

theme

Bar & Restaurant Style * July 2002 * £3/\$5

the showrooms



A unique feature is the bar, which has been constructed by Eight Inch from TTURA, a new, highly polished composite made from 85% recycled bottle bank glass. Bound to be a talking point at the venue, this magnificent pale slab was also available with green or brown glass, but the pale colouring maximises the effect of internal fibre optic lighting, which punctures the skirt of the bar with aquamarine rings. Again, electrics are concealed inside the metal skeleton of the bar structure. "The simpler the look, the more design you have to put in," surmises Mark.

The quality spend didn't end at this resin and glass behemoth, however, with the products behind the bar being an equally impressive draw to the Leicester market. Bar Manager, Richard Arts has made sure that requests for top Champagnes and premium cocktails are not met by embarrassed shrugs, and table service will feature throughout, enabling maximum interaction with a potentially cocktail-shy public.

The narrower rear of the space is a dining area, where the music ("jazzy and non-commercial") is lower. A request has already been filed for making the rear door a separate entrance to this restaurant area. The menu features some tasty-sounding mains, including Whole roast mullet with oregano,

lemon and black olive mash at a very reasonable £7.25 and Garlic roasted duck breast, served on a spiced potato cake with a nuocmam sauce - only £8.95 on the bill.

If you can't stomach a dessert, then the brilliantly named 'Stuff' cocktail (Baileys, Advocaat, Galliano and Kahlua blended with banana, milk and cream) won't appeal to all, but would nevertheless do the job. Richard was keen that Dom Perignon made what he claims is its Leicester debut (at £85.95 per bottle) and there are four cheaper options on the Champagne menu. Oh, there is another link to the Shoreditch showrooms - films will be screened on Sundays, the projector hidden behind a false column, which also provides a leaning post in the centre of the space. "The bar has turned out just like I imagined it - it's got a clean, precise, architectural look, without it being austere," concludes Mark Allison.

Says the Showrooms team; "Our bar in London wouldn't work in Leicester, there's no way. But then it probably wouldn't work outside of Shoreditch." Just as well, then, that they have created something that will stand so beautifully on its own.

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