Foster + Partners-designed restaurant opens at Monteverdi Tuscany

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Words Foster and Partners

Photography Foster and Partners and Aaron Hargreaves

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Following the opening of Zita in June last year, Foster + Partners has designed a

second restaurant for the luxury boutique hotel, Monteverdi Tuscany. Oreade offers an intimate fine dining experience for fourteen guests every evening, with exquisite dishes prepared by the executive chef, Riccardo Bacciottini. The restaurant design is rooted in the local Tuscan culture, emphasising the use of natural materials, and aligning with the chef's passion for sustainability, storytelling, and foraging locally sourced ingredients.

Annamaria Anderloni, Partner, Foster + Partners, said: "The project strives to redefine luxury dining in the most incredible one-of-a-kind setting. Chef Ricardo Bacciottini's philosophy has been a driving force behind our design, which embraces local and natural materials, to create an authentic and extremely atmospheric experience for guests."

Michael Cioffi, Founder, Monteverdi Tuscany, added: "When conceptualizing Oreade with Foster + Partners, our vision was to create a space that embodies the spirit of Tuscany while expanding the boundaries of its renowned culinary artistry. Every design element, from the reclaimed stone to the handcrafted furnishings, reflects our deep commitment to honoring the landscape, culture, and traditions of Tuscany. Oreade is not just a restaurant, it is an invitation to experience Tuscany's past, present, and future through food, wine, design, and hospitality."

Set within a medieval building, the restaurant features reclaimed floors and original stone walls to preserve the historic character. The design inspiration draws on the chef 's unique approach and the Tuscan countryside, while nodding to the Italian Arte Povera movement of the 1960s and 70s, which explored the use of ready-found objects. To minimise the project's environmental impact and support regional artisans, 90 percent of materials are sourced within a 100-mile radius of the site.

Local artisans played a significant role in the design process, creating a number of bespoke pieces using reclaimed elements. The chef's table comprises two solid planks of timber from a local olive tree, which are seamlessly joined by a liquid metal spine. Elsewhere, a recovered 300-year-old ceiling beam has been transformed into a unique illuminated bench with integrated LED lighting.

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Panels on the walls are made from woven leather and timber to help absorb sound and enhance the acoustics of the space.

Several custom pieces have been designed for the project, including a leather sling and guéridon. The soft leather sling attaches to the arms of a dining chair, providing a place for guests to store their belongings, while the folding timber guéridon allows the chef to finalise dishes in front of them.

The intimate restaurant requires a high level of acoustic performance to ensure a comfortable and private dining experience. Acoustic panels on the ceiling are made from intricately woven branches, made by local artisans, while those on the walls are made from woven leather and timber to help absorb sound and enhance the acoustics of the space.

Lighting is designed to cast gentle shadows on these textured surfaces, creating a theatrical yet warm effect.

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