



Chilliwow

Fortitude Valley

Taking over the 10 year old hospitality venue previously known as Barsoma, Fortitude Valley's newest venture, Chilliwow is a fully themed Mexican cantina, spreading over three levels complete with private dining rooms, a dance floor and an alfresco area.

The design of Chilliwow was designed, implemented and completed within three months, including the steel and timber furniture which was custom designed and constructed. Extensive joinery and material work and over 15 different paint colours and finishes are used throughout the design, including two bars, a courtyard, bathrooms, and shared eating and drinking areas. The overall spectrum of colour use is broad, yet honed to specific areas, invoking the colours of Mexico without being a pastiche of its rich culture.

Featuring the main bar, seating, outdoor area as well as smaller private dining rooms, the ground floor is an all encompassing entrance. Inspiration has been taken from colours and patterns of Mexican geographical elements, with blues, yellows, pinks and oranges applied to the façade, Interior and alfresco areas,

with architectural and cultural elements layered into the design and lush accents of festivities, iconography and Mexican symbolism completing the look.

Moving to the upper floor of Chilliwow, it becomes an aesthetic ascent into elements of astrology, featuring the stars decorating the background to the second bar and additional seating areas, with rich dark blue hues. The overall design and feel of Chilliwow is a colourfully rich, playful and relaxed atmosphere showcasing the historically beautiful Mexican culture and combining it with the equally colourful modern Brisbane social scene.

Alexa Nice Interior Design created a colour palette which was believed to be closer to the true culture of Mexico. This is strikingly apparent from the moment the facade is viewed, gone is the original, uninspiring grey façade and in its place is a vibrant and eye-catching façade.

Painted elements in the design, created with influence from native Mexican patterns, create what is now a highly recognisable bar in the thriving night-time district of Fortitude Valley. Once

the threshold is crossed the spectrum of colour use is increased to a spectacular degree with hues of orange, red, pink, blue and yellow applied together to paint a scene of which up until now had been unseen on the east of coast of Australia.

The inspiration for the design came from the vibrant colours of Mexico, its landscape, culture and people. The colours were selected to represent native fabrics, geographical colour palettes and cultural celebrations.

Different techniques were applied to different elements to highlight or disguise their uses. A previously visually ugly air conditioning vent was painted bright copper to create a new bold element. Six different paint colours were used on the façade in order to create a unique geometric pattern and renowned street artist Jimmy Bligs was brought up from Melbourne to hand paint the interior walls in a series of intricate geometrical and Mexican patterns.

A front façade of **Resene Sweet Corn**, **Resene Saffron**, **Resene Jordy Blue**, **Resene Riptide**, **Resene Mandy** and **Resene Rob Roy** greets you on





 Resene Optimist





arrival and advertises Chilliwow to passers-by. The palette warms up to **Resene Geraldine**, **Resene Grenadier** and **Resene Mexican Red** as you enter, a colour scheme repeated in the Level one bar with the addition of **Resene Black** and **Resene Alo Alo**.

The blues of **Resene Optimist** and **Resene Eastern Blue** decorate the men's bathroom, while a flush of pinks of **Resene Lipstick** and **Resene Deep Blush** decorate the women's bathroom.

Resene California, **Resene Eastern Blue**, **Resene Ayers Rock**, **Resene Alabaster**, **Resene Copper Fire** and **Resene Outer Space** boldly decorate other spaces throughout. The exterior courtyard is a breath of fresh air in **Resene Jordy Blue** and **Resene Alabaster**.

The design incorporates extensive joinery and this joinery work was highlighted with a use of complementary colour ranges to give a bold yet achievable finish. We also

hand painted many decorative styling elements in Chilliwow, including the resin cow skulls, human skulls, pots, and decorative wall items in Resene colours to tie everything together. The existing space has had its original industrial features highlighted, exposing brickwork, timber beams and concrete elements. It is from this unique canvas that the design for Chilliwow was created.

A challenge was to strip 10 years of worth of paintwork from the interior of the building, including faux shag carpeting that had been applied to the walls 15 years prior, in order to apply the new colours and finishes.

The façade uses geometric application of bold colours to form a recognisable entrance from what was once a conventional dull purple building. We scraped off a lot of the purple paint to reveal beautiful brickwork and also hand rendered the orange brickwork to give an aged effect and blend it in with the Mexican design.



Client: Chilliwow, www.chilliwow.com.au

Graphic work: Arcade Creative, www.thearcadecreative.com

Interior designer: Alexa Nice, www.alexanice.com

Mural artist: Jimmy Bligs, www.grandscheme.com.au

Painting contractor: United Colours

Photographer: Jonathan Bagniski, www.JonBagniski.com

