

The power of lighting

Lighting can make or break a design. Get it right and it can transform a space, adding ambience and interest. Get it wrong, it can be dismal.

Often overlooked when budgets are tight, lighting is a key element of any design project. Even if the budget is relatively small, you can still achieve high impact by being creative and resourceful.

With the right advice and design expertise, there are many things you can do to enhance lighting in a restaurant environment.

CREATING THE RIGHT LOOK AND FEEL

Within a dining space, in particular, lighting creates a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere for all visitors, it's not only about selecting stylish lights, but it's also about picking lighting that is efficient and enhances the diner experience.

Large bold feature lighting can add a lot of interest to a space even when they aren't turned on.

Flexible lighting to change the mood and ambience to create drama throughout the day and for different clientele.

Utilise wall space with accent lighting. Making the most of the space you have is important, especially in smaller restaurants. Using accent lights such as retro wall sconces, flush mounts and lighting above mirrors or artworks can effectively outline decorative features in your restaurant.

Use various lighting styles and LUX levels to create zoning within a space, as this also can create a completely different mood within the space.

Don't forget the servery. We've come a long way from the institutional style of heat lamps. There's now far more colour, size and shape options available, and we're more frequently incorporating these as a key feature within our designs at CDG.

TRENDS

Scandi trend is still very popular: Matte surfaces on pendant lights, preferably with a satin-soft look are very much in vogue. The matte surfaces go well with the exquisitely earthy colours that are currently trending. Organic shapes are also a key trend in lighting, and we are seeing beautifully rounded edges and curves.

Using natural or warm lights to replace cold and intrusive blue toned lights are becoming more popular. This takes its inspiration from the Scandinavian way of living where they have candles burning – hygge! Warm light is often associated with a sense of belonging and community - a relaxed space for people to enjoy.

Brass & Tropical Trend 2019 - Brass tones are still very popular and we are still seeing a shift from copper to these warmer tones. Brass tones complement the tropical trend nicely.

PROMOTING YOUR BRAND

Entice customers with attractive menu lighting. Making your menu stand out to your customers is a must for all restaurants. Lighting can be used to highlight signage to make sure it is easily noticed. Customizing lighting to reflect the brand of a space is becoming increasingly popular.

Use ceiling height to your advantage, making bold focal points that not only create a talking point but also form part of the restaurant's identity.

SUSTAINABILITY

Longer lasting, environmentally friendly and incredibly energy efficient is key. Smart bulbs can be controlled by smart phones and the colours they emit can be changed easily to influence mood.

When it comes to materiality, try to be resourceful by sourcing locally and using upcycled and refurbished materials– it's all about being clever with the budget. Lighting doesn't have to break the bank. With a little ingenuity and creativity, good lighting can be achieved on a budget too.

DON'T FORGET YOUR OUTSIDE SPACES

Outdoor lighting is key and shouldn't be forgotten about as it can add to an outdoor environment, whether this is during the day or creating an atmosphere in the evening. Lighting can be suspended from furniture, trees or architectural features to enhance the outdoor dining experience.

Our in-house interior designers are constantly researching new and exciting lighting concepts and systems. For an informal chat about how your commercial kitchen or restaurant can be enhanced with contemporary lighting options, contact Steve Hutchings, Director: Steve.hutchings@cateringdesign.co.uk