

PORTFOLIO

THE CLUB AT MSY, NEW ORLEANS

A stress-free feeling at the airport? For a small fee, anyone can experience it, even if they're lacking a first-class ticket or frequent-flyer status. London-based Airport Dimensions, which operates the common-use "The Club" airport lounges throughout the U.S. and the U.K., is delivering on just that. One of its latest spaces, the 5500-square-foot The Club at MSY, opened January 2020 in Terminal 2 at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport in Louisiana. The goal for the new lounge's design was to "create an oasis of calm amid the crowded and cacophonous experience that is the typical airport," according to Gregory Ibañez, Principal at Fort Worth, Texas-based firm Ibañez Shaw Architecture.

Multiple zones divide the space and direct travelers to areas that are suitable for a variety of activities. That means everything from napping or reading in The Rest Zone; dining in The Replenish Zone; catching up on the latest news in The Relax Zone (under its deconstructed crystal chandelier crafted by local glass artisans); working in ergonomic task chairs in The Productivity Zone;



or chatting over drinks at The Bar Zone's curved quartz counter. As for illumination – which can sometimes be harsh and unforgiving in airport settings – generous natural light via windows overlooking the concourse curtain wall is combined with dimmable fixtures in proper color temperatures for a glare-free and comfortable environment. "Pooling the light, rather than having a uniform level throughout, provides eye comfort

ABOVE
A mix of natural light and dimmable fixtures creates a calming level of illumination throughout the space.

while maintaining levels needed for reading," Ibañez says.

Given the lounge's proximity to NOLA, the design team wanted to reference the storied city's culture through its design without relying on obvious motifs. Instead of over-the-top hues or patterns, its palette includes soft whites with rich, yet muted, colors and subtle textures. Ibañez credits the bar area, which features a pleated wall of translucent acrylic panels that provide acoustic separation and contribute to the setting's energetic atmosphere, as the most exuberant space. As air travel climbs back to its pre-pandemic levels, a lounge that's open to all offers a welcome respite. "Upon entering, [a traveler's] first reaction should be to let out a deep breath, releasing the tension from a hurried dash to the airport or the unruly onboarding after a long flight," he says. "That should be followed by a sense of curiosity and delight, as you pause to study the work of local photographers and artists who are displayed throughout." –Lauren Mang



PROJECT SUPPLIERS

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DESIGN/ARCHITECTURE

Ibañez Shaw Architecture, Fort Worth, Texas

WDG Architects/Engineers, New Orleans

SIGNAGE & GRAPHICS

Triangle Sign Services, Baltimore, Md.

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Horizon Retail Construction Inc., Kenner, LA.



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