



Hospitality Interiors

HOTEL, RESTAURANT, BAR & CLUB INTERIORS

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PROJECTS

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Peninsula Hong Kong | Hotel Alfonso XIII
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INTERVIEW

Spencer Swinden Design

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Café Lolita by Trije Arhitekti





Mixing business with leisure

Fit-out specialist WFC was founded in Devon over 30 years ago, and has since established a reputation in the UK leisure industry for completing projects to a high standard and to tight deadlines.



Oxo Tower, London



WFC is currently run by executive director Phil Waggett and managing director Steve Howle, lifelong friends who took over the business from their founding fathers, Brian and Lloyd, in 2002. Partly thanks to its family ethos, WFC is becoming a personal face of contracting – which is emulated throughout the company thanks to a dedicated team of staff.

“WFC delivers an excellent product from a professional team with a personal touch at all levels,” says Phil. Under the guardianship of a contract manager, every site is personally overseen by one of the company’s directors.

Steve adds: “We make designers and clients look sharp with high-specification fit-out – maintaining consistency and flexibility through being non-contractual.”

With an ever-expanding portfolio, WFC has grown beyond its Devon-based roots and into some of London’s high profile venues. The company counts restaurants such as OXO Tower, HIX Selfridges, Aubaine and Lutyens Restaurant on its client list.

As well as restaurants and bars, WFC has been involved in other projects that range from the V&A Museum and The Royal Horseguards Hotel to Gymbox and Gala Casino. This variety is something that the company thrives on, as Phil explains: “The thing I like about the leisure sector is that anything goes and every one is different – there are no rules.”

WFC has recently received a

highly-coveted NAS Design Partnership Award in recognition of its work at The Delaunay in London. The Parisian-style brasserie was fitted-out in only 20 weeks, and features dark oak wall panelling, aged bronze metalwork, gold leaf detailing and chequerboard flooring. In addition to the aesthetic elements, WFC was credited for the mechanical and electrical installations, coldrooms, extract canopies and bespoke cooking suites.

WFC was also commissioned by Corbin & King to work on Brasserie Zédel, located in the heart of London. The contractor had to work within the constraints of a Listed building without interfering with any existing art deco features. Bar Américain, for example, had to be built around soaring marble pillars rather than being connected to them.

“With this project, protecting and preserving the building was just as important as fitting it out,” Steve says. “But I think we’ve been successful – we had lunch with an architect there recently, and even he had to ask what were original features and what weren’t.”

Corbin & King has also commissioned WFC for another highly-anticipated launch at the former site of Oriel on Sloane Square, London, which is due to open in October.

Independent projects in the pipeline include a new Buddha Bar and a re-fit of Boujis in South Kensington. “We like to work across a range of different clients and projects – it keeps



The Delaunay, London



Semi-private area at Babylon Restaurant, London



WFC receiving the NAS Design Partnership Award

thing fresh and exciting,” says Steve. “Though at the same time, it’s great to get a commission off the back of another project you’ve already done for a client. It reaffirms that it’s a job done well.”

Phil adds: “We are never content with our current position, and are always striving to improve our brand – it’s a cliché, but it’s true that we are only as good as our last project.”

Looking to the future, Phil and Steve predict that the company’s workload will shift with the way in which the industry is moving forward.

“We’ll continue to see the expansion

of small bar and restaurant chains,” says Phil. “The opposite will be true of large-scale clubs, which used to be our bread and butter but it’s a sector that has been relatively inactive over the past couple of years.”

Steve adds: “Foreign investment in the London restaurant trade will also gather pace – it’s definitely not going anywhere. 90% of all that is happening in the UK leisure industry is happening in London right now. We are happy to work anywhere in the UK, but our London operation is gaining in strength the more we work there.”

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