



# Hugos Manly

Designing a cool beach house feel for a restaurant and bar situated right on Sydney's Manly Wharf made perfect sense for architect Vince Squillace

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hen David Evans, one of the partners of the Hugos Group, engaged my company to design Hugo's Manly, the existing site was an '80s extension sitting on the heritage wharf. It had been vacant for a number of years and was very disorderly. There were structural columns in bizarre places and it was in need of a major overhaul.

“Ultimately, the only things we could save were the roofing and some of the external walls. We even installed new beams to re-position the steel columns in more suitable locations.

“David is a creative client and he had a clear vision. We wanted to create the feel of an Australian beach house with a large verandah. Hugo's was to be a place where people feel relaxed and come in wearing their shorts during the day. The site works really well because it faces west so there's great access to sun which is perfect for the venue.

“We removed the ugly curved sail membrane at the entrance and built the verandah where there was just a couple of sad umbrellas. The verandah has transformed the whole western facade of the wharf. A membrane roof allows daylight inside and two layers of vertical blinds—one clear and one that acts as a sunscreen—were installed on the vertical face of the verandah to create year-round comfort. When they're retracted, they disappear.

“The interior of the restaurant can be enclosed with white timber framed doors. When not in use, they stack into a hidden cupboard. However, due to the verandah blinds, I don't think I've ever, in any weather conditions, seen them closed when the venue is operating.

“There was an emphasis on the design to give Hugo's the flexibility to adjust to its environment and to allow patrons to be comfortable. It also gives the business operators the security to book tables on the verandah.

“The floor in the restaurant is polished concrete and recycled Australian hardwood on the verandah. The white timber panelling was profiled to match the heritage cladding that features at Manly Wharf. It helps break down the barriers between in and out.

“The dark timber ceiling, darkish concrete floor and dark furniture really exaggerate the

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view. Even on an overcast day, it looks bright and iridescent with the beautiful blue water shining.

“David was very involved with the design of the kitchen. He knew exactly what he wanted, so I just helped him with layouts and spatial planning. The furniture is all bespoke to create a continuity with the other Hugo's venues. Contempo furniture ([www.contempofurniture.com.au](http://www.contempofurniture.com.au)) and Royal upholstery assisted with detailing and construction. Once again, David was very hands on.

“An AMX system runs the lighting and the heating. There are many downlights on a very dim setting so as to give a nice even glow.

“I truly believe Hugo's was responsible for the revival of Manly's dining and beverage scene. Since it's set the mark, a lot of other places have stepped up their design and service.” ○

WORDS: KERRYN RAMSEY