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Emporium Design Crafts Drexler’s in New York’s East Village

September 02, 2015



Restaurateur Darin Rubell has opened Drexler’s, a cocktail bar located in New York’s East Village neighborhood.

Locally based Emporium Design, headed by co-owners Robert Stansell and Timothy Welsh, crafted the F&B outlet with a French-Creole aesthetic rooted in Southern architecture. Drexler’s is a bright space spanning two floors with whitewashed ceilings, distressed plaster walls, walnut furnishings, exposed brick elements, and double-armed globe light fixtures.

“We wanted to pay homage to the architectural vocabulary of Southern design as seen in the French Quarter of New Orleans,” says Stansell. “We used light colors and finishes to make the bar warm and inviting so that guests felt comfortable spending time there.”

Drexler’s accommodates patrons with a 30-seat dining room, a 15-seat communal table grouping by the entrance, and an additional 25-person entertaining space downstairs. Communal tables feature walnut butcher-block tops on newel post legs, while church pews have been repurposed and reupholstered as built-in booth seating.

The upper level features a custom 40-foot-long, cast zinc bar that spans half the venue’s length and is backed by pivoting half-round, wrought iron transom grills that display the lounge’s liquor selection. Meanwhile, the beer and wine selection is stored in vintage cast iron bathtubs, repurposed as ice vessels.



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Connecting the floors is a staircase enclosure framed in wrought iron. A walnut bar and tap system is located downstairs, where a fully concealed DJ booth and upright piano are available for live performances.

“Our palette was broad, focusing on combining new and repurposed materials in creative ways, especially in the many custom pieces that we designed and fabricated,” says Welsh. “We’re particularly proud of the light fixtures, furniture, backbar liquor storage, and the hidden doors that reveal a piano and DJ booth area when needed.”

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