

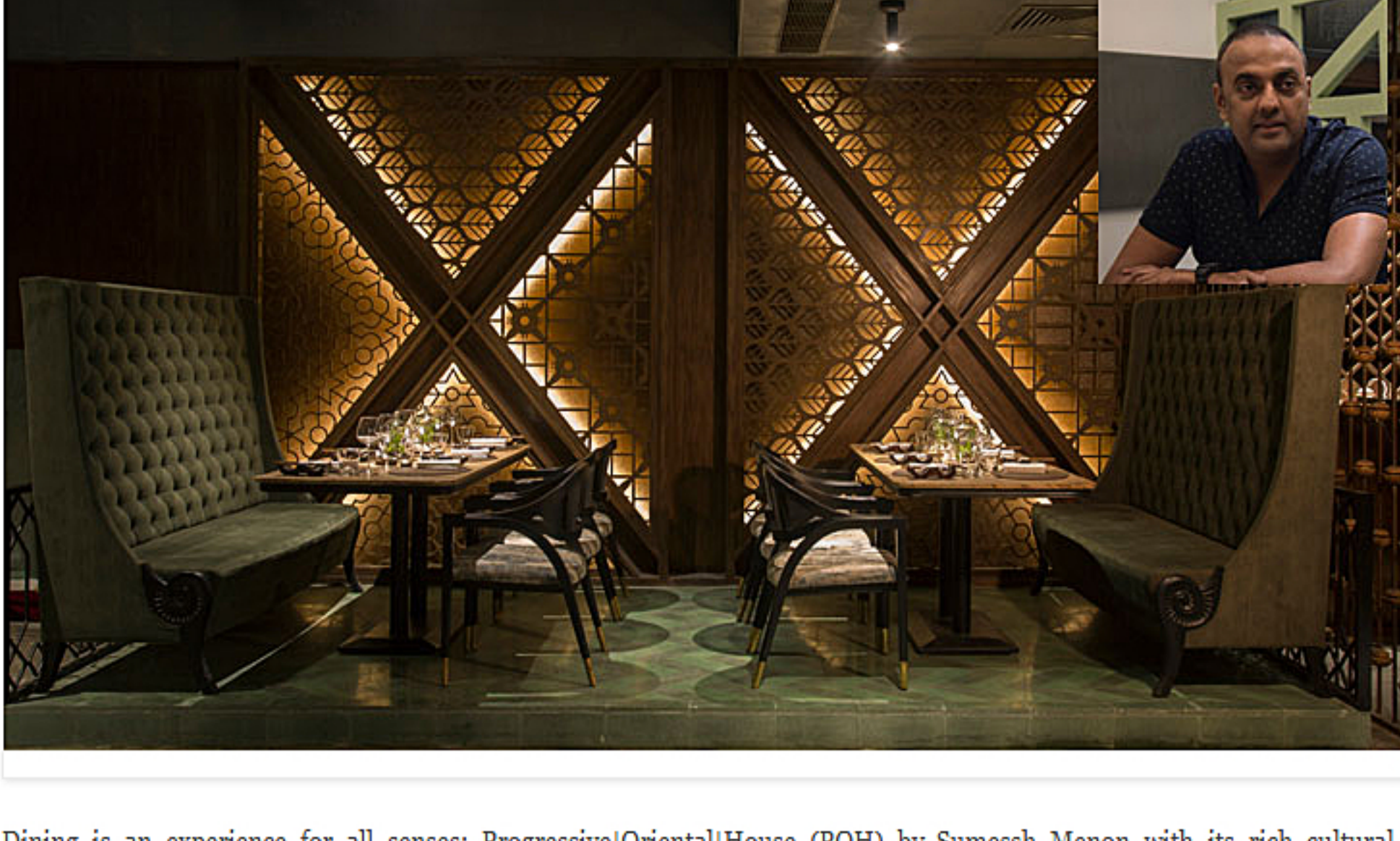
Tuesday, July 25, 2017

A vintage oriental experience

By Rutvi Ashar

Photography: Courtesy Sumesh Menon

Read Time: 2 mins



Dining is an experience for all senses; Progressive|Oriental|House (POH) by Sumesh Menon with its rich cultural influences adopted from South East Asia does exactly that; if not more!

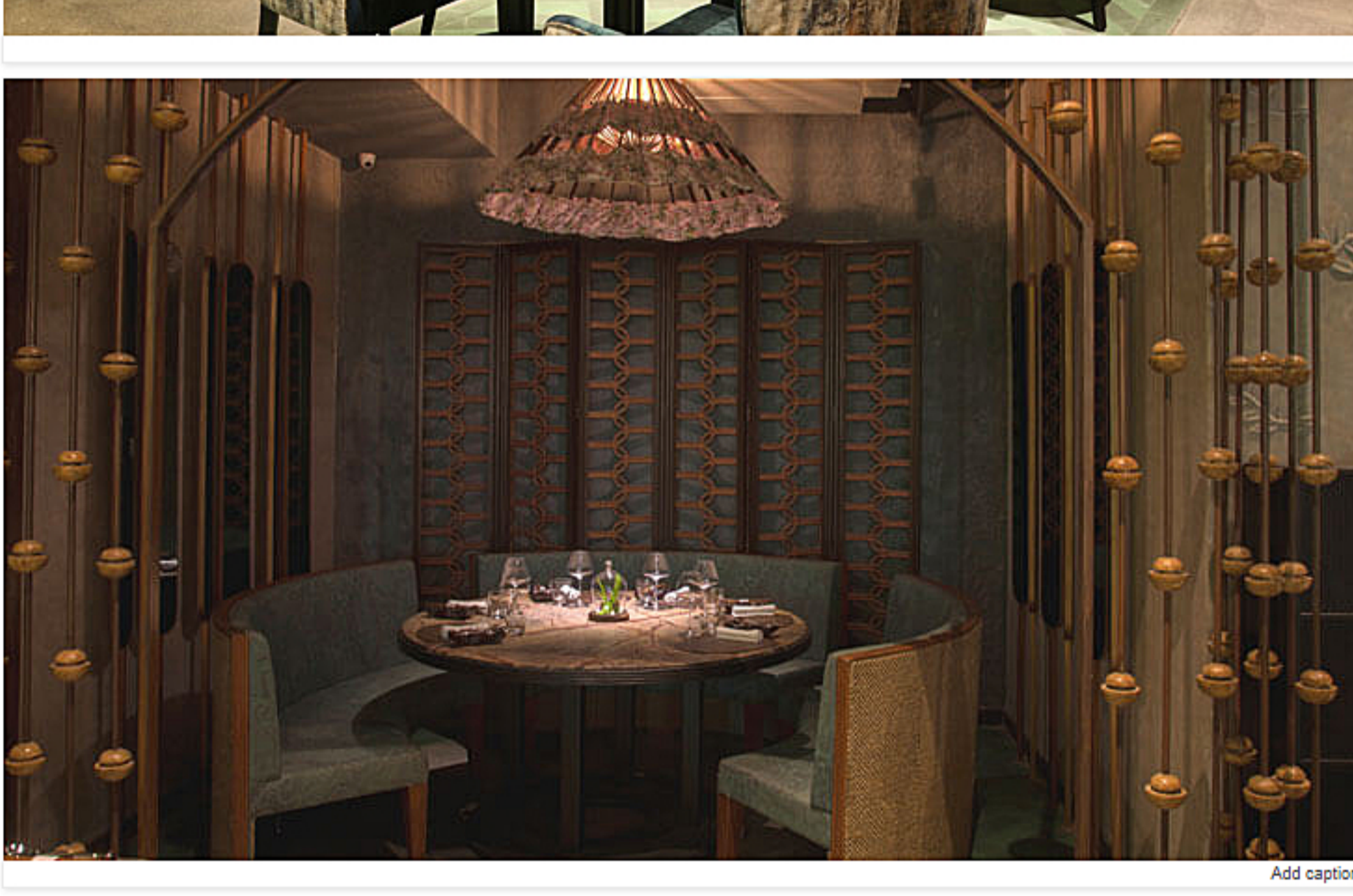
Mumbai's commercial centre - the Kamala Mills compound, Lower Parel has emerged as the haute spot for restaurants that serve a vast spectrum of cuisines; the newest addition, POH is attractive and impresses via its integrated palette of food and decor! Going beyond *just-another* Asian restaurant, it stands apart for its uniquely rich ambience.



Retaining the old-world charm of the industrial fit-out, the designer starts out by retaining the existing rustic brick arches that effortlessly integrate into the design; employing minimal structural alterations to lend the concept its form and function.

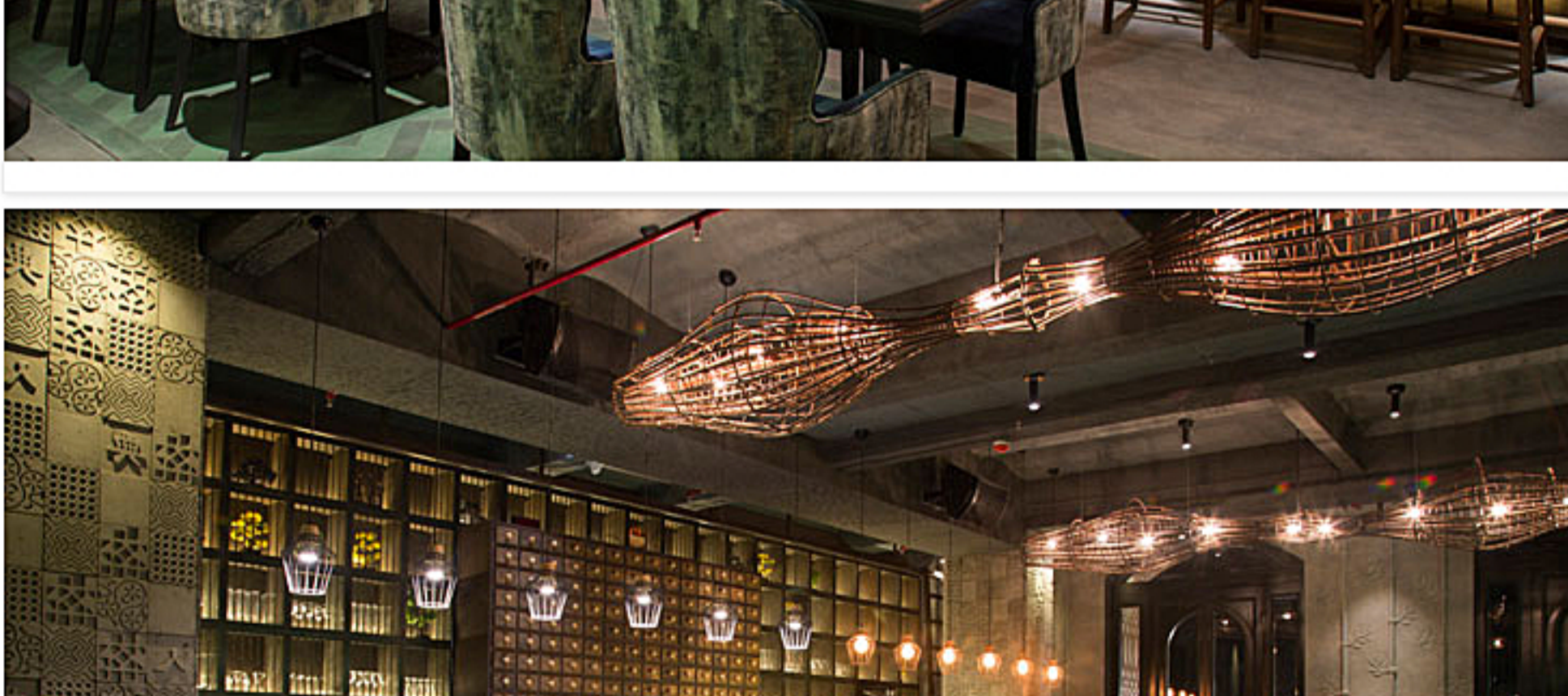


Using his signature style of having-his-way with materials, weaving design narratives, the rawness of the building shell evolves by rooting the design concepts in the existing context, resulting in a smooth flow of spaces. Combining the client, Avik Chatterjee's vision with his creative skillset, Sumesh uses local craftsmen to chisel an ethereal 10-foot Kimono sculpture that stands tall as the POH mascot.

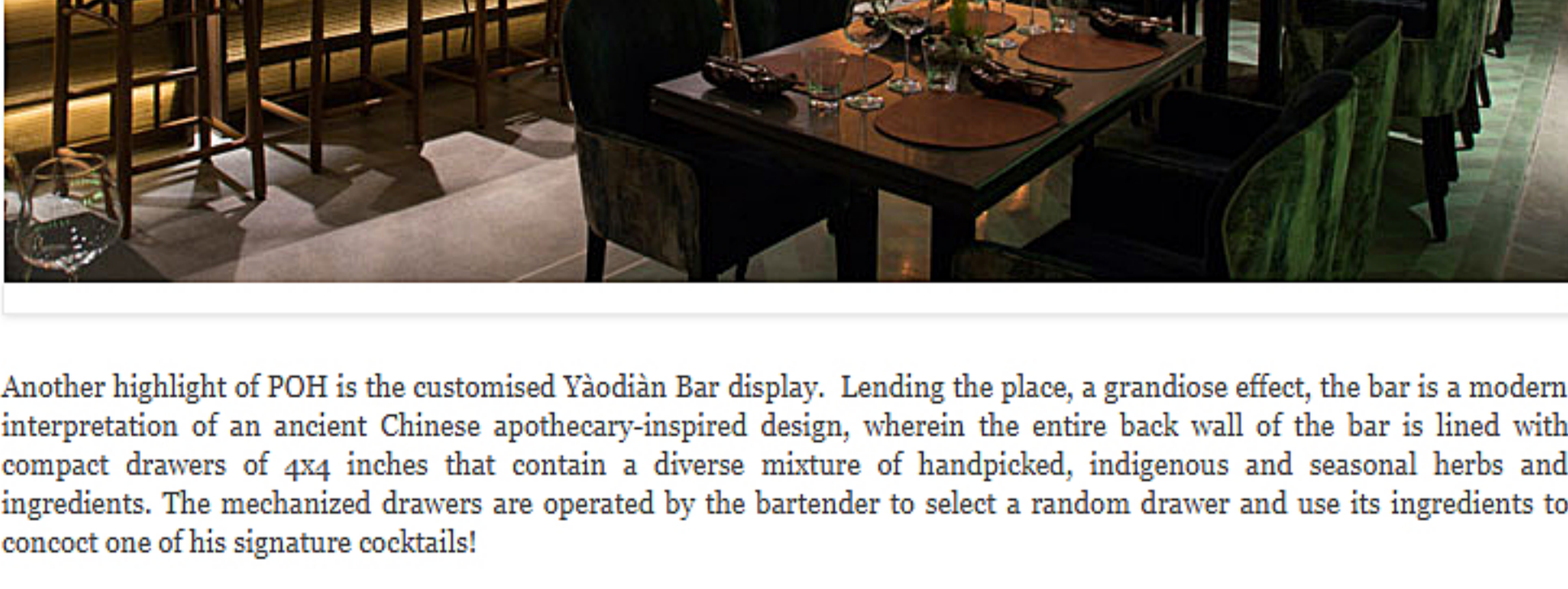


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Several elements come together to lend the place a uniqueness and set it apart; lighting plays an important role in establishing the mood of the fine-dine and is catered to via cove lights in the bar display, Japanese-inspired umbrella pendant lights that display beautiful origami-like fabric covering in the pod-seating area; Chinese-inspired vintage green lanterns along one wall, adding a whole new dimension to the ambience. The pièce de résistance, however, is undoubtedly the pair of huge 14-foot long sculptural cane lights that crown the dining space with glamour!



Another highlight of POH is the customised Yàodiàn Bar display. Lending the place, a grandiose effect, the bar is a modern interpretation of an ancient Chinese apothecary-inspired design, wherein the entire back wall of the bar is lined with compact drawers of 4x4 inches that contain a diverse mixture of handpicked, indigenous and seasonal herbs and ingredients. The mechanized drawers are operated by the bartender to select a random drawer and use its ingredients to concoct one of his signature cocktails!



Pockets of interest stand out in this 2700 sq. ft. eatery, yet another worthy of mention being the 'bamboo design wall', wherein the entire wall replicates this bamboo shoots in the form of relief and inlay work alternatively thus creating an ethereal backdrop. With natural elements like cane and jute and raw forms of materials like fly-ash bricks, concrete etc., juxtaposed within the design canvas to capture the earthy and warm essence of oriental design, the diner is instantaneously transported to a modern interpretation of an ancient South East Asian-inspired eatery.

Fact File:
Name of client: Amvish Hospitality
Design Lead: Sumesh Menon
Design Team: Sumesh Menon, Nishant Desai, Ankita Raja
Area: 2700 sq. ft.

