

Israeli Design Firm Scores First U.S. Project- at Picabu Restaurant in *Walt Disney World's® Swan and Dolphin Resort Hotel*

Kakadu Design Explodes into U.S. market with coveted venture

ORLANDO, FL -- Creating pieces for the home as colorful a Purim party, the Israeli design firm Kakadu Design in Wood, Ltd. (Kakadu) has staked its first claim on the United States interior design market: by designing the interior space for Picabu restaurant in the *Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin* Resort Hotel in Orlando, Florida. The restaurant opened its doors this spring.

For a small, independent design firm like Kakadu, this coveted interior design venture is an impressive debut in America. The firm transformed a tired, dark buffet house into an evocative gallery of food and art comprised entirely of Kakadu furnishings. Everything, from the wall hangings to the booths and tableware, Kakadu designed and built in its Israeli studios.

“Kakadu prides itself on being an Israeli firm, with operations in Israel,” said Reut Shahar, co-owner of Kakadu and chief designer. “Our pieces reflect the rich culture of Israel and bring art to daily life.”

Kakadu as a company is a marriage of talents of Aharon and Reut Shahar. While Reut was Israel’s first trained female carpenter, Aharon is the practicing carpenter and Reut brings her artistry and creativity to Kakadu designs. They believe art shouldn’t be reserved for museums, and as a result, design and build “functional art” for businesses and the home.

Designing the interior space for Kakadu required a lot of coordination and cooperation from several teams. Michelle Acevedo, Vice President of Design at Tishman Hotel Corporation, assisted Reut in translating her artistic vision into a tangible product by creating the construction documents and aided with the technical aspects of the project. “Working with Kakadu on Picabu Restaurant was unique for several reasons, one of them being that furnishings arrived on schedule, and that the project remained within budget. Kakadu was professional and accurate throughout the design phase and execution.”

“It’s hard to believe how differently the restaurant has transformed,” said Wolfgang Ebenbichler, Executive Chef for the *Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin* Resort Hotel’s 17 restaurants and lounges. “It speaks strongly to the creative potential of Kakadu. Reut approached the problem of designing the interior space not only from an analytical perspective, but as an artist.”

In its 16th year of business, Kakadu Design in Wood, Ltd. is headquartered in Israel. Kakadu was named after the Israeli name for “cockatoo,” the large white bird native to Australia. The company operates throughout Israel, Europe, and the United States through retailers in each country. Kakadu products are sold in nearly 200 stores in the United States alone, where distribution operations are based in Livermore, California. For more information about Kakadu, visit www.kakadu-design.com.

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