



## *The Garden in the North*

Interior Designers El Equipo Creative and lighting designers BMLD transformed a former office building into a concept restaurant with a difference.

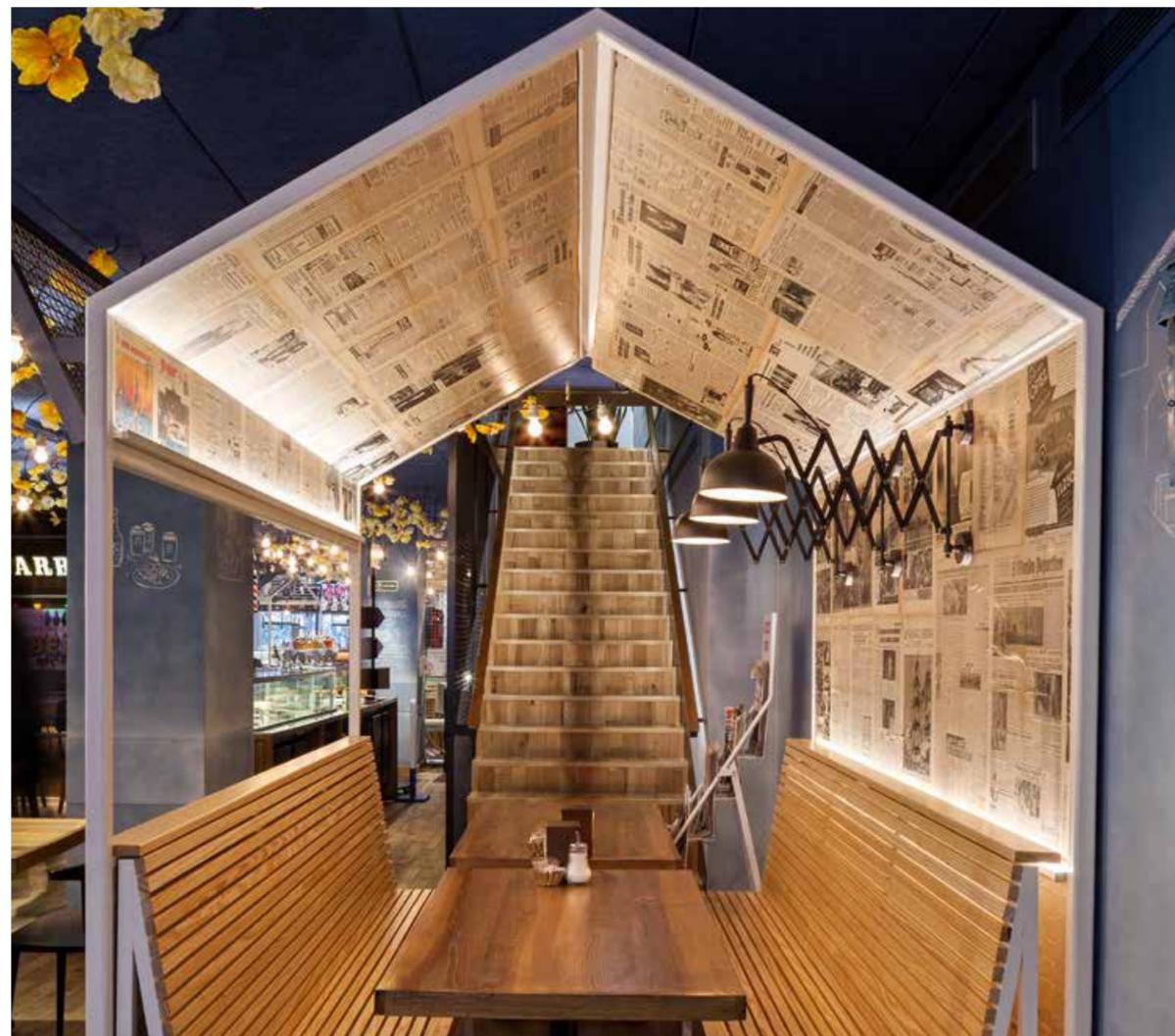
Images: Álvaro Valdecantos



Located in the Eixample district of Barcelona, Bellavista del Norte is the brainchild of the Iglesias and Messi brothers who, from the very beginning of the project, wanted to create a 'town' we would all like to live in. Working hand-in-hand with interior designers El Equipo Creativo, lighting designers BMLD reinterpreted the two key elements of the town the owners' envisioned nature and the lights that adorn the patron saint festivities of Spain. Formally an office building with a fantastic garden at the rear, which was unavailable to the public at the time, the 'town' of Bellavista includes a garden, cinema, town square, church, local pub, barber shop, newsstand, corner store and flower shop. BMLD's strategy throughout was based on a two-part design: visible decorative lighting that provides the required ambience in each part of the restaurant, accompanied by

almost invisible architectural illumination that allows suitable levels of light in each space. For each scenario BMLD came up with different, innovative lighting solutions, for example the Plaza a six-metre high space which ends the tour of the 'town' under a sky full of fireworks. Brigit Walter, head of creative direction at BMLD, designed a special set of different disc-shaped structures, hanging luminaires and shadow producing ceiling lights at different heights to evoke an exciting climax, an explosion of light and shadow. "The overall design and development of the project took three months, whilst the construction took around nine months to complete," says Walter. "From an operational point of view the space is used 24/7 all year round, mornings for breakfast and brunch and later on for lunch and dinner which is served throughout the entire lower floor. The upper floor houses the VIP

areas, restrooms and conference rooms, so coming up with an all day concept that divides the venue into smaller spaces with different atmospheres was a challenge." Due to the peculiar brief, custom tailored solutions were required as Walter explains: "Once the conceptual design was approved mock-ups were conducted and during the process, special attention was given to the custom elements, their proportions and balance within the space, detail and integration." Bellavista guests are greeted by thousands of luminous flowers hanging from the ceiling at different heights, a system the BMLD team designed. Strips of lamps are fastened by tension wires and clamps that adjust the position of the lights to create a natural spontaneity. Across the space to the greenhouse, vegetation takes the spotlight and hangs freely from the ceilings, lit to showcase its beautiful green hues and bring



the outdoors in. Scores of yellow flowers hang from the ceiling in the flower shop accompanied by garlands of light while a rail luminaire illuminates the flowers from below, causing shadows that produce a three dimensional effect. "The original brief didn't change much over time," Natali Canas del Pozo, architect at El Equipo Creativo tells darc. "The restaurant design translates the idea of daily life and the festive spirit of villages and towns in Spain and all around the world. Bellavista del Norte means 'beautiful view of the garden in the north', referencing the large garden at the back, a surprising oasis in the centre of Barcelona. The final result of the design creates a sensation of a familiar setting for many Spanish people: going back home for the yearly village feast and enjoying homemade food, each corner is as surprising as it is familiar." The innovative design evokes a connection

to nature, the sensation of the open air, the festive spirit of the lights in the city, summer nights and fireworks. "We tried not to be too literal when evoking a town, we wanted to introduce into the venue something of a spirit and atmosphere," continues Canas del Pozo. "We are more interested in abstract references and reinterpretations; lighting became a key element in achieving this goal. The idea was to create a lighting installation that accompanies the concept of a walk through a town and the grand finale in the final open space is the explosion of fireworks. The light varies in intensity and colour and gives the option of creating a separate ambience for lunch and dinner," says Canas del Pozo. "The decorative lighting is a key element in this project," continues Walter, "it's a visual cue to identify the feeling in the town and the town square's fireworks.

*Opening Spread* Bellavista's dining room, illuminated by the bespoke firework fixture, designed by BMLD and El Equipo Creativo. *This Page* Thousands of luminous flowers lit by strips of lamps fastened to tension wires, designed by BMLD. Bespoke wall sconces illuminate a booth in the dining area. *Next Page A* closer look at the firework installation from the street outside. Exposed lamps in the main area, reflect off the scattering of custom made flowers. The meeting room, with a spectacular view of the luminous flower installation.



To incorporate nature into the project, custom flower elements were designed to greet you from the entrance and follow you all the way to the town's plaza. These flowers hide recessed mounted track systems that incorporate the functional lighting for tables, as well as small uplights that highlight the flowers; both the track and uplights were designed for this project due to size limitations. Throughout the space, you find additional cues such as decorative lamp posts, signage within kiosks

and bare E27 lamps placed strategically. Once at the plaza, the town's fireworks are recreated through custom designed fixtures that provide sparkle and soft changes within colour." The result is an authentic and endearing location, where good comfort food can be enjoyed on a bright summer evening, no matter the season.  
[www.bml.d.es](http://www.bml.d.es)  
[www.elequipocreativo.com](http://www.elequipocreativo.com)

#### *design details*

**BELLAVISTA DEL JARDIN, BARCELONA, SPAIN**  
**CLIENT: IGLESIAS AND MESSI**  
**INTERIOR DESIGN: EL EQUIPO CREATIVO**  
**LIGHTING DESIGN: BMLD**

#### *lighting specified*

**BESPOKE FIREWORK INSTALLATION: BMLD WITH EL EQUIPO CREATIVO**  
**CUSTOM DECORATIVE LIGHT FIXTURES: BMLD**