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 Hospitality**DESIGN**
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projects the fish shack

gone

1. Commercial fishing wharves, workers' cabins, and waterfront cafés inspired a DIY aesthetic at the Fish Shack.

fishin'

Creating a timeless
seafood joint in
Vancouver

By ALIA AKKAM

Photography by LARRY GOLDSTEIN





Six weeks. That was all the time BOX Interior Design had to transform Glowbal Group's Moroccan restaurant Sanafir, in downtown Vancouver, into upbeat seafood destination the Fish Shack.

While adhering to this compressed schedule on a tight budget was challenge enough, Cynthia Penner, principal of locally based BOX, reveals other concerns: embracing a nautical theme "without becoming trite or overly cliché" while creating visual texture, warmth, and intimacy in a double-height space.

These quandaries were solved when Penner and her team dreamed up the concept of dockside chic, turning to commercial fishing wharves, workers' cabins, and waterfront cafés for inspiration. "We feel the success of this project comes from the use of simple materials used in innovative ways. It feels new but also like it has always been there," she says.

To create a DIY aesthetic of found objects, used wood shipping pallets dominate the space, amplified by natural rope, cleats, marine bollards, and vintage pulleys and

2. A wall comprised of used wood shipping pallets adds warmth to the double-height space.

3. A rope and pulley installation paired with industrial lighting is one of the restaurant's "dockside chic" highlights.

4. Inky blue walls, hand-glazed green subway tiles, and red banquettes break from the traditional nautical palette.



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hooks. “The existing double volume allowed us to be bold in our vertical expressions, so the pallet wall becomes impactful due to its scale, and the rope and pulley lighting suspension can also shine,” Penner adds.

Other lighting takes the form of bare lamps in porcelain sockets, mason jar-like glass pendants, and hanging over the bar, large-scale industrial creations with a salvaged appearance. “The overall effect of these various lighting types,” Penner says, “is warm, easygoing, and familiar, but it also has some of the sexy drama the Glowbal Group is known for.”

Guests perch on nostalgic upholstered kitchen chairs at one of the casual wood dining tables, or a basic metal painted work stool at the bar where the seafood display becomes an energetic backdrop. The deep color palette—inky blue walls, hand-glazed green subway tiles, and red banquettes that call to mind old-fashioned life jackets—is a departure from the “light and sun-bleached looks” of traditional seafood restaurants as Penner notes. Yet she felt these saturated hues “would give a good dive vibe and match the R&B soundtrack.” **hd**

boxinteriordesign.com; glowbalgroup.com

The Fish Shack

Vancouver

Owners

Bosa and Emad Yacoub, Glowbal Restaurant Group

Interior Design Firm

BOX Interior Design Inc., Vancouver

Interior Design Project Team

Cynthia Penner, Jay Brooks, and Tara Lingle

Contractor

Action Projects

Dining Chairs and Barstools

Industrial Revolution

Banquette Fabric

Maharam

Glazed Tile

Bullnose Tile & Stone

Lighting

Restoration Hardware, DWR, and West Elm

Paint

Para Paints



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