

Light and Dining

FOREWORD

Lighting in a restaurant environment has evolved from being basic tools of illumination to instruments that influence perceptions and moods. Light is now designed to support the identity of the restaurant, interior design theme and the social interaction that takes place over the dining table or bar.

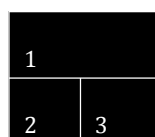
Brand restaurants strive to create identity and uniqueness through lighting and this has become a must in order to entice and retain clientele. Food presentation is just as essential as to the success of a dish as its taste and flavours. In the current world of LED lighting, the understanding of how the quality of light affects the appearance of food is an important aspect that restaurateurs need to understand and utilise.

More so, light, be it natural or artificial need to be planned from the outset and not treated as an afterthought to the restaurant design. The lighting design is best developed in par with the architectural, interior and engineering designs to ensure that it does not look like an 'add on' equipment out of necessity. A few key considerations are outlined below when designing lighting for an F&B environment.

The whole is greater than the sum of all parts – Aristotle

THEME

Light needs to reinforce the theme and branding of the restaurant in order to impart a strong visual experience. It needs to seamlessly harmonize with the interior design so that, altogether, it creates a strong overall dining experience. The origin of the cuisine and the presentation of the dishes also affect the lighting design approach and type of lighting. Just like a puzzle, assembling these design considerations together can be tricky but the overall outcome will be much stronger.



1, 2 3 Le Planteur Inya Lake, Myanmar

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AMBIENCE AND LIGHT QUALITY

Notwithstanding the theme of the restaurant, the lighting should be visually pleasant and has the ability to evoke emotions. The lighting should amplify the character of the restaurant by highlighting key features, food spreads and material finishes within a predefined hierarchy. Balancing the light to ensure that it is comfortable and relaxing to diners is important to ensure that their overall experience during the time spent in the restaurant is pleasant.

The quality of light greatly affects the appearance of the food and needs to be carefully selected. Variables in the quality of light, such as colour temperature, colour rendering index and colour consistency all plays a major role in making the food look more appealing and fresh.



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1. Waraku Bistro, Oriental Singapore
2. Executive Lounge, Oriental Singapore
3. Le Planteur Inya Lake, Myanmar
4. Shanghai Tang Cafe, Shanghai

FUNCTIONALITY

While the lighting design of the restaurant is critical in achieving the desired dining experience, the operational aspects of the restaurant also needs priority. Identifying activities that is to be carried out in different 'zones' within the restaurant will allow the designer to define the correct lighting levels to aid the visual tasks carried out in that zone.

CONTROLS

The fulcrum of achieving the desired appearance of the restaurant throughout the course of the day, and daily, is the effective control of the lighting equipment used. While the use of manual switches is often perceived as adequate to operate the lighting of a restaurant, it is vulnerable to tampering and always at the 'mercy' of the operator. A simple lighting control system is often advantageous to eliminate human errors and produce a consistent visual experience.

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EFFICIENCY

While it is important to create a stunning visual experience in line with the identity of the restaurant, the lighting system should be easily maintained and energy efficient. Consideration of using long lasting light sources and a well programmed lighting control system will also help in achieving this.



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1. The Line, Shangri-La Singapore
2. Shanghai Tang Cafe, Shanghai
3. The Line, Shangri-La Singapore

ABOUT SOCIALIGHT

Socialight has extensive experience in hospitality lighting design from hotels and resorts to individual restaurant and bars. With offices in Singapore, Jakarta and Ho Chi Minh City, we aim to provide the client creative lighting solutions while ensuring that the investment in lighting remains justifiable.

Further information about us is available at www.socialight.sg

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