



Añada Bar & Restaurant

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Inspired by six months travelling through Spain and Morocco, co-owner Vanessa Gerner, with her husband Jesse, brings a taste of southern Spain to downtown Fitzroy

After Jesse [Gerner, chef/owner] and I married, we spent six months driving around Spain and Morocco, experiencing as much food as possible. During this time we couldn't help but notice how places that were a bit older and worn-in were warm, inviting and usually full. This was the feel we were hoping to achieve when designing the interior of Añada.

"We found the space that would become our restaurant three years ago. It was a little Japanese kurosaki bar that was dark with a low-hanging roof. We immediately went about trying to make it feel bigger and brighter.

"The first thing we did was rip down the roof to add height. One wall is exposed brick and the floor is dark grey polished concrete. We painted all the other walls, the ceiling and the window frames white. A big mirror was positioned on the back wall so when you looked in from the front, it appeared like the place just kept going on and on.

"The kitchen is tiny and we ripped everything out. We put stainless steel on the walls, added a new oven, a charcoal grill and a dishwashing area. We make all our own bread so we also needed a big dough maker. Somehow Jesse made it all fit by using lots of shelves and ladders so he can access everything. People walk right past the kitchen on their way to the toilets so it had to look good and function well.

"Añada is one big room and we have organised it to seat as many people as possible without being ridiculously squishy. The front of the restaurant has brown leather bench seating and wooden tables and chairs that add a lovely warmth. The copper bar and copper wine shelves are gradually gaining a beautiful patina. Three high tables with stools are positioned in the narrow area in front of the bar and there's a big communal table at the back. We seat about 40 people which is why we do two sittings a night.

"We designed all our furniture and had a couple of carpenters make it up for us. One guy did the tabletops and another did the bases. We then had them powdercoated and then assembled them. We tried to do as much as we could by ourselves because we were on such a tight budget.

"The lighting is designed to be warm and soft. At the front, there are four big light shades, then

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two industrial metal lights and a few downlights over the bar. At the back, we have old-school house lights above the communal table with candles positioned throughout the place.

"Margie Shepherd is a well-known artist from Adelaide and family friend who kindly lends us some of her work. They have a lot of depth so really suit the atmosphere of the restaurant.

"When people come into Añada, we want them to feel warm and welcome whether they are by themselves or in a big group. I believe Añada has a generous and inviting spirit that allows people to have a really good time." ○