

THE WORLD'S LEADING DESIGN NAMES

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design et al





NADIA DI DONATO

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Nadia Di Donato has been part of the Liberty Entertainment Group organisation since its inception in 1987. Since then, Nadia Di Donato has worked closely with its developers in creating the individually unique design approaches for each of the Liberty Group venues. Formally trained in visual communications at Ryerson Polytechnic University and as a result of the many years of involvement with the Liberty Group, she is able to create synergy between form and function. With particular attention to detail, Nadia Di Donato has established the Liberty Entertainment Group facilities as the most creatively themed venues in the city. For over three decades the Liberty Entertainment Group has been redefining Toronto and Miami's restaurant, nightlife and special event experience. As developers and operators of numerous landmark establishments, the Liberty Entertainment Group has become recognized as one of the most successful and innovative companies in the industry.

What projects are you currently working on/have recently completed?

Currently working on a medical facility from design stage to full completion. Healthcare interior design has evolved immensely over the years with far more emphasis on the overall patient experience.

Please describe these projects in brief?

Commercial applications to residential design, the same mindset is being applied to medical clinics. The design incorporates many hospitality design details in this 5000sq ft medical clinic. Breaking rules with fresh concepts regarding reception areas, foodservice facilities, clean open spaces, lighting effects, audio/visual applications, natural material, warm neutral colour pallets.

Please describe any new challenges faced /innovations explored whilst working on these design schemes?

One of the most interesting projects that a designer can take on is designing a hospitality venue. It can be daunting (and stressful) to come up with concepts. At times I find myself stumbling upon some “design magic” through the exploratory process. Narrowing it down to a final design concept and then seeing it through the build process to customer enjoyment is a very rewarding experience.

How would you describe your style? Do you have a defined style?

Conceptualization - All design components revolve around clearly defining my target market. Every detail departs from that one notion of “how do I want the customer to feel?” Once I have that clear understanding in mind, I establish the identity of the restaurant by pairing a design style palette (ie, furnishing, colouring, lighting, construction materials) with a visual package (ie: tableware, uniforms, signage, logo, menus, marketing collateral, etc) which I use as my framework to ensure the overall image of the restaurant is cohesive and consistent. This phase is the most crucial part of the overall process. It results in a design vision that guides the entire project.

What are your hopes for the future?

Aside from expanding into new projects outside of hospitality; my goals are from a personal growth perspective regarding my work. Not

taking myself to seriously. Never accepting the notion that it can't be done and always thinking out of the box.

What direction do you see design moving in?

Design with personality and comfort in mind. No flashy design that might date itself or take away from the intended experience — to feel it but not have it get in the way. My mindset towards my work in interior design has always been work is play, and in light of all that is going on in the world, that more than ever will resonate in my future design approach.

Tell us a little about yourself:**Favourite food/drink?**

Food - authentic Japanese is by far my favourite food. Drink - fine Italian wine.

Favourite city/holiday destination?

I don't have one favourite. I've travelled to every continent. Each experience enriching my sense of style and design. That is my favourite holiday.

Favourite hotel?

I personally enjoy small boutique style hotels. Exceptional attention to quality, service and detail are a priority for me.

The car you drive?

My everyday car is the Porsche Cayenne, it's an SUV so it suited for my day to day needs.

Your thoughts on life?

I'm very saddened about the current state of the hotel and restaurant industry due to the COVID19 pandemic. It's going to be a challenging comeback. We all need to support this industry which has served the world so well.

Final thoughts or inspiration: is there anything you would like to add?

Design should be timeless, sophisticated, clever and primarily relevant to the intention of the space.