

EXOTIC PALETTE

Evocative furnishings, a giant mural and eye-catching surfaces give the interiors of new venue Bar Machiavelli a sense of ancient Rome

Bar Machiavelli is the offshoot of Machiavelli, an institution in Sydney's ever-changing restaurant scene for more than thirty years, belonging to the Toppi family, says interior designer Jason Mowen.

"For Bar Machiavelli, Paola Toppi – daughter of Giovanna Toppi, who at 80 still cooks in the original Machiavelli restaurant – wanted a hipper venue."

The building, a 1915 tyre factory in Rushcutters Bay, has an incredible sense of age and patina and a very New York-industrial feel to it. As the budget was limited Mowen needed to be creative – all the more of a challenge as the space is enormous, with ceilings that soar to over 15m in the dining room.

"I wanted to use colour and lighting to create intimacy and warmth in the large space," says Mowen.

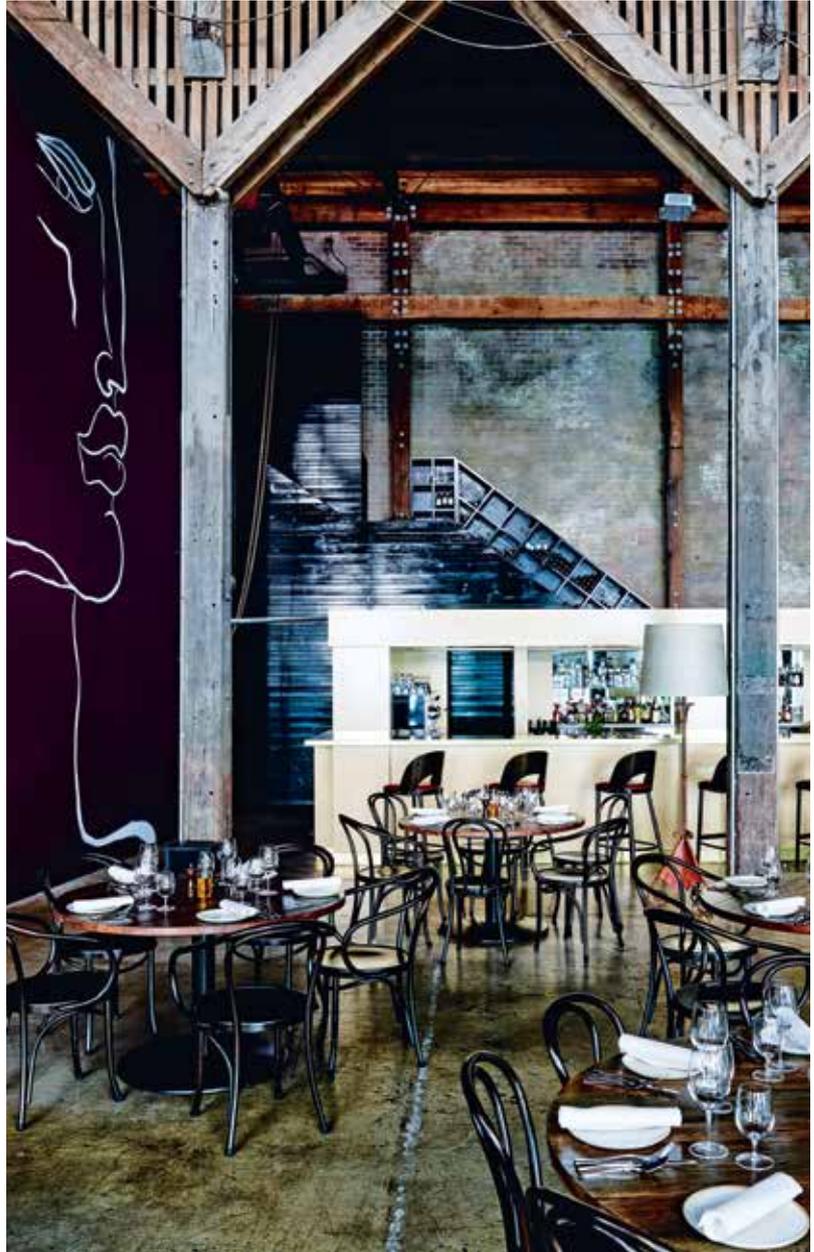
The bar, in Resene Enamacryl Metallic Gold Dust, sits in the middle of the room like a giant gold sculpture. At the same time, the rear mural, by artist Robert Doble, brings a sense of theatre to the space and highlights the sense of scale.

"We wanted a colour palette that was both elegant and sexy, but also a little bit left-of-field. It also needed to play on the client's Italian heritage. I looked to the rich colours of Ancient Rome and chose those most conducive for eating and night time – purple, gold and red. These also sat well with the brick-clad industrial shell. The mural's background hue was important so I was thrilled when the client said yes to Resene Castro. Not only is it a magnificent colour, it's also what I imagine to have been the colour of the emperors of Imperial Rome, and I love that play on the Italian heritage."

This project was Winner of the Resene Total Colour Commercial Public + Retail Maestro Award 2016.

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Above Attention to colour brings a sense of intimacy to this high-ceilinged venue – Resene Castro is used on the rear wall mural. Photography by Anson Smart.