



Striped Horse HQ interior by Haldane Martin

Completed in 2014

De Waterkant, Cape Town

The Haldane Martin design team has created a contemporary new office interior with an African flavour for Striped Horse craft beer.

This new-to-the-market brand was launched in late 2014 in pursuit of the perfect blend of African beauty with European tradition. Its flavour and branding are more mature and restrained than most craft beers. Harking to its birthplace and bold identity, the brand tells the African tale of how the zebra got its stripes, with the black and white of the packaging naturally referring to the zebra while the yellow and burnt orange reference the African vista.

To coincide with the launch of their first beers, a lager and a pilsener, the founder of Striped Horse, Grant Rushmere (also brand guru of Bos Ice Tea) commissioned Haldane Martin to design its 50m² offices in The Hudson in Cape Town's upmarket De Waterkant area. The HQ would also serve as a show bar, with a space to meet clients and sample beers in a relaxed atmosphere, while showcasing the product and embodying the brand's three-dimensional iconography.

In order to fully capture the essence of the Striped Horse brand, Haldane Martin's design team drew on a number of fitting design references to thematically interpret it.

American artist, photographer, writer and playboy Peter Hill Beard – known both for his hedonistic presence in the New York party scene and for his serious artistic work, particularly in Kenya – was the perfect character reference for the design concept. Straddling two worlds, he marries rugged masculinity with glamour and panache, manifested in the concept of a "Ralph Lauren Safari".

The Striped Horse lounge area epitomises Beard's character, in particular in the form of an intentionally casual half-completed deep-buttoned Chesterfield sofa. Other specially selected furniture pieces that speak to this theme include a zinc passivated plated Dokter and Misses tray coffee table and khaki canvas and leather butterfly safari chairs, which are brought together by the warm earthy colours of a Kilim rug. A classic half sphere pendant light in bright red adds a contemporary twist.

Another design reference is Dazzle camouflage or Razzle Dazzle. Based on the concept of animal print this unlikely camouflage technique developed by the British Navy sought to confuse rather than conceal. Just like zebra stripes, strongly contrasting shades break up the irregularity of an outline, making a moving object surprisingly difficult to spot.

This pattern finds perfect application in the Striped Horse interior. Haldane Martin applied Razzle Dazzle to the faceted reception desk and most importantly the beer fridges to reinforce these prime branding features. Striped Horse have also adopted this motif for all their sponsored events, such as Southern Guild.

The shell of the space includes dark khaki walls, low lighting and recycled Herringbone Parquet flooring that aptly mirrors the Dazzle pattern. A linear ball chain screen divides the work area from the bar, creating vertical stripes with a touch of gold that reinforce the Striped Horse branding.



Haldane Martin created two bespoke designs for this project: rebar shelving and desks, whose combination of wood and reinforcing steel give the space a raw industrial edge.

The rebar shelving, designed to show off the product and packaging, is an important focal point. This is framed by a brass-clad oval behind the shelving that mimics the design of the beer label. On the other side of the brass oval is the Striped Horse logo, which faces the exterior of the building.

Razzle dazzle bar fridges sit below a contemporary interpretation of a traditional bar edge moulding, accented by bright red bar stools and light fixtures.

A minimalist outdoor bench, table and stools are positioned on the street side to make the most the late afternoon sun while sipping on an ice cold Striped Horse.

The final result is a sophisticated yet unpretentious, relaxed, contemporary African atmosphere – the perfect embodiment for the new beer brand.

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Interior designed by Haldane Martin: www.haldanemartin.co.za

Photos taken by Micky Hoyle