

# Light less ordinary

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Alex Randall's organ pipe chandelier at The Blues Kitchen

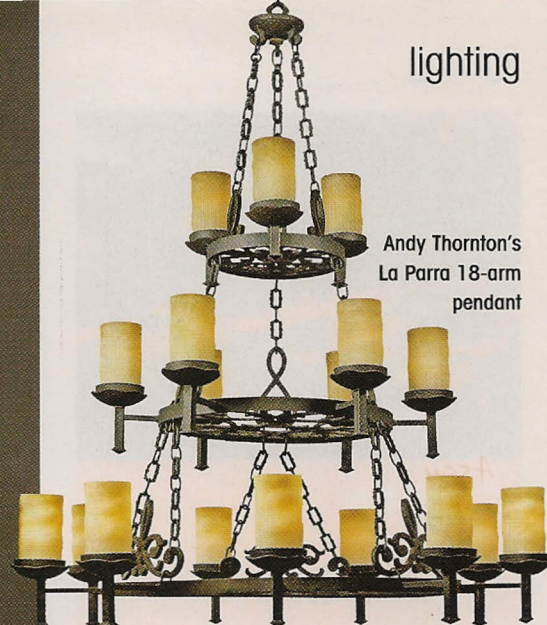
Bar owners and designers are turning to unique creations as well as traditional designs when it comes to decorative lighting, reports Mark Ludmon

Lighting often has to be a major focal point for a bar interior and, according to Robert Chelsom, managing director of lighting specialist Chelsom, designers are increasingly looking for something special and a bit out of the ordinary. "We are regularly manufacturing bespoke creations based on the designer's concept visuals, which are often wacky to say the least," he says. Projects for Chelsom last year have ranged from multi-coloured crystal cascades for the Hilton in Reading to Noir chandeliers featuring polished chrome frames and black glass mouth-blown by artisans in Venice.

Designer Alex Randall has established a reputation for striking chandeliers in bars, providing unique creations for the likes of Renaissance Pubs. Her designs have

included chandeliers made from ship parts, gramophones, stuffed animals and tea chests. Her latest work in the hospitality sector was a chandelier made from organ pipes for The Blues Kitchen, Columbo Group's new music bar in Camden, north London. Hanging in the centre of the space, the huge solid brass fixture was placed to look "extraordinary from the street and attract people in" as well as to fit in with the musical theme.

Tyson Lighting has begun supplying the Chiquitos chain with bespoke lighting, working alongside Harrison Design. As the restaurants have a strong Mexican theme, Tyson Lighting has created pendants made with Mexican beer bottles. "The outcome of the different-coloured bottles set in our bespoke-made frame gives an authentic



Andy Thornton's La Parra 18-arm pendant

Mexican feel and casts light throughout the various coloured bottles giving a great effect," explains Natalie Hart of Tyson Lighting.

Novus Leisure also worked with Tyson Lighting, which created a centrepiece fixture for the Cocoa Club room in its new venue Grace, which opened on the site of Sugar Reef last year. Working with design practice Design At Source, they installed a Caboche pendant from Italian manufacturer Foscarini, made of transparent globes of polymethylmetacrylate which creates a beautiful dispersion of light.

Lighting in bars and restaurants needs to be versatile to suit different moods and uses throughout the day, and this means that large-scale pendants need to be integrated within a broader lighting solution, points out Robert Chelsom. "Large centrepiece luminaires for example may need supplementary lighting to enable the room's ambience to be varied to suit the occasion," he explains. "Many clients expect too much from the main fitting, and in a large room the fitting can't be expected to do all the work."

With budgets now expected to go further, Chelsom notes that its client base of four- and five-star hotels are increasingly choosing large fabric shades. Dexter Moren



Chelsom shades at Courtyard by Marriott at Gatwick