this project.

The lower levels of Great Houses were typically more utilitarian in design and function, Neville explains, while the upper levels were more refined – an idea that has been incorporated into George Town Yacht Club. The ground floor features tiled floors and concrete walls, and houses the kitchen and dining area. The clubhouse, above, has beautiful hand-scraped wooden floors, tongue and groove wood panelling and an elaborate wooden ceiling.

Both levels, however, capture a timeless sense of gentility.


“This truly was a design/build programme, as many of the interior finish selections were not finalised when we took on the contract to build the shell of the property,” says Neil Rooney of Phoenix Construction. “Even some of the major features, like the wonderful ceiling in the members’ lounge were devised, drafted and crafted by the team of owner, designer and builder after the roof was on.”

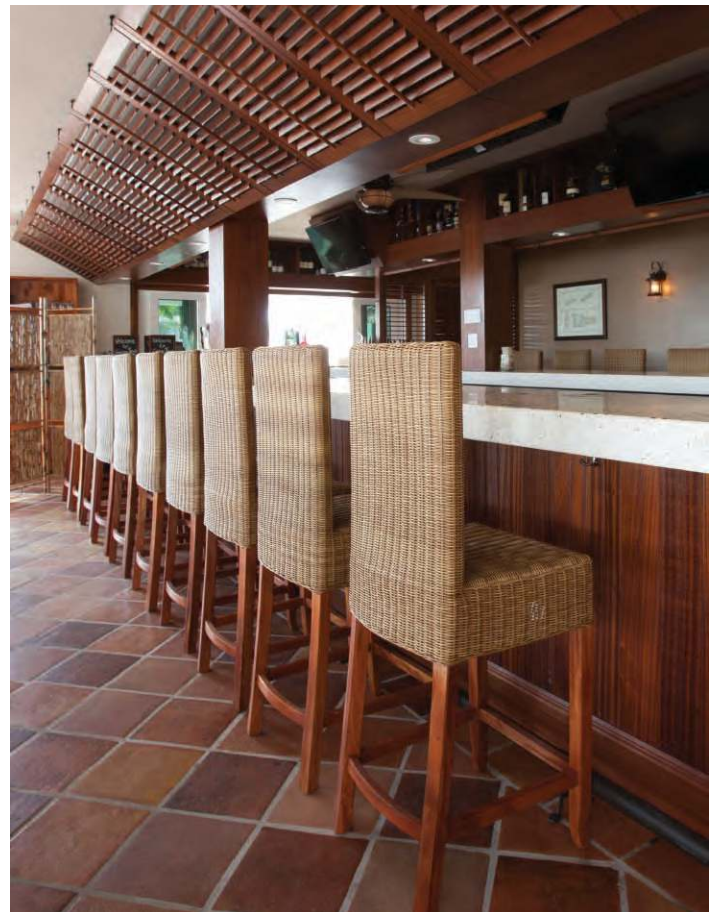
Heavy mahogany doors and solid mahogany dining tables, both indoors and out, almost glow with warmth, windows spanning the entire front of the building create the airiness of a long porch, while allowing the restaurant to be air conditioned during the hotter months.

Nautical details abound. Brass portholes acquired from ship scrap yards in Europe have been polished and inserted into the kitchen doors, old ship’s lanterns hang from walls and ceilings, and antique maps of Grand Cayman adorn the walls.

Blending old and new, the vast bar counter is a masterpiece in itself. Made from a single piece of concrete, Neville collected glass bottles, conch shells, pieces of coral, beach sand and luminescent stones to mix into the concrete which was poured in situ.

Outdoors, the atmosphere is South Beach-style, relaxed sophistication. White directors chairs and mahogany tables are placed to observe the coming and going of the boats, while around a circular leisure pool - into which coloured jets of water arc after dark - day beds invite guests to lounge awhile.

The clubhouse on the upper level, reserved for members only, is truly a space in which to sit back in comfort. Clusters of sofas fill the majority of the Great Room, with a bar and a handful of tables occupying one end. Local artwork by Guy Harvey and Chris Christian hang on coral coloured walls, above white painted wood panelling, lending it a uniquely Caribbean feel. 




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