

Barefoot Chic: ICRAVE designs The Colony

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John Ellis

The Hamptons and Hollywood may seem worlds apart—each a distinct A-lister’s scene set on opposite coasts. Yet the new SBE-owned and operated club The Colony brings a beachy East Coast feel to the heart of Hollywood with its design by ICRAVE, the New York-based firm known for designing a host of New York City and Los Angeles hot spots. “We wanted it to be an oasis so that when you walk into The Colony, it transports you somewhere else, making you forget you’re in the middle of Hollywood,” says Behzad Souferian, vice president of SBE real estate. “LA has the best setting that is conducive to this type of theme.”

Located on the once-seedy but now trendy Cahuenga Boulevard in a vast, 13,000-sq.-ft. space that was previously home to shuttered clubs Halo and White Lotus, The Colony adeptly melds indoor and outdoor spaces into a cohesive nightspot that’s unlike the traditional Hollywood club. Souferian and SBE founder and owner Sam Nazarian sought a scene that would be reflective of their experiences summering in the Hamptons, but ICRAVE founder Lionel Ohayon explains, “We were more focused on the idea of a beach resort setting because of what it lent to the notion of feeling casual—a kind of barefoot chic—which sets this venue apart from other Hollywood clubs.” He adds, “We wanted to create something that differentiates this experience from what the LA scene had been delivered to date. Aesthetically, we were looking for something that was non-pretentious and invited the guests to engage fully in the space…to literally take their shoes off and dance on a table. This approach to encourage the guests to feel at home completely changes the dynamic of the room and ultimately the experience.”

ICRAVE designed The Colony as a series of spaces, each with its own personality, that work well as one cohesive venue where circulation seamlessly flows from inside to out—from dance floor to lounge to pool and bar areas. “It also is designed to be scaled back to smaller, separately operated venues. If you look through the space you will see a series of large sliding lower walls and rotating panels that close off

rooms and allow the space to function practically with a floor [plan] that makes sense,” Ohayon notes. Souferian adds, “The seating of the interior was designed with the DJ in the middle and stadium-style seating throughout, making for a high-energy atmosphere&hellip With the sight lines, no one gets blocked, and it allows for patrons to be active participants rather than just spectators.”

With a large space and a meager budget, the ICRAVE team had to be judicious in their allocation of dollars, creating maximum bang for the buck with strategic selections of materials. “The rough sawn lumber worked perfectly to lend the conceptual context as well as meet budgetary requirements,” Ohayon says. Salvaged distressed barn wood flooring achieves a beach boardwalk feel and also works as cladding for walls and seating. ICRAVE-designed furniture crafted of distressed wood and aged steel help foster the desired aesthetic. And cabanas on the patio exude a true beach club ambience, as do the structure reminiscent of a lifeguard stand that denotes the main entrance and the perfectly landscaped exterior that features sand dunes and beach grass. Versatile lighting throughout the space ranges from soft highlights to a full-scale rig with moving heads and an LED grid for a full nightclub effect, according to Ohayon.

“It is true that this is a Hollywood club, but in many ways that gave us carte blanche to create a space that was literally a set,” explains Ohayon. “Since the building was a standalone, it affords us the opportunity to create a complete immersive experience and use the exterior to reform and reinforce the idea of what lay beyond the velvet rope.”

who

Project: The Colony. Owner: [SBE](#). Interior designer: [ICRAVE](#) / Los Angeles; Lionel Ohayon, Anthony Mrkic, Paola Tassara, Jessica Marx. Architect: AMA (Anthony Mrkic Architect – Los Angeles). Contractor: DLD Contractors. Lighting: Dougie Lazer (theatrical) Lighting Design Alliance (architectural). Engineering: John Labib + Associates (structural). Landscape: West Coast Landscape Management. Graphics (if shown): Custom art/murals by ICRAVE. Furniture dealer: Custom furniture custom designed by ICRAVE (various vendors). Photographer: [John Ellis](#).

what

Paint: Benjamin Moore. Laminate: Rigidized Metals. Flooring: Custom by S+L Woodworks. Carpet/carpet tile: Outdoor rugs by Chilewich. Ceiling: Fabric by Architex. Pendant lighting: Roost. Doors, lounge seating: Custom by DLD Contractors. Cafeteria, dining, auditorium seating: Emeco barstools, Lounge seating by El Arca Ironwork MFG. Upholstery: Eagle Upholstery. Other tables: Custom by Shortell Design and Brown + Trowbridge. Architectural woodworking: DLD Contractors. Planters, accessories: International Art Properties. Signage: custom by ICRAVE fabricated by Dziner Signs. Plumbing fixtures: Kohler. Outdoor furniture: custom by ICRAVE, fabricated by Shortell Design. Artwork: “Women of The Colony” custom by ICRAVE (printed by Dziner Signs). Catamaran net hammock: custom by ICRAVE fabricated by Multimarine. Wooden boat: custom by Jay Bloom. Glass display case: custom by ICRAVE fabricated by California Living. Metalwork: Brown + Trowbridge. Sail Curtains: Custom by ICRAVE, fabricated by Art Craft BD. Wood reeds: Danao Outdoor. Staff uniforms: James Thomas.

where

Location: Hollywood, CA. Total floor area: 13,300 sq. ft. No. of floors: 1. Total staff size: 80. Cost/sq. ft.: \$375.

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