

The Commercial Project



N°16

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MED

Luchetti Krelle

Location Canberra, Australia

Words Aimee O'Keefe Photography Romello Pereira Styling Luchetti Krelle



Luchetti Krelle's design for MED in Canberra is a paean to the colours and charm of the Mediterranean.

Transporting visitors from the windy streets of Canberra to a seaside oasis, MED sees Luchetti Krelle transform a dark, industrial-leaning restaurant into a welcoming hotspot that seamlessly blends rustic charm and coastal luxe.

"Our client, DOMA, requested an outdoorsy feel – which largely influenced the restaurant's pergola-like ceiling – plus the embodiment of two key sentiments: exuberant yet sophisticated and polished yet relaxed," says Rachel Luchetti, co-owner and director of Luchetti Krelle. MED's Mediterranean-inspired menu also meant the client wanted the space to reflect a coastal ambience.

The transition from the black, sleek apartments and hotel facades that line the streets of Barton is immediate – a large, terracotta arched entrance instantly echoes balmy days spent in the sleepy enclaves of the Mediterranean. Once inside, an

open floor plan is imbued with a similar sense of flow and calm, welcoming sunlight and encouraging effortless movement between spaces. Designed to replicate a garden bar, a meal here feels like dining alfresco. Floor-to-ceiling glass pivot doors line the dining terrace, and a custom, brise-soleil-inspired brick bar is a subtle nod to the sun-drenched courtyards of seaside villas.

MED feels both rustic and monastic, with reclaimed timber and brick, stone and raw elements dominating throughout. The concrete floor is ground down and walls are rendered in a matte golden wheat tone to achieve a gentle patina, punctuated by Corten arches, while stone features on outdoor tables, surfaces and tabletops. Eye-catching surfaces extend upwards too, with the intricate wire-brushed ceiling lined with hardwood beams and a canopy of fine bamboo-like sticks.

The space is so tactile it implores one to pause, admire and touch. Assorted timber chairs featuring natural woven linen and cord are complemented by blues redolent of the Mediterranean Sea and sun-kissed terracotta hues. These tones are softened by dappled light from handcrafted sculptural sconces and pendants made from raffia, rope, banana fibres and rattan.

Instead of framed artworks, the design studio commissioned a wall hanging by Anna Fiedler "comprising handwoven natural fibres loosely recalling fishing nets to span one wall, adding a delicate textural depth," explains Luchetti.

Dining at MED feels like entering a sun-drenched lane on a Greek island or a quaint eatery nestled within the Tuscan countryside. This is the power of Luchetti Krelle's design – thoughtful, transformative and transcendent.