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## Thomas Schoos Designs Figue, New Restaurant in La Quinta, CA

### Interior designer creates a 21<sup>st</sup> century update of “mid-century modern” style

Guests having a drink or choosing items from the charcuterie bar at Figue are likely to notice the unusual facing that covers the bar front and other surfaces of this new restaurant in La Quinta, CA: a sensuous pattern that alternates rustic wooden boards with polished green onyx in a herringbone pattern. This mix of textures – contrasting the rustic with the refined – might be seen as a summary of the design philosophy for the entire restaurant; that is, a dialogue between the casual and the sophisticated.



As designer Thomas Schoos explains, the idea was to create an environment that is both comfortable and visually stimulating, providing plenty of artistic interest without feeling stuffy or formal. And while clearly an homage to the influential “mid-century modern” design tradition of nearby Palm Springs, Schoos brings to Figue an effusion of shapes, colors and textures that is decidedly post-modern. “I love the practicality and clean lines of mid-century modernism,” explains Schoos, “but if you are too strict about it, the uniformity can be off-putting. I wanted Figue to be a place where people love to mingle and hang out.” The design needed to encourage that, while adding a sense of entertainment and fun.

To accomplish this, Schoos made use of many elements of modernism but added a degree of eclecticism and contrast not associated with the modernist style. For instance, above the lounge area near the entrance is an explosion of light fixtures that hang in random patterns. Most of these fixtures suggest the mid-century era or “space age” with shapes recalling flying saucers or Sputnik satellites, but, their sheer number and variety goes far beyond what any true modernist would imagine. Instead of merely serving the function of providing light, they become an exhibit of retro ornamentation – an un-modernist elevation of form over function. Another dramatic moment is the collection of monolithic desert “driftwood” pieces that stands inside the front door, bringing an organic sculptural quality that ties the restaurant to its local environment.



Like the visual variety, the space itself contains a mix of environments to accommodate diners with contrasting needs and preferences. Depending on the occasion, there are areas that encourage socializing and mingling, such as the lounges and sharing tables, or more private spots for romantic encounters. There are also cozy indoor areas and breezy outdoor rooms that make the most of the stunning view of the desert and mountains. “I wanted Figue to feel more like a home than a typical restaurant,” explains Schoos. “These days, people aren’t inclined to spend much time in a formal dining room. They like to eat and drink everywhere -- in the living room or at the kitchen table or out on the patio. And you can do that at Figue.”

To encourage this, Schoos makes another dramatic gesture in the bar area, where he has literally put two large kitchen tables – or “farmhouse” tables with lathed or “turned” legs -- over one end of the bar, extending out at oblique angles. This breaks the formality of the elegant bar area and gives a clear message that eating at the bar is “okay.” There is plenty of room to spread out on one of these clearly un-modern tables. This mix of formal and casual areas is echoed by the mingling of rough and refined textures and styles, giving this mid-century modern restaurant a distinctly 21<sup>st</sup> century attitude. For more images of Figue Restaurant, please visit <http://bit.ly/15FIZB6> .

### About Thomas Schoos

Thomas Schoos is known as designer of some of the most successful hospitality venues in the U.S., ranging from *Tao Restaurant and Nightclub* at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, which has been the top-grossing restaurant in the U.S. every year since it opened in 2005, to *Searsucker* in San Diego, voted by Open Table as the second most popular restaurant in the country in 2011. Schoos has partnered with celebrity chefs like *Iron Chef* Morimoto and *The Taste*’s Brian Malarkey to design numerous restaurants in many cities, with dozens more planned. Last year, his design for *Morimoto Mexico City* was named one of two finalists in the Hospitality Design Awards for Fine Dining. When he is not working – or even when he is! -- Thomas loves to travel and collect treasures from around the world for use in his own artwork, for design projects, or to sell. Schoos original designs and collectibles may be purchased in his showroom in West Hollywood, *Schoos Night*, or at [schoosonlineshop.com](http://schoosonlineshop.com).

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For more information on Schoos products and designs, to acquire high resolution photos, or to interview Thomas Schoos, please contact the Schoos PR department by email at [pr@schoos.com](mailto:pr@schoos.com), or call Matthew Hutchison at 323-822-2800. Information is also available on the Schoos Design website at [www.schoos.com](http://www.schoos.com).