

JOHANNES TORRE.

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DESIGN / FASHION / ARCHITECTURE / ART / CULTURE

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SURVEILLANCE / Interior

INSPIRED BY FENG SHUI, JOHANNES TORPE STUDIOS' NEW TAIWAN RESTAURANT CONCEPT FOCUSES ATTENTION ON THE KITCHEN'S BLEND OF FIRE AND WATER.

For his new South Beauty Taipei restaurant, contemporary Danish designer Johannes Torpe has done a remarkable job of bringing together traditional Chinese sensibilities. The result is a sophisticated gamut of materials—including the warm palette of the upholstery, and the chocolate-brown tones of the wall cladding—that alongside stunning food creates a feast for diners' eyes. A cool blue feature LED wall shows a continuous video of a waterfall, but when looking through this screen into the kitchen the raw flames created by chefs in action are visible, resulting in the perfect feng shui combination of fire and water. **OR**



BLOWING UP



In a mid-19th century Hong Kong complex once used by the British army to house explosives, interior designer Joyce Wang has crafted a restaurant landscape that is inspired by history as it is imaginatively composed from sci-fi references. While the restrained material selection and muted colour palette hark back to the restaurant's explosively-charged past, the inventive wall and ceiling treatment are inspired by iconic 1960s Jean-Luc Godard movie *Alphaville*, which combined dystopian science fiction with film noir. This combination of the historic and retro-futuristic elements augment the dramatic grandeur in the six-metre-high space. The potential bombastic feel of the luxe furnishings, upholstered in velvet, silk and leather, is significantly softened by the restaurant's warm lighting and hard-edged surroundings, described as "retro yet futuristic; mechanical yet luxurious." Clad in copper and metal, the armour-like surfaces shine against the polished tabletops and the exterior glazing of the restaurant. The rigid connections of the lighting elements hanging from the ceiling allow Ammo's visitors to become lost in the metallic glamour of the three grandiose spiral staircase chandeliers. The staircase chandeliers are direct nod to *Alphaville*, where staircases played a crucial role in important scene changes. Diners can also find further references to the film in the imposing copper bar relief wall and in the prominently displayed rug under the bar area, featuring a futuristic yet familiar skyline. **OR**



THE SHENZHEN RESTAURANT & SPA IS A REFUGE OF BALANCING EXTREMES.

Designed by Taiwanese Studio Very Space and opened in January 2012 in the southern Chinese metropolis from which it takes its name, the eclectically-designed but prosaically-named Shenzhen Restaurant & Bar is a restaurant, hair salon and beauty salon in one. According to award-winning head architect Liu Rung-lu, the design draws inspiration from *tai chi*, the traditional Chinese respiration exercise, and Chinese calligraphy, aiming at finding equilibrium through the juxtaposition of stark contrasts. The structure is a prolonged volume where the flow of energy moves from one space to the other following wall beams reminiscent of long brush strokes. Like ink lines on immaculate paper, the deco alternates mahogany and black on white backdrops, while ubiquitous mirror panels create games of infinity that increase the breadth of the already generous venue – a well needed airiness for a multifunctional space that promises to provide a full-fledged satisfaction of the senses. **AF**



A SINGAPOREAN INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM BRINGS THE OUTDOORS INSIDE TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS CONDUCTIVE TO INTERACTION AND CREATIVITY.

For a firm where collaboration is the key to employee productivity, SCA wanted to design an open plan workplace with pockets of dynamism – places where its employees could come together and interact. To help create the hybrid indoor-outdoor setting that would be conducive to collaboration, the office features a two-lane driveway through its centre, which serves as the "main street of creativity," several rope swings, and old egg crates recycled as acoustic soundproofing for the meeting room. Finally, the company's former business cards, obsolete after the move, were reused in a feature signage wall in the lobby. **OR**



CLUB CLASS

Vanke is China's largest residential developer, and the firm recently commissioned Neri & Hu to deck out its new five-storey private members' club, the Yingjia Club. The spacious venue provided plenty of opportunity for different types of spaces: some public, like the reception hall, gallery and members' lounge and bar; some more intimate, like the tea room and the wine-tasting room. The levels are connected by a boxy, zigzagging staircase and the club is infused with an air of exclusivity with oak and teak interiors in musky shades. Taking their inspiration from the traditional courtyard houses of Beijing, Neri & Hu tried to create a sense of curiosity and surprise for the venue's patrons. Wandering between floors and rooms, one experiences double-volume areas, atriums, skylights and expansive hallways, and dark and narrow corridors and hidden-away nooks. As one ascends the building via the staircases, the ambience gradually brightens as the palette lightens and natural light increases. The semi-outdoor bar leads out to a viewing platform, offering clear views over the Chinese capital. **AD**