



# Elegant illumination

Selecting light sources for chandeliers

They've had a really bad press since Liberace planted one atop his piano lid, and many incredibly precious pieces were consigned to rubbish skips as the first big waves of interior design fever gripped the UK, and we all went 'clean, uncluttered and neutral'. But the not-so-humble chandelier is big news again.

Suddenly, chandeliers are turning up in boardrooms, city firms are using them to grace contemporary reception areas, and instead of being the preserve of grand country houses with even grander dining rooms and ballrooms, they're suddenly the 'must-have' finishing touch in the kitchen, of all places (Mrs Beaton is no doubt spinning grave-side at the thought of all the unhygienic particles collecting high above food preparation areas, but presumably one's staff deal with the dirt?).

As Robert Chelsom, managing director of Chelsom commented: 'As long as there are buildings with high ceilings, either historic buildings being converted to modern use, or new buildings with atriums, there will always be a need for the chandelier.'

He continued: 'From a design perspective, if we take the principle that a room should largely be divided into thirds, both vertically and horizontally, and apply that to the height of a tall-ceilinged room, then the top part is an empty void, for which the chandelier is the ideal solution from a decorative and functional perspective, commanding the open space perfectly.'

## HOPING FOR A MIRACLE

Love them or hate them, one thing we can all agree on when it comes to the showiest of fittings is that using a suitable light source is paramount to present them to their best advantage.

Robert Chelsom continued: 'Following the death of the incandescent lamp, there was a period where it was difficult to select the right light sources for chandeliers; early compact fluorescent lamps were bulky, cold and ugly, halogens often produce too much heat, and short lamp life is a problem because of accessibility for lamp changing (a scaffold to change one lamp?).'

'Then along comes the LED to answer our prayers. Far from LEDs replacing chandeliers, they serve to enhance them, and certainly optimise light output and efficiency. Anytime a lampshade is used on a chandelier, a retrofit, candle or GLS lamp shape can be used. In terms of the more traditional chandelier, without shades, clear LED candle-shaped lamps are now available for a more authentic look, and if the chandelier is a much more contemporary statement piece, then integral LED boards can be used to produce dramatic down lighting, such as acrylic rods with bubbles.'

## MADE TO SPARKLE

WenTao Kuang, managing director at Kosnic has come up against resistance to LEDs for use in traditional chandelier designs: 'People have come to expect a certain level of warmth and sparkle from their chandelier lamps. However, even though the switch from traditional light sources



to LED equivalents makes economic sense, we still find that many are reluctant to make the change. People are concerned that LED lamps will look too modern in their classic or heritage chandeliers, and that they won't work as well. So, we have a two-fold challenge when designing chandelier light sources; the lamp has to look good, whether it is turned on or off, and it must deliver in terms of sparkle and overall light quality.'

Having identified a problem, Kosnic got to work producing a candle lamp specifically for decorative fittings.

'The secret to the success of our popular decorative candle lamp range is that light is delivered from LED chips mounted on a 3D array that protrudes from the

#### RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

A particular challenge that Chantelle Lighting kept coming up against was the increasing number of requests by its customers for chandeliers using LED bulbs that didn't detract from the aesthetic appeal of the fitting.

The problem the company faced was that most LED bulbs were manufactured to be functional rather than decorative, so didn't improve the look of the chandelier.

Chris Astin, Chantelle Lighting research and development manager, explained: 'After extensive research and discussions with LED manufacturers, we found that there was not a good looking, high

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centre of the base,' explained Kuang. 'This unusual configuration ensures that the light distribution is non-directional and encourages the fabric of the chandelier to gleam, as well as lighting the space around it. We have designed the range with the comfort factor in mind for end users.'

As well as standard, bent-tip and twisted traditional shaped, clear glass candle lamps, the Kosnic range also includes silver, bronze and brass bases to suit heritage and modern installations.

'We have even taken the step of printing product information on the glass, not the base, so that when placed into a chandelier, nothing is visible to the user. This isn't the case with many old LED candle lamp designs,' he added.

'It is ironic, but we love it when our lamps are used in an LED refurbishment project, and the feedback from staff and guests in the establishment is that they haven't noticed anything different in the lighting!

'The warmth, look, and feel of the space remain excellent, but maintenance cycles have been dramatically reduced - along with their lighting electricity bills.'

powered LED bulb on the market, because the technology isn't ready yet!

'We did however find a solution, which met the needs of our many clients in the leisure and hospitality industry, who wanted warm, dimmable light from an LED with a long lifespan. We became the exclusive UK stockist of this new generation of LED bulbs, and they are already revolutionising our customer's lights - both existing fittings and new.

'Our customers didn't want their fittings to produce the harsh white light, which is often associated with LED lighting, so the bulbs are the perfect light temperature for their venues.

'Whilst they don't match the light produced by a 60 watt bulb, we find that, when used as a feature chandelier, they produce the perfect light and look fantastic.

'The warm colour temperature brings a new perspective to bespoke lighting projects, and produces incredible ambiance in restaurants, pubs and other public venues, or in residential projects. We do however warn our customers that these lights aren't suitable for all projects - such as in an office.'

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CHELSOM

# BUMS ON SEATS

What difference does lighting really make to the bottom line for hospitality venues?

It's not unreasonable to suggest that the success or failure of a hospitality venue can be based on something as 'simple' as the lighting.

Whether something as simple as scene setting is available (and staff are trained to operate it), to change the ambience of a restaurant from a bright, welcoming daytime environment for families, to a romantic place for couples to meet and eat, can be the difference between empty tables and a bustling order book.

So, how can you create the right mood at the right time of day – or night?

Robert Chelsom, managing director of Blackpool-based Chelsom says: 'In short, the answer is a combination of downlights and feature lighting.

'Downlights need to be strategically positioned and individually dimmable, to create sparkle and drama when illuminated, and mood and ambience when dimmed. They also need to be used to pick out key features, such as pieces of art, or used for wall washing.

'If LEDs are the main light source, then this enables coloured light and colour changing options to be used, and decorative lighting remains to create the style of the venue and be fundamental to the whole bar and café culture.'

Sounds great, so how do you achieve it? Chelsom explained: 'Over tables and bar areas, you need low hung lighting, which can either be coloured glass providing downlight and ambient lighting, or metal pendant shades with painted exteriors and contrasting metallic interiors in sumptuous gold and copper tones to project warm and dramatic downlight.'

Of course, there's often more than just lighting the tables to consider. At Claridges

Fera restaurant, TM Lighting was called on to light a six-metre high mural and triptych by artist, Linn Meyers.

The company, which specialises in museum-grade LED luminaires for the art market, engages the latest and most sophisticated energy-efficient LED technology to create specialist solutions to achieve unprecedented levels of colour rendition and light distribution.

Andrew Molyneux from TM Lighting explained: 'We used a customised version of the TM Picture Light, which illuminated the striking mural and triptych, being mindful to prevent any glare from the lights due to their high elevation.

'The gold relief of the floor-to-ceiling mural surrounding the kitchen entrance was brought to life with the high colour rendition achieved by the LEDs.'

The company was also responsible for accent lighting of artworks at the Hyatt Regency's Churchill Bar.

## WORK WITH FUNCTION

At the British Film Institute's new restaurant and lounge, .PSLAB crafted a lighting experience in keeping with the BFI's legacy.

Elegant, white-and-brass insertions, custom-designed and fabricated by .PSLAB, evoke the essence of cinema.

Fixtures on columns in the lounge, which feature both in the interior of the building and on the exterior façade, were produced using a craftsmanship developed by the design team, which follows a manual, recto/verso bending technique applied to corrugated brass sheets. The resulting cylinders are given a powder-coated exterior finish, while the natural brass interiors reflect a burnished glow. They are hinge-mounted to the columns, providing



.PSLAB



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TM LIGHTING

the space with a modular aspect, allowing the light scheme to be subtly manipulated according to the desired mood.

The design is echoed in the separators between the seating booths. Utilising a smaller-scale version of the column fittings, table lamps finished in brass, are outfitted with a custom black base, lending ambiance to the dining experience.

**HIDING THE LIGHT**

Lamps and Lights regularly supplies lighting for bars, restaurants and cafes.

The company's Hen Cox said: 'Lighting is essential when creating an atmosphere. Firstly your design brief is key; are you designing a bright airy daytime cafe, a soft



romantic restaurant, a cosy intimate bar, or a funky shiny nightclub? When you know what mood you want to evoke, you often then decide on colours and furniture, but lighting must not be left as a last thought. Tied in with the right furnishings, it can totally change a look and feel.

'The value of well-designed lighting should not be overlooked. A good lighting scheme is often not recognised, but



PNLD

brass lamp holders, galleries and ceiling plates with retro shades is a very popular look today,' agrees Cox.

'At the opposite end of the spectrum, contemporary chrome metal and black plastic fittings are paired with funky Plumen bulbs, combined with lengths of coloured braided flex and hung from ceilings to create modern vibrant pendants.

'Clear glass shades available in all shapes and sizes, from small domes and ribbed globes to tulip bells and large railroad, these shades, often known as vintage holophane luminaries, are very popular and extremely useful in the restaurant industry; their reeded prismatic glass add that touch of sparkle whilst still offering maximised light - a must if you want your diners to see what culinary delights you have in store for them!'

**KEEPING TRADITION**

Paul Nulty Lighting Design (PNLD) recently completed the interior lighting for Fischer's, the new Corbin and King restaurant in Marylebone, London; the third time PNLD has designed for the renowned restaurant partners.

The concept for the Viennese restaurant was an early 20th Century informal neighbourhood café. PNLD's brief was to maintain a warm, intimate atmosphere from early morning breakfast right through to evening service. The team's solution was to bring a fresh concept to traditional lighting by using established lamp technology, rather than LEDs.

The result is a space that exudes warm tones and encourages conviviality, using a flexible lighting system that produces the intimate hue of the old-fashioned lamp.

PNLD ensured the space was permeable by carefully balancing illumination levels across the floor space, with the rear dining areas being subtly brighter to enhance the depth of the restaurant. Layered lighting that blends wall and pendant lights was applied to create the ambient illumination of picture lights, and track mounted spotlights provide feature and accent lighting. The overall effect is the illumination of artwork and murals that adorn the walls, as well as a soft glow across the floor area.

One of the challenges for PNLD was to create a lighting system that was modern, efficient and flexible, that would deliver the intimate atmosphere of a traditional café, but which complemented natural light throughout the day. PNLD used a lighting control system that enables scene setting to balance the stages of daylight and maintain the interior's warm tones.

The system also helps reduced energy consumption where possible without comprising on the quality of illumination.

Paul Nulty, head of practice, said: 'The concept behind our design was to create the required intimate environment, but with a system that is flexible and energy efficient.

'Working with the design studio from the initial phase means that we can implement a solution that truly complements interior design, not diminish it, which can so often be the case if left too late.'

# Oh, là là

British chic is right on trend  
for a Parisian getaway

After its involvement with the successful refurbishment programme of three Mövenpick hotels in the Netherlands last year, Chelsom was commissioned to supply the lighting for the extensive refurbishment of the brand's four-star Mövenpick Hotel Paris Neuilly.

The superior graded venue is located in the heart of the city, with views of the iconic Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe.

During the renovation of 281 guestrooms and suites, Chelsom collaborated with the teams at ARA Design and Chandler KBS, project manager for the complex roll out, to ensure that the exacting design requirements were met, and that stringent French regulations were adhered to.

MD, Robert Chelsom commented: 'We are extremely proud to have been commissioned to work on this project, as we were up against some tough international competition. At almost 300

*6 The logistics involved in order to deliver large volumes of product to central Paris on time were instrumental to its success*



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guestrooms, the refurbishment of Movenpick Paris was a great opportunity to reflect the scope of work we can and do deliver.'

Working closely with ARA Design, Chelsom devised a lighting solution, which delivered the utmost in terms of style and functionality, and was in keeping with the wider interior scheme, effortlessly balancing contemporary design with the elegant atmosphere of Parisian chic.

The scheme incorporated a mixture of existing fittings, standard products from Chelsom's collection and custom-designed pieces, featuring clean, contemporary lines and neutral tones.

Custom-made pendants with striking French Drum shades in off-white silk with a black trim were commissioned for bedside lighting. Suspended from the ceiling and supported from the wall gives the illusion that they are hovering above the bedside tables.

LED reading lights in a polished chrome finish with bullet heads were also specified, along with inverted wall lights, providing the perfect balance of functionality and design for the bedside lighting requirements.

Stylish cone-shaped shade fittings were chosen for the wall lighting, while standard Chelsom floor and table lamps from the Swing range were customised to provide an elegant look in keeping with the interior scheme. The Swing fittings were teamed with colour-matched shades in off-white to complement the colour palette of the guestrooms, offering ambient lighting to enhance the guest experience.

'The scale and timings we were working to meant that it certainly wasn't without its challenges,' explained Chelsom. 'The logistics involved in order to deliver large volumes of product to central Paris on time were instrumental to its success.'