



Ocean Prime New York, USA

Ocean Prime NY is a modern American restaurant with a surprisingly intimate atmosphere given its double height main dining area and compressed bar. The decorative lighting was key in creating multiple layers of light with sparkle and reflections, which worked to bounce light around from the warm materials inviting diners to sit down and relax. Lighting design practice LICHT worked together with lighting manufacturer Cerno to develop bespoke lighting features throughout the restaurant. Commenting on the collaboration, Renée Joosten, Director of LICHT tells *darç*: “Cerno and LICHT share a deep passion and energy for the design process, and we worked closely to make sure that not only the design aesthetics were met, but also, fabrication and cost were considered. The process started from a napkin sketch and through back and forth coordination, developed into detailed submittals and realisation. By leveraging the cross-disciplinary expertise of both teams, we challenged ourselves to execute on the highest level of performance. “At our first Ocean Prime restaurant in Beverly Hills, the decorative lighting became an integral and key part of the branding. When we designed the new location in New York City, the client specifically directed us not to reinvent the wheel. This allowed us to expand the

custom fixture collection, while staying true to the original design language and brand identity.

“The bar area was challenging to deal with as it had very low ceilings. Instead of eliminating the mezzanine, which would have been quite costly, we decided to accentuate this lower ceiling and make it a design feature. Cast GFRG (glass fiber reinforced gypsum) ceiling panels mimic the look of a stylised concrete waffle slab from which a playful field of carefully coordinated low, oversized pendants make the space cozier; transforming a space that could have felt like a pancake space, into a glowing jewel box of a room.”

In comparison, the dining room featured nearly 20ft high ceilings and needed a lower level of decorative lighting to create a more intimate dining experiences at the perimeter banquettes. Joosten explained further: “To achieve this, we modified the pendant into a bracketed sconce that protrudes from the wall highlighting the tables underneath, creating a destination.” At Ocean Prime NY, LICHT carefully coordinated the architectural lights with the decorative lights to ensure that they both supplement each other. Not only in placement of the lights, but also in regard to light levels, colour temperature, overall quality of light and dimming capability. “When designing a restaurant

like this, the final step is the scene setting which is key to achieve the appropriate ambience throughout the different hours of operation,” continues Joosten. “For Ocean Prime, the custom decorative fixtures truly make the space. Although each decorative fixture is unique and tailored to its distinct area, it created the overarching feel of the restaurant of sparkle, coziness and brand identity.

“At LICHT, the in-house lighting department of ICRAVE, we work hand-in-hand with the interior designers to ensure that the lighting is not only an integral part of the design but also its own voice. It tells the story of the brand and shapes the experience; the moment you walk in the restaurant, the decorative lights catch your eye, and lead you through the space. The combination of light reflected of the brushed brass and walnut wood, and architectural envelope create an inviting, cozy experience, as we set out to do. Following on from this, the collaboration with Cerno was such a great experience that we have since further developed two pendants and brought them to market - the Imber and the Ignis.”

Images: John Muggenborg

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