

new
arrival

ASIAN BAR AND RESTAURANT DESIGN

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INK CLUB BAR

Designed by Alice Nguyen and Andrew Moore at Hirsch Bedner Associates, Ink Club Bar is an assured mix of leather, luxe and lounging, with a classy refinement in its details. These take the form of silver bead niche dividers, organza and velvet drapes, custom-designed seating and light projected in different forms and colors, as well as a statement-making bar. And that is just the design: a large cigar selection, great drinks, a house band and chill-out vibes, make this a seriously cool venue.

Opened in 2004, the bar is housed in Raffles The Plaza hotel near the Esplanade and Suntec City. On the ground floor, it may be accessed from the hotel lobby or from its own low-key private entrance. Once ensconced inside, the palette is unashamedly sexy: a mix of chrome, black and red. As a blot of ink has no definite shape, but can morph and flow into different forms, so too can the multi-functional space. Fairly open-plan, with a boxy central bar, curtains can be opened or closed and seating moved around to form different booths or conversation niches. Similarly, as the night progresses, state-of-the-art pre-programmed lighting by Stephen Gough of Project Lighting Design changes areas into intimate smoochy cubes, or more lively dance sections.

A spacious bar area with a stage for a band, dominated by an enormous custom-designed mirror, comprises the main area. Radiating off this is an adjacent VIP boudoir-boho lounge with one wall entirely clad in red leather; a circular semi-enclosed upper deck; and a wall of silver beads behind which nestle six or so seating clusters for four or more. Grey concrete on floors and grey-sheen hand-troweled Venetian plaster walls present a suitably neutral backdrop for the drama within.

"We play with all five senses at Ink," explains a hotel spokesperson. "In addition to the usual sights, sounds, touch and taste,

Right The black-and-red VIP room features one wall entirely clad in red leather. A low-slung, black leather sofa designed by Francesco Binfarè for Edra with mock-croc cushions is seen in foreground. The carpet, designed by Alice Nguyen to resemble ink smears, adds a luxe touch.



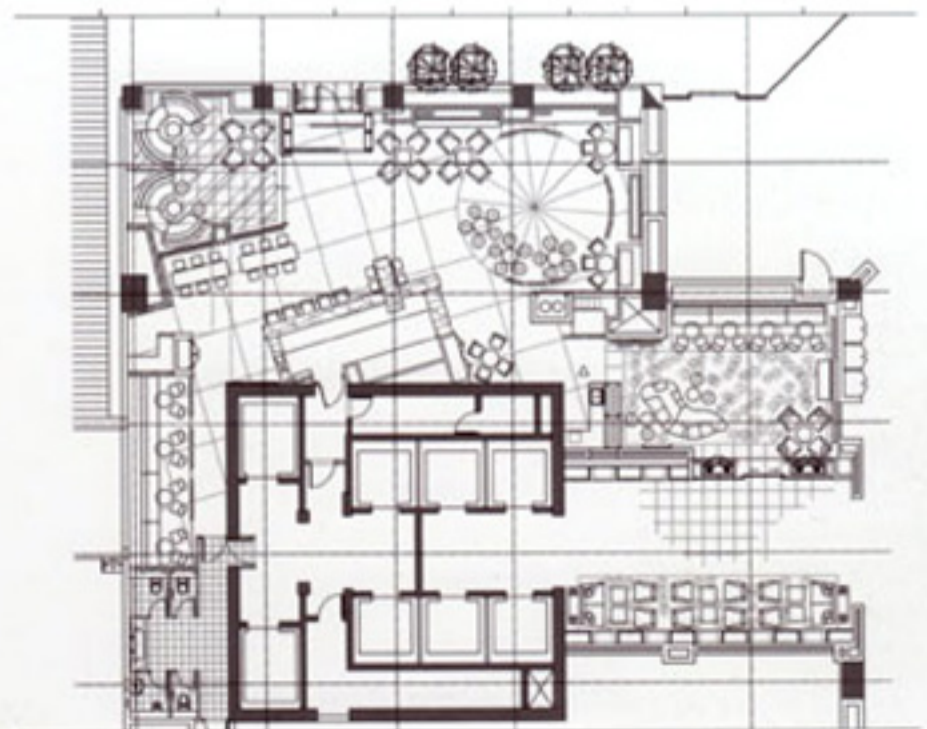




we also pump fragrances into the space through the air-conditioning; this purifies any smell of smoke and also adds different scents to the atmosphere." With your sense of smell catered for, you'll find your hands caressing a faux fur cushion or a velveteen chair, your eyes taking in a futuristic light display, and your taste buds tantalized by top-notch bites and beverages.

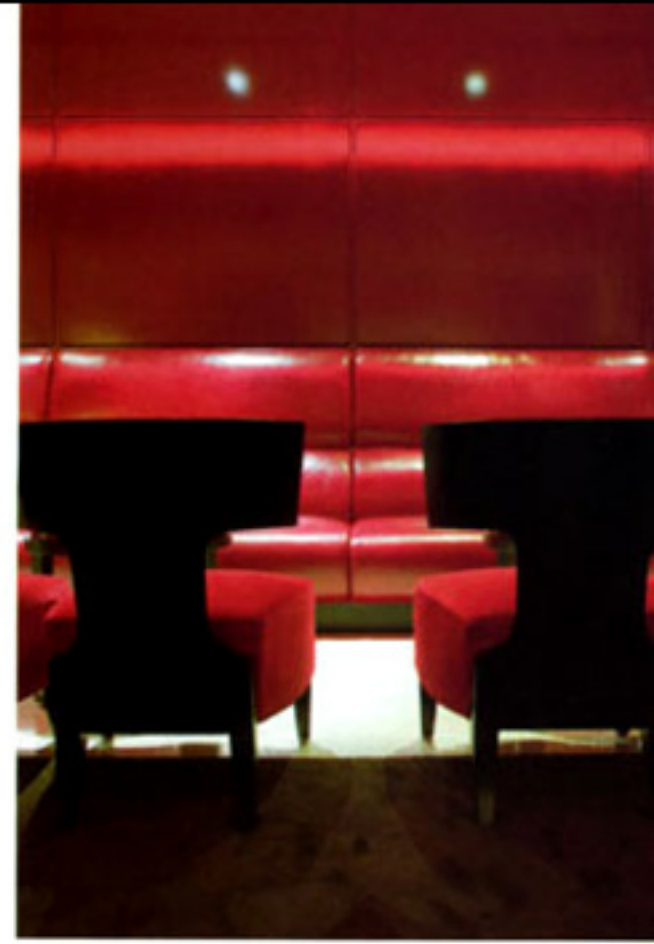
This — after all — is a seriously sensuous venue. Says designer Nguyen: "Our aim was to go for a Wow Factor. We designed Ink around the lifestyle of the projected patrons: as they are über-cool, so is their lounge of choice."

Above Custom-crafted rounded sofas in the club continue the black-and-red color scheme. High-gloss lacquered cocktail tables are Asian inspired.



Below Two over-sized Chesterfield-inspired red leather armchairs were custom designed for men who certainly don't eat quiche! Nevertheless, the faux fur black cushions add a feminine touch.

Right top and bottom Custom-crafted chairs come in three types: low round numbers with black wood circular backs, the same but bar-stool height for high tables, and comfy bucket seats for the more horizontally inclined. Poufs are space saving in the club area.





Above Long division: Floor-to-ceiling curtain dividers, made from nickel beads sourced from a US supplier, serve to delineate space, adding privacy to seating areas. Their semi-transparent, textural sheen is glossy and glam.

Left High quality silk curtains are also used as space dividers. On left can be seen the enormous angled mirror that serves to enlarge the space.

Opposite Men only? The masculine bar, with black granite top, is softened with an out-jutting section made from shiny acrylic from Australia. This is curved under at the end using a heat-bending process; the shape is echoed in the aluminum shelving behind.

