

Majeka Tricks

Because interior design is so far from factory work, it's hard to imagine using an industrial environment to inspire a swanky boutique hotel. But that's exactly what one talented designer did with Majeka House in Stellenbosch.

The project

When the owners of Majeka House approached VISI magazine art director and interior design consultant, Etienne Hanekom to transform their hotel, they knew they could expect something daring and different. And Etienne did not disappoint.

Taking unlikely inspiration from industrial areas, the designer made magic with Majeka House and its restaurant Makaron. The spaces are indulgent. The mood is peaceful. The overall effect is striking and sophisticated. It's far from factory-like, but also absolutely unique.

"I wanted to use a muted palette of warm and cold greys and chose petrol blue as an accent colour," says Etienne. "In factories, colour accents are used for warning signs and clearly demarcated areas, and it's this subliminal message I introduced with this bold petrol blue."

Metals in the form of raw steel, copper and gold work hard to complement the palette and Etienne's industrial feel. "But I veered towards warmer metallics," he explains. "No silver was used as this would have been perceived as cold."

Despite – or perhaps because of – the cutting-edge inspiration, the overall look is pure contemporary elegance. And, while it may at first appear that many colours were used in this unusual hotel, there are in fact only six in the palette – it's how they're combined and used that ensures the endless interest and moods.

The colours

In one suite, the cool stormy mood is enhanced by the almost earthy putty grey on the walls – Plascon Cashmere Hong Kong Mist (GR-RO2). On its own this colour could be dull, but here it's enlivened by accents in bold petrol blue – Plascon Velvaglio Greek Island (B6-A1-1).

Another suite combines all-natural colours with prolific natural materials like leather and wood. The walls in grey Plascon Double Velvet Hong Kong Mist (GR-RO2) complement the wooden floors, sheepskins and wooden deer trophy on the wall between bedroom and lounge. The framed picture ties together the colour scheme and can be swung around to move the TV screen from lounge to bedroom.



At first glance, it looks like several colours were used in the entrance to restaurant Makaron. In fact they are only three shades of grey. Plascon Double Velvet Grey Aluminium Snow (AL-BO1) makes a great, neutral wall base, complemented by warm, lilac grey panelling in Around Town (P5-E1-3) and a fresh, green-toned grey for the chair – Plascon Velvagio Elfin Magic (G3-E2-1). The metallic accents shine out from the gold lacquer chair seat and the anodized aluminium planters on the wall.

Almost the entire bar area is painted in Plascon Double Velvet Silver Charm (B1-E1-4) and highlighted with blue LED lights. For even more impact, the screens are CNC cut and painted in a dark moody blue – Plascon Velvagio Magic Noir (B5-E1-1) that adds intimacy both day and night.

On entering what appears to be a unisex toilet, you come face-to-face with a wall painted in Plascon Double Velvet Silver Charm (B1-E1-4) and an old double-drop-side table with a strategic band of Plascon Velvagio Mystic Tulip (R1-A1-1) on the left-hand side. This clever colour use indicates which side should be used by the ladies. To avoid unnecessary Ally McBeal moments.

The indoor swimming pool is the perfect place for splashings of Etienne's strong petrol blue. It's the ideal colour for added impact and palette continuity.

ETIENNE'S ADVICE

- Use strong accent colours. They serve to create aesthetic tension and draw attention to specific objects or areas of a room.
- Consider painting ceilings the same colour as the walls. Removing the strict division between ceiling and wall, you'll create a seamless space from which the eye can be drawn to areas or objects of interest.
- Don't be afraid of dark colours. When used correctly, they create a warm and cosy mood. They also work well with natural wood – family heirlooms will come into their own in a dark, dramatic space.
- Find a place for faux panelling. This is a cost-effective way to create texture in a room – as in the hotel and restaurant entrance areas. The panelling was made from Supawood and then painted, creating the impression of expensive all panelling at a fraction of the price.

