

CheesePlease!

By Karin Bohne, **Moeski Consulting & Design** www.moeski.ca
Photography by Amada Oster – Provoke Studios

Who doesn't love (and I mean LOVE) macaroni and cheese? Macaroni and cheese lovers in Vancouver can now rejoice as the MAC Shack, a new quick-service restaurant concept, just opened in the heart of Kerrisdale. And the modern shack is all about marrying the ultimate comfort food with a cool and contemporary vibe. Inspired during the uneasy times of the recession, the gang at Epita properties (better known for their real estate developments around town) craved a feeling of comfort. This nail-biting interval led to the idea behind the MAC Shack: a quick-service restaurant that would deliver everyone's ultimate favourite comfort food and impress with inventive iterations including 'Blue Cheese Mac and Cheese', 'Lobster Mac and Cheese', and the 'Four Cheese Mac and Cheese.' And impress it does as every dish is made with the freshest ingredients and each sauce is made in-house. The open kitchen allows each customer to watch as their dish is prepared immediately after ordering, while the back of house kitchen provides ample space for the pasta to be made from scratch - take a peek through the retro circular window into the kitchen to watch the process. And for the health-conscious, gluten-free and whole wheat pasta options are also available. As the interior design team on board to help execute the project, how could we not be inspired by such a cool restaurant concept? A quirky and modern shack interior that would reflect the overall brand was in order!



First and foremost we took inspiration from the food as our design direction. What better way to reflect the concept of macaroni and cheese than to provide an environment of cheesy goodness! Well not literally, but the rich and creamy orange walls were taken as inspiration from a bowl of traditional macaroni, and the graphic black and white floors are a playful approach to a salt and pepper. The quirky shack-inspired exterior welcomes guests to an interior that's dressed with local reclaimed barn wood, black and white accents, and bold plaid-covered barstools that scream cabin cozy. Projected menu boards, retro amber glass pendants and rustic table tops are unique accents pieces that provide pops of color. The overall atmosphere is undeniably "comfort food meets modern shack." This ooey-goey interior paired with modern menu items guarantees the ultimate Mac and Cheese experience. Cheese? Yes please!



Restaurant Design Tips:

- Think of creative ways to conceal kitchen equipment. In this case we fully integrated the mechanical ducting of the hood fan into a built out diywall feature that was designed to add an architectural element as well as provide a clean and visible surface for projecting menu boards.
- Be authentic! We live a world where copy and paste is a common practice but what can make or break a great restaurant is authenticity or lack thereof. Listen to your clients goals and engage a creative discussion to portray a unique concept behind the food into the space. Be creative and take risks. Restaurants are the ideal space for expressing original and unique design ideas. No one wants to dine in a room that looks like it belongs in their own home. Push the boundaries and get creative, uniqueness draws attention.

