

NO 23 VIVE LA FRANCE!

The owner of Swan Café in Cape Town consulted designer Haldane Martin to bring her dream crêperie to life.



The chairs are from Haldane's Sim-Ply collection and Artemide Egg pendant lights are a nod to the avian theme introduced by Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Leda and the Swan*.



Designer Haldane Martin and Swan Café owner Jessica Rushmere.

In a world with more than its fair share of sombrely stylish café interiors – all charcoal fabrics and masculine dark wood finishes – it's a breath of fresh air to find a light-hearted, uplifting, feminine spot to pick up a coffee. That's exactly what Cape Town's Swan Café offers. This Parisian-style crêperie in the East City Precinct is the brainchild of one-time French international model and sought-after style consultant Jessica Rushmere, who wanted to bring a touch of her nostalgia for Paris chic and sense of fun to the Cape Town café scene.

"We tried to create a space that celebrates Jessica's personality," says Haldane Martin, who worked with her on the interior. She'd used swan iconography before, so they picked up on it as a theme, not just in the large prints on the walls featuring mythological scenes but also in the design details. Birdcages become light fittings and mushroom tiles covering



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the front counter start to resemble feathers. The blue-and-white colour scheme of the traditional crêperie is given a contemporary spin. "We used traditional bistro table bases, but we powder-coated them a bold blue," says Haldane. He also referenced classic Parisian marble tabletops, but they're contrasted with others in timber.

"We designed some chairs and bar stools based on a traditional bistro chair, but in a contemporary way," he adds. A bespoke shelving system also gives the fixtures a distinctive character. Tiling – another

definitive feature of French Café design – has been harnessed and reinterpreted, with custom-made hexagons bearing the swan motif sprinkled on the screed floor at the entrance. There's even a nook for serious meetings, marked by its pinstriped denim upholstery with a playful wink to the businessman's uniform.

The result proves you can indeed have fun and indulge in bright colours and feminine touches, and still be stylish and sexy while enjoying coffee and crêpes.

• swancafe.co.za

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT Heidi Chisholm designed the Swan Café logo, brand identity and wallpaper. | The blue mushroom tiles on and behind the front counter resemble feather patterns associated with swans. Haldane designed the shelving used to display the beautiful crockery. | The red, white and blue colour scheme and traditional French café features are softened with rose-coloured timber and birdcage pendant lights by Hoi P'loy.

FAST FACT
IN FRANCE, IT'S TRADITION TO EAT CRÊPES ON 2 FEBRUARY, WHEN THE CHRISTIAN FEAST DAY CANDLEMAS IS CELEBRATED.

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