Comair Slow Lounge

Comair recently added a very stylish and comfortable addition to their existing lounge for passengers to enjoy whilst waiting for their flights at Cape Town International Airport

INTERIOR DESIGN: TONIC INTERIORS    ARCHITECTS: BLUEPRINT ARCHITECTS    PHOTOGRAPHY BY: WIELAND GLEICH

Architects Brief

The brief from Comair to Blueprint Architects called for collaboration with Tonic to extend and refurbish the existing Slow Lounge at Cape Town International Airport to meet increased demand from passengers using Comair flights and FNB’s loyalty programme on domestic routes.

Solution

Blueprint Architects were responsible for the new Central Terminal Building completed in 2010 and the building owner, the Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA), were confident with Blueprint’s proposed extension out on to the roof of the fourth floor of the existing building to expand the existing Slow Lounge mezzanine level (fifth floor) covered by a dramatic curved roof extension to achieve the solution.

The double glazed curtain wall façade was extended across the east and south elevations of the extension with a new insulated aluminium panel wall construction with punched windows on the west elevation.

This extension presented challenges as the site was largely inaccessible for construction. It was not possible to erect scaffolding to the exterior of the building on the eastern façade due to the busy airside service road below and on the southern façade the Domestic Departures roof was an obstruction.
Architectural Design
The extension of the building footprint and new southern façade offers spectacular views of the distant mountains, runway and aircraft apron for Slow Lounge patrons.

The lounge floor area has been doubled and the upgraded facilities allow for an increased capacity in a luxurious stylish environment.

Spatial arrangements and design detailing were work-shopped with Tonic Interiors throughout so that Blueprint Architects could provide a completed shell for the Tonic Interiors finishes fit-out. This shell included fully finished back-of-house areas such as the kitchen, liquor store, stairs, all ceilings and fittings, air-conditioning, first fix plumbing and all related services.

Tonic Interiors concluded the contract with wall and floor finishes, second fix plumbing and all joinery and soft furnishings.

Internally, the existing lounge and mezzanine levels were reconfigured by repositioning the mezzanine access stair in the lounge space and creating an elegant new feature stair. A more spacious mezzanine level now includes a new dining area, refurbished spa and private booths.

The mezzanine moves to the new upper lounge which includes a bar, comfortable seating, with entertainment and Wi-Fi facilities.
BLUEPRINT ARCHITECTS
JOHANNESBURG: 011 447 4190
CAPE TOWN: 021 426 2622
Email: info@blueprint.co.za
Web: www.blueprint.co.za

Blueprint Architects was established in 2000 as a permanent joint venture company between Jonker & Bernes Architects and KMH Architects, providing architectural, interior design and space planning services. The combined resources of the two practices provide a substantial resource base to engage in large projects which enable Blueprint Architects to further its BEE and Employment Equity aims.

Tonic
JOHANNESBURG: 011 327 2028
SHOWROOM: 011 262 4513
3 Desmond Road, Kramerville
Web: www.tonicdesign.co.za

Tonic is a design consultancy that offers clients a comprehensive service for their projects. With considerable experience across the fields of corporate, retail and hospitality design, our clean-lined aesthetic and meticulous detailing have been widely acclaimed. From large-scale planning and project management through to curatorship of private homes, every Tonic interior is characterised by a bold use of shape and form, and an unusual juxtaposition of elements.

Additional luxury toilets and two new ‘Room with a View’ toilet cubicles have been added to augment this popular feature to five such cubicles.

The lower level kitchen was completely revamped to include induction plate cooking facilities and new cold room storage. This kitchen serves the new upper kitchen by means of a dumb waiter.

On the upper level, a new suspended tunnel fire escape bridge was designed as an escape route from the lounge into the existing fire escape stairwell adjacent.

Technical & Construction
KFDW Structural Engineers assisted Blueprint Architects with a design solution which allowed for modular constructability. A crane, with limited reach, delivered materials to the roof deck for transport to the site. A steel support structure for the façade, with an integrated cleaning platform, was built initially, to enclose the roof deck and allow for further work to take place. The specialised sound proof double curtain wall panels were fitted internally.

Interior Design Brief
The brief to Tonic was twofold. The existing Slow Lounge had proven to be very successful and was under huge pressure to expand to meet the increased capacity. The need to extend the lounge had been looked at for some time but it took a lot of planning to get the approvals for the extension due to the nature of the

FULCRUM FLOORING
Sydney: 082 552 7766
sydney@fulcrumsa.co.za

Fulcrum Flooring is proud to complete another quality timber floor for Comair Slow Lounge. Fulcrum supply and install a wide range of floor coverings nationwide. Our products also include timber decking and pergolas, decorative cement floors, polished concrete and decorative cement wall finishes. Our innovative range X TEC Stoneflow and X TEC Superflow was launched last year, creating a buzz in the market due to its versatility and custom options. Visit our Ideas Center in JHB with everything under 1 roof.

SLOW LOUNGE
Airport environment. The client wanted to give the lounge an update without losing any of the core elements that had made it so successful. It was important to use the opportunity to keep the Lounge ahead of the competition as the client was very aware of how they had given the Airport lounge market a shake up and wanted to maintain their position as the market leader.

**Interior Design Concept**
Once Tonic had been given drawings of the new space by the architects they set about developing a plan on how best to enhance the entire space and give the lounge a new element that the customer had not yet experienced. The space had amazing views over the runways as well as of the glorious mountains that are so distinctive.

The concept was to create a cocktail bar environment that took full appreciation of the views and gave the lounge a distinctly more social area, thereby achieving the feel of a great international hotel bar. The additional area also meant the space could be cleaned up, by removing some elements on the existing ground floor to give the area a more spacious and relaxed feel. The aim was to provide each of the areas with its own atmosphere that conveyed the nature of its use while maintaining an overall unity.

**Materials and Finishes**
Many of the finishes were used throughout the lounges to maintain the clear brand identity, while adding in new elements and finishes to enhance some of the new spaces.

The existing palette of natural materials; oiled oak, marbles and textured wallpapers was combined with oxidized brass and smokey mirror.
Design Challenges
It is always a challenge to work on an existing environment that has proven to be very successful. You have to distill the elements that work and not mess with them while still adding a freshness to the project that keeps it relevant. Too often, updates of spaces are worse than the original as too much emphasis is placed on making a completely new statement and the original magic is lost.

Tonic Interiors were very fortunate on this project to have a client who was completely on board and very trusting, which really drove them to do their best work. An example of this was in the use of contemporary art in the space that is now part of the Slow Lounge identity. In this instance, a site specific mural by Cape Town based Artist, Andrzej Urbanski was commissioned.

Conclusion
The collaboration between Blueprint Architects and Tonic has produced a spectacular domestic airline lounge facility at Cape Town International Airport which is on a par with global standards and will greatly enhance premium passenger travel experience.