



A Kyiv Restaurant Built around the Sensual Harmony of Rough Concrete

ISTETYKA
KYIV, UKRAINE
YAKUSHA STUDIO



“With Istetyka, we focused on the essence. And to emphasize it, we created a lot of air, enhancing the power of the void,” says architect and designer Victoria Yakusha, discussing how she and her team created this ethereal, pared-back Kyivan restaurant, known for its upmarket lunch options and breezy dinners. “It’s minimalism but natural, sensual, and emotional,” continues Yakusha. “Looking at it, you feel character, Ukrainian DNA, a living spirit.” With an emphasis on materials, the space brings to life Yakusha’s love of mixing and matching. And so, the rough, unpolished, tactile textures of the concrete and clay walls sit alongside the smooth finishes of wood, stainless steel, and porcelain stoneware. In other quarters, geometric shapes, such as square poufs made from

recycled plastic, are set against rounded tables as well as steel sconces that line the walls. Cold thus comes to feel warm. “It is in combining contrasts that I find harmony,” Yakusha notes. At the entrance, curvy banquettes are joined by large dining tables and decor from Yakusha’s very own furniture and furnishings collection, Faina. Her Ztista tables, for instance, take their name from the sustainable material where clay, recycled paper, and other natural components are applied by hand to the object’s recycled-steel base. “This ancient technique known as ‘valkuvannia’ was used by our ancestors for building walls of a dwelling,” Yakusha explains. Above them, intricately crafted macrame lamps descend, adding a final touch to Istetyka’s unique ambiance and atmosphere.