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The main lounge features an interesting juxtaposition of metal and fabric.



FRENCH CONNECTION

DESIGNERS THOMAS DARIEL AND BENOÎT ARFEUILLÈRE UNITE FRENCH ARCHITECTURE WITH CHINESE AESTHETICS IN THE ALLURING KARTEL WINE BAR AND LOUNGE IN SHANGHAI.



Raw, exposed cement wall against polished, modern furniture pieces. **bottom** The rooftop bar looks out to the beautiful Shanghai skyline.

When designers Thomas Dariel and Benoît Arfeuillère conceptualised the design of Kartel, a luxury lounge bar in the former Shanghai French Concession, they decided to pay homage to this very heritage district. Featuring a play of contrasts between old and new, raw and finished, Asian and European; its distinctive style has been described by the French designers as “destroy chic”.

But the inspiration came largely from the original structure of the building that gradually revealed itself during the demolition of the former space. Dariel and Arfeuillère decided to maintain the exposed concrete walls and pillars and juxtapose them with luxe, modern touches. It is a mix-and-match style which is, according to the designers, evocative of the French Beaux-arts architecture.

Kartel spans three floors, each with its characteristic appearance. The lower level, with its comfortable couches and warm atmosphere, provides the perfect setting for intimate meetings. Featuring a massive wine cellar which spreads along the wall punctuated by unconventional bathtub sofa sets, the main lounge oozes the majestic elegance of a traditional Parisian salon. The rooftop deck, however, takes a casual ambience complete with an unrivalled 360 degree view of the Shanghai cityscape.

Dariel and Arfeuillère have been successful players in Shanghai’s design scene since they founded creative agency Lime 388 in 2006. Specialised in luxury projects, the designers often blend French expertise with Chinese aesthetics. Their clients include Hermès, Christofle and MHD. ●

To view more of Lime 388’s work, visit www.lime388.com



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The massive wine cellar is the pièce de résistance of the space.