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Herringbone Opens on Sunset Strip with New Design by Thomas Schoos

The former Asia de Cuba is converted to the “ultimate beach house” with striking art installations

Redesigning an iconic restaurant in an iconic hotel on the Sunset Strip is like being asked to design a new dress for an award-winning actress on Oscar night: it is an honor that comes with high expectations for something elegant and yet new. Herringbone, the new restaurant in LA’s Mondrian Hotel, replaces Asia de Cuba, the restaurant designed by Philippe Starck that has been a landmark of modernism for fifteen years. The challenge of recreating this space was one that Thomas Schoos embraced (imagine following Philippe Starck!). However, instead of relying solely on his success designing popular restaurants like *Tao* in Las Vegas, *Searsucker* in San Diego or *Koi* in West Hollywood, Schoos decided to try something different. To find just the right mix of originality and classic glamour for this playground of Hollywood’s A-list, he drew on his experience designing celebrity homes to bring a chic new domestic vibe into the Mondrian.



“I want *Herringbone* to be classically elegant, but with a personal flair like you get from a private home,” explains Schoos. “It should feel like a posh dinner party at one of those houses you see in the hills all around the hotel, full of creative people, artistic touches and personal style.” To give the restaurant movie star appeal, Schoos began with a sensual, breezy California vibe that one critic has described as “the ultimate beach house.” Comfortable living and dining areas intermingle in an effortless flow between indoors and out. Then, to keep the design provocative and fresh, Schoos has introduced intriguing artistic touches to provide interest and get people talking.

One technique he uses is to reinterpret familiar objects in unexpected ways. For instance, to create a long outdoor bar, Schoos stacked a series of antique lobster traps in a row, covered them with a glass top and filled them with inflated puffer fish that gaze out at diners with comical googly eyes. For the indoor bar, Schoos commissioned an artist to create two chandeliers from the gold-leafed bones of ostriches and other animals that are reassembled to form two fanciful new creatures. To create sharing tables, Schoos transformed two of his signature large-format paintings into 3D art installations, then clear-coated them so that guests can dine directly on top of the art. Out on the patio, familiar table lamp designs are reinterpreted as giant floor lamps that also provide trellises for



greenery. Meanwhile, sectional sofas, eclectic furniture pieces and fire pits make the majestic city views even more enjoyable.

Schoos' use of natural textures and cultural artifacts will be familiar to patrons of the other restaurants he has created for *Top Chef* alum Brian Malarkey, such as the original *Herringbone* in La Jolla, which features indoor olive trees, lobster traps and a whale skeleton. For *Herringbone LA*, however, Schoos has reinterpreted the brand with a jeweled sheen that gives it new "bling" suitable for its red carpet premiere. For instance, Schoos has replaced the gnarled olive trees with tall, elegant Italian cypress that have been bent into a series of great arches on the patio. Rustic chandeliers made from loops of course rope and rusted steel have been reinterpreted in white rope and polished brass. The whale skeleton has become a more delicate fantasy creature that is gold-leafed and draped with fine gold chains. Dining tables feature sleek white Calacatta marble tops. And one large dining table is made from the massive root of an acacia tree which has been dipped in gold, a blend of organic beauty and opulence.

It is this eclectic mix of refinement, diversity and humor that Schoos feels will give the restaurant the right personality for its iconic location. "A restaurant needs charm and charisma, just like an actor," points out Schoos. "As they say in Hollywood, you don't stand out by following the crowd. You have to be original and be yourself."

To see more photos of the restaurant, visit <http://schoos.com/portfolio/project-details/items/herringbone-la.html#1>

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 *Top Chef's* Brian Malarkey to design numerous restaurants in many cities, with dozens more planned. In 2012, his design for *Morimoto Mexico City* was named one of two finalists in the Hospitality Design Awards for Fine Dining. Last year, his designs for *Herringbone La Jolla* and *Figue* in La Quinta were both nominated for the Gold Key Award in Fine Dining, representing two of the three nominations in the category.

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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, or call Matthew Hutchison at 323-822-2800. Learn more on the Schoos Design website at www.schoos.com.