

Deconstruction



CONSERVATORY AT CROWN

Daniella Casamento

Launched in July after an \$8 million and five month refurbishment program, Conservatory retains its status as a premium restaurant at the Crown Entertainment Complex since opening in 1997. This transformation, by Sydney-based design company Blainey North, has an aesthetic that is rich in nostalgia and detail and reminiscent of English conservatories. There is more than a hint of old world glamour throughout the interior which the designer refers to as “Georgian grandeur and Art Deco detailing”.

Subtle LED up-lighting illuminates the glazed

screens which curve along the front of the restaurant and together with the illuminated sign, the white arched entry acts as a beacon guiding patrons to climb Crown’s grand black marble Atrium staircase. For those less inclined to exercise, alternative access is via nearby escalators or the lifts located inside the Crown Towers lobby. A round insignia of red and white mosaic tiles on the floor at the top of the stairs delineates this as the point of arrival.

Symmetry and repetition of the arch motif, mouldings and wall panels set the tone of the interior fit-out. Step into Conservatory, beyond the low ceiling and into the main dining area where double height windows and mirrors reflect the light and accentuate the voluminous interior. Large arches

span the room and divide the dining areas into smaller zones while strategically placed mirrors at each end create the illusion of a much longer space. The resulting composition disguises any difficulty the designer may have been confronted with when planning to the existing structure.

A woven timber ceiling is the only element retained from the original design and is now painted white in keeping with the overall theme of a minimal colour palette and elegant forms. Graphic details such as the round insignia on the floor and in the glass screens at the entry are reproduced in the pattern of inter-locking circles in the custom designed carpet. The carpet also serves to soften the interior and add colour and texture to the main dining area.

Stark white and mint green are the dominant colours while red accents are used sparingly at the fluted bar front and in the upholstery of a few dining chairs. A low ceiling creates an intimate space here, and the Calacutta marble floor tiles help to distinguish the bar area from the larger dining room. At the opposite end and beyond the pastry bar where chocolate fountains flow, a variety of coloured spices are stored in large

glass jars above the stainless steel tandoori ovens and induction cook tops. Beyond this bench, a feature wall of red mosaic tiles draws the eye to the theatre of the open kitchen. Spice jars are also used to decorate the end wall opposite the buffet much like an art installation. There is no need for additional embellishments or fine art pieces here. Well crafted applied surface treatments such as the Calacutta marble wall panels framed by painted mouldings clad every column while mirrors line the upper walls at regular intervals.

Lighting has been carefully considered too with bespoke wall lights and steel and copper framed chandeliers that add to the layering of refined ornamentation. The back rest of each custom designed dining chair has applied curved metal trims, faux racing mesh and belt buckles inspired by car racing seats. Leather upholstery punctured by pin holes adds an element of luxury to the sports car aesthetic and curved metal trims are also inlaid on the figured veneer table tops.

Conservatory overlooks the Yarra River and is located on level one adjacent to Crown Towers at the eastern end of the complex.



SUPPLIERS

1 FLOOR FINISHES

- Brintons Carpets

2 JOINERY FINISHES

- Aglo Systems
- Shears & Mac

3 WALL FINISHES

- Bisazza from Academy Tiles

- Phillip Jeffries
- Aged mirror by Conley & Co.
- Shears & Mac
- Porters Paint
- Dulux Paint

4 FF&E FINISHES

- All decorative lighting custom designed by Blainey North

- All furniture custom designed by Blainey North

5 SOFT FURNISHING

- Internal Curtain Fabric
- Mokum Textiles
- Armani Casa from South Pacific Fabrics

- Alhambra from Elliott Clarke
- Baresque
- Curtains & Blinds by Armani Casa & Sahco from South Pacific Fabrics
- Curtain tie backs by Haywoods Trimmings