



goingcoach

A carriage house-turned-restaurant gets a sleek look

New York City-based Studio Gaia, a veteran of turning awkwardly slender Manhattan spaces into warm, inviting restaurants (think Republic, BondSt, and Jimmy's Downtown), has done it again. The firm recently revamped a 2,000-square-foot former carriage house into a restaurant named for its original use. "Like many typical spaces in New York that we've designed, we had to work with a narrow and long space," says Studio Gaia's founding principal, Ilan Waisbrod, of Carriage House's design.

After keeping the original façade and a white brick wall inside that runs the length of the restaurant, the designers "juxtaposed an interior inspired by the Palm Beach modern style and the works of Richard Neutra, Eames, and the case study houses," Waisbrod says. Round light fixtures, wood boxes stuffed with fake grass, and tan Nelson dining chairs completed his menu of decorative accents. But wood serves as the chief and prominently displayed design material. "We were looking for an economical and warm material that could work on walls and floors. Wood met all of these criteria," Waisbrod says of the stained oak floor, wall paneling, bar, tables, and banquettes.

By Stacy Shoemaker
Photography by Moon Lee



Left: Wood partitions that hang from the ceiling also act as light fixtures. *Bottom:* Railings separate raised dining areas and help create an open feel. *Opposite page:* A desert mural stretches across one wall, adding “some fun and humor,” designers say.

Yet the success of the interior lies in the designers’ polished approach of working with the challenging layout to emphasize its length rather than fighting it or abruptly breaking it up. The solution: To divide the restaurant into separate but connecting seating areas with low partitions and steel railings. Each section has varying seating and table shapes (round or square white plastic laminate with wood edges) and is gradually raised like in a theater allowing guests to “see and enjoy the entire space from the entrance to the back,” says Gaia partner Anurag Nema. Rectangular wood dividers hang from the ceiling and act not only as light fixtures (the bottom glows) but also serve to connect the restaurant’s various elements. “[It] leads the eye to a specific area rather than getting lost in space,” Waisbrod says.

A touch of whimsy was added in the bar’s seating area where a yellow resin surfboard-like cantilevering table is surrounded by stainless steel barstools. “We always like to create a ‘talking element’ that gets people together,” Waisbrod explains.

But the most dramatic and intriguing statement is an oversized desert photomural decorating the east wall. “It was a direct response and typical approach for us in dealing with challenges,” Waisbrod says of the effect. “It’s a simple solution to a ‘long’ problem and it adds some fun and humor.” hd



Carriage House

New York City

Owner Adam Newton

Architecture Richard Lewis
Architecture, New York City

Interior Design Studio Gaia, New
York City

Interior Design Project Team Ilan
Waisbrod, Anurag Nema, Vennie
Lau, Kevin Lien, Pablo Regen

Contractor Old World Interiors

Lighting Studio Gaia

Hanging Table Custom by Ronald
Mark Associates Inc.

Hanging Cables Custom by Decor
Cable Innovations

Banquettes Custom by Studio Gaia

Banquette Fabric Maharam

Bar Stools Knoll

Lamps Flos

Dining Chairs Nelson

Graphics Top Hat