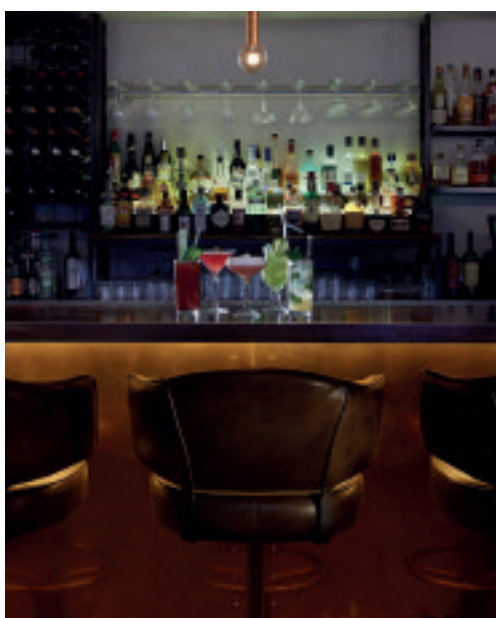


The success of Eat17's refurbishment by Hawtrey-Woore design studio has become evident where it matters most – with record takings reported every week since the venue re-opened.

Eat17, London





Eat17 is an independently-owned small group of eateries and convenience stores with a culture built around creativity and product quality. The Walthamstow restaurant was recently refurbished in a challenging project carried out within a tight two week timeframe, to a design by London-based design studio, Hawtrey-Woore.

The venue is entered through the bar area, now floored in handmade cement tiles and incorporating a number of dining tables, with natural sheepskins draped over the chairs which add texture and luxury immediately. This leads through a floor-to-ceiling opening to the main dining area with its circular zinc topped tables and upholstered stools. At the far end of this area, the space is divided into more intimate sections, with tables for two made from reclaimed oak and leather upholstered banquette seating, using low walls featuring arrangements of fresh foliage to divide the space.

One of the key features of the refurbishment was to soften the division of the bar and restaurant to create more of a unified space. Natasha's design solution was to open up a wall dividing the restaurant and bar areas and re-position the bar in a more central location. This entailed knocking

through the dividing wall and installing a bespoke structural framework needed to support the floor above, where apartments are located. This was a major element of the project – particularly due to the tight two week timeframe allocated to complete the refurbishment. The works involved constructing a hoarding around this section of the restaurant with works ongoing whilst the restaurant was operational, as this was the only way to achieve the completion deadline.

Another key element was to make the bar itself a focal point to be enjoyed from both the restaurant and the bar areas. "As a centrepiece, we wanted it to feel special while maintaining a natural, unpretentious feel. By adopting a simple, honest form and making it entirely in natural copper, we were able to create an exciting, natural focal point for the space," says Natasha.

Another key aspect of the project was the re-location of the entrance to the side of the venue. The entrance was previously at the centre of the internal space, and created congestion with people entering and leaving in the same area where diners were queueing for the restaurant – coupled with staff and other customers trying to get through the

crowded space. The re-location of the entrance thus resulted in alleviating congestion and in making the space feel more unified and comfortable.

Additionally, the queues of customers prompted by the popularity of the food had created the need to find a way of creating more dining space, while still giving diners a feeling of comfort and intimacy at their tables.

"We used low dividing walls, deep upholstered banquettes and soft, glowing pendant lights for each table to achieve this. We also created an area in the bar for people to enjoy a cocktail while they wait to be seated," explains Natasha.

Cow horn-style chairs were chosen to echo the design cues for the restaurant and a specialist clay plaster was used on the walls to add texture, warmth and a natural feel. One wall also features brick slips to blend with a garden wall outside.

Natasha concludes: "Overall we set out to create an experience that befits Eat 17's earthy yet sophisticated nature and its edge of East London provenance. We have re-worked the space and married natural with urban influences in our design, with a focus on imaginative use of craftsmanship." [W hawtreywoore.co.uk](http://W.hawtreywoore.co.uk)