

DJ EXPO SPECIAL! GEAR, SUPERSTARS AND ATLANTIC CITY'S HOTTEST SPOTS

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CLUB systems

INTERNATIONAL

GET YOUR JUST DESSERTS AT
BRÛLÉE / 32°

Explore Expo host venue **NIKKI BEACH**

RICHIE HAWTIN'S theoretical tech

ERICK MORILLO'S sensual groove

The system they're all talking about

RANE SERATO SCRATCH LIVE



► By Ruth Floriani

► Photos by Allan Toft

With the flip of a switch, a two-way mirror sign transforms decadent daytime dessert bar Brulee into alter ego 32°, a swanky bottle service nightclub. The 1,700-square-foot space sits inside The Quarter, the newly developed retail area in Atlantic City's Tropicana Hotel.

The venue is bedecked in both cream and candy colors, with a white-concrete-and-mica floor, caramel-hued banquettes, and an architectural lighting system that can turn things fire-engine red with an LCD-screen finger-touch. But the room's centerpiece is a 12-foot, neon-lined chrome orb – a sculpture of sorts – recessed in a 24' x 20' soffit, and surrounded by 500 square feet of fiber-optic-embedded mirror paneling and 1,000 dangling crystal strands, each about six feet long. Hanging from the orb's central opening is a turn-of-the-century chandelier.

While executive pastry chef Jamal Edwards rules over the kitchen, plenty of cooks had a hand in creating the venue's unique broth. Owners Barry Gutin and Larry Cohen, who originated the 32° concept in Philadelphia, are also behind neighboring Cuba Libre restaurant, and Philly nightclub staples Egypt and Shampoo. Interior designer Steve Lewis of Steve Lewis Design (Marquee, Plaid in New York) worked alongside architect Karen Daroff and Chris Sheffield of Daroff Design (Harrah's, Loews Philadelphia) to create a room as fit for dining as it is for dancing. Paul Gregory and Michael Cummings of Focus Lighting (crobar New York, Teatro Las Vegas) added versatile architectural lighting, while Scott Kemly of Powerhouse Sound (Tru, Cuba Libre Atlantic City) camouflaged the sound sources as well as possible.

Lighting designer Michael Cummings:

"Typically in restaurants we don't make such extreme shifts. You don't want to be shockingly dramatic; you don't want to signal people to get up and leave because they don't want to be part of the club. So the well-timed gradual change is really under the control of the manager;



Fiber optics light the venue's overhead centerpiece: nebulous orb, or giant tick?

he's able to feel the shift in the clientele. He's got an LCD panel; he can adjust lights on the fly if he wants to. I think at the time that it's done – nine, 10 o'clock – the people there aren't with their kids necessarily, so to be in that change is OK.

"We tried to use different angles, different colors, and different intensities to create the change. We used downlights and simple lighting during the day, which would set that clean, elegant mood, and then allow us to shift into the color at night. So at night, all the white light sconces and glowing objects that create the daylight effect turn off, and we bring in color

sidelight. We get more dramatic. We bring in color uplight. We pull out illuminated objects, and elements that are colored and more vibrant.

"There's a series of end-omitting fiber optic points, protruding through a five-foot vertical mirrored soffit wall that sidelights the crystal chandelier. There are no LEDs: The point sources are what we were trying to get to, and we found that the fiber optic could give you more point sources more economically. To do that with individual LEDs was going to be more costly."

Sound designer Scott Kemly:

"They didn't want these big nightclub

Sweet Sound

- 9 - Tannoy CMS12 TDC ceiling speakers
- 8 - JBL CSP18 surface mount 2-way speakers
- 2 - JBL ASB6118 single subs
- 2 - JBL PD5122 dual-12" subs
- 2 - Pioneer CDJ-800 digital vinyl turntables
- 2 - Shure Whitelabel cartridges
- 2 - Shure ULXP24/58 wireless systems
- 2 - Symetrix ARC remotes
- 2 - Technics SL-1200M3D turntables
- 1 - Allen & Heath XONE:92 mixer
- 1 - JBL EON15 G2 powered booth monitor
- 1 - Symetrix SymNet Express Cobra DSP



Crème-colored JBLs and Tannoys camo-ed above.

speakers hanging, but they didn't want ceiling speakers that sounded like ceiling speakers. So we used Tannoy's high-end ceiling speakers, and we kind of made them disappear into the sheetrock. It's a 12-inch dual concentric, so basically the tweeter/horn is mounted in alignment with the woofer, but it uses the woofer as a horn to throw the high frequency, so they're both in alignment with each other so it hits your ear at the same time. Just to hear that much hi-fidelity coming out of a ceiling speaker is amazing.

"We chose the Crown I-Tech because of the DSP: All your crossover points, your EQ-ing, your compression, limiting, everything is in the amplifier, so each amp is self-contained. And it's the only amp that can run that hard of a load that many hours.

"We couldn't have anything much in the centerpiece because it's all glass; all reflective surfaces. So we talked to JBL, and they made a custom box for us, the ESP18; super-clean in a very small box. I was leery because I don't believe you can get good audio out of a small box. But these things turned out to just be absolutely incredible.

"We didn't want to fly any subwoofers because you just lose output dramatically. But there are no cubby holes, no alcoves, no real spots to place subwoofers. But they had this center island thing, wrapped around with banquettes. There was lattice work over it, with a fabric stretch. We put the subs in it, but we were still limited in size, so we went with two JBL ASB6118's, a

Luscious Lighting

- 50 - FJ Gray & Co. Devon color glass filters
 - 50 - GL LitesOn low-voltage transformers
 - 35 - CSL Creative System 2090 wall washes
 - 34 - Litelab Corp LITETRAX socket strip
 - 33 - Contrast Lighting NW3000LM downlights
 - 27 - Lucifer Lighting Puklight downlights
 - 20 - Lightolier C6LV recessed adjustable PAR36 accent lights
 - 4 - Advanced Lighting Systems custom fused harness fiber optic cables
 - 4 - Martin Professional FiberSource QFX150 fiber optics illuminators
 - 1 - ETC Unison sensor dimming system
- Lamps by Sylvania*

high-powered single-18. I've used them many times before, and they definitely have the real slamming output and super-deep low-end of a true subwoofer."

Interior designer Steven Lewis:

"It's Atlantic City. If you really want to say what the intellect is, you can talk about dessert, you can talk about a nightclub, but think about where you really are – you're in a casino. We wanted it to be one of those elements that when a visitor came to Atlantic City, their friend had told them 'Hey, you've got to check out this joint.'

"The idea [with a dual-use venue] is to try to economize what the restaurant needs as best as possible, so you have room to operate as a nightclub. You have



JBL subs hide under a central island.

to really take into consideration size; size is the whole thing. You need to put an oven behind the bar, a microwave... what is the smallest size you can possibly use? Plus it has to be unobtrusive: How do you hide it at night, how does it fit it, how do you divert people's attention away from something that has nothing to do with a nightclub after the restaurant is closed?"

"The main [focus] was to create this thing in the middle of the room, which is absolutely eye-catching. And putting that thing above the ceiling, which is above the plane of the bar, certainly helped. You are immediately drawn to it, and since it's a highly reflective material, people are constantly looking at it. There's reflections of new people walking in, the actions of people. If it's in restaurant mode, there's flambé going on at the tables, causing crystals to move, and the flames are being seen in this mirror-like effect, and it becomes a show just looking up. And if you're a people-watcher you're certainly checking out the girl or guy sitting at the table three rows down. [It was made] on purpose to create that.

"We kept the people plane very neat and clean; very clean lines, very subtle, very controlled, so you felt warm and comfortable with what was going on above your head. And the fact that the thing changes color creates more interest.

"We designed questions into the place. For instance, the orb, what is it? Is it a cloud? Is it a zeppelin? We were constantly asking people what they thought it was, because there really isn't an answer. I heard somebody call it a big tick; that was my favorite. It's been called a lot of things, but as long as they're talking about it I figure we've done what we're supposed to do; we've created controversy and thought process."