

CREATE.

EATING, DESIGN
AND FUTURE FOOD



Luxe Canteen

As the trend for fast-moving gourmet food grows and temporary restaurants pop up in every city, canteen culture has at last gotten a grown-up look. These are hip places where friends and family dine and socialise. Warm and welcoming, Luxe Canteen spaces are designed to encourage conviviality and convenience, efficiency and elegance. Food and drink are served to share, and many of the dining spaces and areas are communal, open-plan, and designed to encourage the shared starter, or the collective pot or plate.

Long communal tables and retro school chairs evoke the hustle and bustle of a school dinner hall, while decorative wallpapers and statement lighting create an air of luxury. The interiors are modern, sleek and glossy, but contrasted with exposed walls and unfinished surfaces, ornate chandeliers and murals.

Dutch and Belgian café influences are to be found everywhere, such as Fabbrica in Rotterdam and Witloof in Maastricht. Also popular are do-it-yourself interiors, the presence of the objet trouvé, or workbench-like tables that nestle next to old-world bureaus, and cabinets or storage areas straight out of a no-nonsense East European workers' brasserie. The Luxe Canteen is often a conglomeration of stylistic elements assembled seemingly without rhyme or reason.

The latest London hotspot, Sake no Hana, has been designed by architect Kengo Kuma to resemble a traditional Japanese izakaya. The restaurant features informal dining at low tables and a menu made up of izakaya-style dishes in small portions meant to be shared. Bamboo, tatami, leather and black lacquerwork ensure this is authentic Nipponese canteen dining at its best.

In Stuttgart, Ippolito Fleitz adopted a Luxe Canteen aesthetic in order to recreate traditional Tuscan ideals of authenticity and homeliness at Trattoria Da Loretta. Diners sit at large wooden tables from the drawers of which they take their cutlery and napkins. Peter Ippolito explains that *'communicative exchange is intended at Da Loretta, but not intimate togetherness'*.

from top | Sake No Hana, London by Kengo Kuma + Associates; Trattoria da Loretta, Stuttgart, by Ippolito Fleitz Group. opposite from top | Amankora, Bhutan; Fabbrica, Rotterdam by Tjep; Amankora Gangtey, Aman resorts, Bhutan by Kerry Hill.

