



360 Bar and Dining

WORDS: KERRY RAMSEY

Design whiz Michael McCann has given an iconic venue atop Centrepont Tower a new spin

“**W**e had a definitive concept to work with—a revolving restaurant with great views—although the very idea is quite clichéd. On top of this, we had to overcome the necessity of patrons walking through a shopping centre to reach the restaurant. The challenge was to create an iconic space that would attract both a la carte diners as well as groups. We started by selecting dramatic finishes and adding a spectacular revolving

bar. The bar was clad with tortoise shell imported from Indonesia. Actually it's 50x50mm squares of mussel shells coloured to appear like tortoise shell.

“The wine rack provided a simple way to shield the lift lobby. As patrons exit the lifts they get a hint of the view through the wine cellar. When they walk around the cellar and have an unobstructed view, the result is very dramatic.

“It's important that moody, dramatic lighting sets the scene for the intended drama as well as for the required task lighting. The venue is flooded with light from floor-to-ceiling windows during the day, so lighting needs to provide the balance on the inner walls and entry vestibule. In the evening, the lighting dims down to enhance the light show that Sydney provides. It also ensures that reflection on the inside of the windows is kept to a minimum. We also designed the custom ceiling lights with a local lighting designer. These remain fixed while diners rotate under them and can be clearly seen by a number of Sydney suburbs.

“On the upper level, the banquettes are quite small yet provide a ‘big night out’ ambience. Most guests feel they have been given the best table in the house even though they are not seated at the window.

“The flooring consists of beautiful timber parquetry in the entrance and glass mosaics in the toilets. This is coupled with a stunning Tai Ping carpet featuring hand-cut circles that match the

theme of the fit-out.

“The revolving aspect of this restaurant created some very unusual difficulties. We had to design large stainless steel holding tanks under the floor for both clean and dirty water. A NASA-style coupling system allows us to ‘dock’, take on clean water and purge the dirty water holding tank. Electricity was supplied by a live steel curved flat-bar, much like as done on a merry-go-round. We also had to ensure that the extra weight of these tanks was evenly balanced in the tower.”

“This is a venue that reveals itself slowly. Most patrons immediately focus on the stunning view and we didn't want to compete with that. Then, little by little, they'll notice the beautiful hand-carved timber walls, the warm hair-on-hide cowhide entry foyer, the unique ceiling lights and lots of other individual touches. Hopefully this will add to their experience as the evening progresses.” ○

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