

## Design - all about ingenuity

Within the world of interior design, the challenge lies to strike a delicate balance between the forces of form and functionality - and when you add money to the mix, it's made even more complex.

By [Anthony Manas](#) 10 Feb 2012

Comfort and cost are, of course, paramount, but you know you have struck an "aha" design moment when person feels welcome, intrigued, and comfortable in a space without consciously thinking why.

Manas Design And Detail (MDD) has recently designed the Mezepoli restaurant in Camps Bay, Cape Town, Simply Manas, a gift store, and a new concept store, SOHO Nails, both in Johannesburg.

### Expensive impression

I like the fact that my designs and projects come at a very competitive rate, but still give the impression that they are expensive, as I want clients to associate MDD with the highest quality. I would rather have lower expectations and deliver extraordinary results than under-deliver and disappoint.

MDD was formed in 1992 on the premise that clients deserved - and, indeed, would appreciate - quality design by professional specialist designers and architects without bearing the brunt of costs associated with corporate overheads.

My first year's turnover was R7000 and I thought I was rich, but my lucky break came when I walked door-to-door at Sandton City offering free revamp proposals. I secured two jobs within a short space of time and have never looked back.

### No stock solutions

I recognise the fact that there are no stock solutions to complex architectural challenges and what is needed is a boutique, hands-on, service-orientated approach.

As a result, MDD provides a 360° "turnkey" design experience, offering not only interior design, but also architectural and building services to residential, retail and commercial developments.

What sets MDD apart is that we set realistic completion targets - it's an art - and always deliver on our promises based on experience along with a solid team and knowledge of the industry's most reliable, quality suppliers.

Amongst others, MDD has designed the interiors for the Baron group of restaurants and numerous brand stores (including Fendi, Replay, DKNY and the Aston Martin Showroom) in Johannesburg and the complete revamp and new look of the Auction Alliance building in Wale Street, Cape Town.

I like it when clients come back so the revamp of the old J B Rivers Restaurant in Cavendish Square, Cape Town, which we originally built in 1999, was especially fulfilling.

Another example of this is Cape Union Mart, which has recently engaged with us again.

## **Purpose-designed furniture**

As the design experience is not only to create an empty façade, we also purpose-design furniture pieces to suit, as we believe that there is no reason to purchase off-the-shelf items.

Being able to purpose-design pieces - from classic to contemporary - enhances the trend towards sustainability as we no longer have to accept Eastern imports which are manufactured under far-from-ideal environmental conditions.

Indeed, MDD has embraced sustainable design and less carbon footprint in the building process with one of the company's most recent projects being a development of seven eco-friendly houses in Bryanston, Johannesburg (due for completion in early 2012).

At MDD we try to create sustainable buildings that embrace the landscape and employ the latest technologies to improve our lives while utilising natural materials to create a sensuous timeless product, both from an exterior as well as interior point of view.

## **Natural, sustainable materials**

With the latest trend in sustainable design, designers have started to embrace natural, sustainable materials such as solid timber, that are either grown for use or that have been stripped and recycled. As such, we are striving to specify solid timbers, glass and stone into our designs at MDD, creating an opulence that one cannot create with synthetic materials.

As I do not want my business to run my life, I would like to specialise in innovative boutique design projects for the discerning client who has a very specific idea of what he wants. I do not want to water-down my designs for large-scale projects, but rather for intimate designs on request. It's a real balancing act.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Anthony Manas is the owner of Manas Design and Detail.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>