Delectable Designs – Lune Croissanterie

> Text by Tim Roberts, Photography Tom Blachford







CASE STUDY (LUNE CROISSANTERIE)

Lune Croissanterie has quickly become known as the prime location for Melbourne's most coveted commodity – the perfect croissant. Situated in a converted 1930s warehouse, Lune Croissanterie certainly looks (and bakes) the goods.

As pastry heaven demands a beautiful setting, a memorable yet functional design was essential. Lune co-owner Nathan Toleman was heavily involved with the design and construction, in conjunction with co-owners Kate and Cam Reid, and Design firm Studio Esteta.

Nathan explains the philosophy behind it all. 'We started out as a nondescript "hole in the wall" croissanterie in Elwood,' he explains. 'Every last inch of that tiny original bakery was used in our quest to produce the most consistently delicious croissants, but we soon found that we were running out of room and couldn't cope with the heavy demand.'

With the opening of Lune 2.0, things have changed dramatically. 'Our new home is a vast and aesthetically striking space that is purpose-built for the baker,' Nathan says. 'Lune 2.0 surpasses traditional bakeries, as it offers a temperature controlled environment that will allow us to experiment with the boundaries of the possible. It is a space in which to find inspiration, both for ourselves and for our customers.'

From the beginning, Nathan Toleman and fellow business partners Kate and Cam Reid had a clear idea of what they wanted to achieve – to enclose the pastry shaping area (known as the 'Lune Lab') for the preparation of croissants, to create a design that would help keep the working environment dust-free and temperature-controlled, while remaining visible on all sides to curious customers interested in what was going on.

The site featured several uniquely challenging glazed areas. 'Glazing the bakery's rear wall was quite a task, as we wanted us to create a reflective surface with a "starry" or "heavenly" appearance,' says Harry Pitaro, Managing Director at David Glass. 'As the photographs reveal, the David Glass team helped them achieve this with the careful arrangement of glass walls and mirrors, resulting in a visually striking array of internal reflections. Over 30 panels of glass had to be precisely measured to ensure a perfect fit.'

Creating this effect required a careful choice of materials. 'There were well over 20 large mirrored panels of glass installed on the rear wall,' Harry notes. 'The grey tinted mirrors on the rear wall were selected to simulate the appearance of outer space and had the additional benefit of making this already-large room appear even more expansive.'

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(Lune Croissanterie, continued)

The centrepiece of Lune, as you might expect, is the preparation space. (Customers seeking a closer look at the engine room are welcome to perch on one of the adjacent stools while devouring one of Lune's highly sought-after treats.)

This enclosed 'Lune Lab' area in which the croissants are prepared can be considered something of an engineering marvel. The preparation area in the centre of the factory required a specialised LED lighting design to create the appearance of stars in the night sky. 'The approximately 6m x 4m food preparation enclosure utilises fully frameless glass in its design. It is composed of 12mm laminated safety glass along the fixed glass panelled walls and 12mm toughened safety glass along the two walls with double sliding doors. This creates a clear sense of space, as well as providing a food-safe environment.'

Getting the blend of materials exactly right was crucial to the project's success in meeting the designer's and client's goals.

'The whole process from measuring to installation required care and craftsmanship to ensure a quality installation. I'm very proud of the final result, and of the David Glass team who completed it,' Harry explains.

Harry appreciates the reception that Lune has received. 'Lune has already won several design awards for the space, which is great news. We were also fortunate enough to win an award for this project: Australian Glass and Glazing Association – Victoria, Best Use of Glass in a Commercial Application. We also know that their croissants are in high demand, with long queues stretching outside waiting to collect them – so that's also a positive sign!'

If the idea of sampling Melbourne's most acclaimed croissants in an unforgettable setting sounds appealing, a date with Lune awaits. GA