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AJAX TAVERN RESTAURANT RENOVATION + A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY



Aspen, Colo. (September , 2019) – The finishing touches have been made to Ajax Tavern at The Little Nell, renovated by Rowland+Broughton Architecture/Urban Design/Interior Design. The renovation’s primary goals included improving the overall flow of the restaurant, ensuring maximum flexibility within the space, brightening the interior and updating the dining room and patio furniture.

DESIGN

A new corner entry allows for better flow into the interior, improves presence from the gondola plaza, and leads directly into the bar area, further enhancing the tavern feel and community atmosphere. The previous entry remains for service access between the patio and dining room. Inside, improving upon the seating flexibility allowed by existing booths and banquettes, a new central, divisible banquette set on casters may be reconfigured or moved away to accommodate private functions and groups. With the goal of brightening the interior, the color palette was lightened, and existing wainscoting painted. New caramel-colored leather stools complement natural light oak tabletops, and a custom mirror hung by leather straps reflects exterior light and activity of guests entering the space. A higher banquette overlooking the main dining area was also added along a rear wall.

Throughout the restaurant, handcrafted details reflect the ethos of Colorado and enhance the overall effect of the new décor. Banquettes feature new custom upholstery that transitions from leather to fabric. Pendant lights were updated with matte black fixtures with brass interiors and leather accents. The rear dining room wall and back wall of the semi-open kitchen was refinished with handcrafted Industrial Glass tiles. Additional interior details include new black leather barstools at the blackened steel bar and the community table, and sustainable carpet that softens acoustics and

discourages slipping for those in ski boots. Updates on the patio include new dual cantilever umbrellas and dining chairs.

This renovation furthers Rowland+Broughton's collaboration with Aspen Skiing Company, parent company to The Little Nell, which spans over 20 projects in the last ten years, including a renovation of Ajax Tavern in 2007 and this recent refresh in 2019. R+B Principal Sarah Broughton, AIA, NCIDQ, shares, "We are so proud to once again be involved in the renovation of everyone's favorite slope-side restaurant, Ajax Tavern, as it moves into the future. In combination, strong design, great food and impeccable service play an invaluable role in the success of a restaurant. We really want to compliment The Little Nell and Ajax Tavern staff for the amazing job they do, and we thank Aspen Skiing Company for allowing us to further a collaboration that has encouraged sustainability and hospitality over the last ten years."

Little Nell General Manager Jonathan Fillman adds, "Rowland+Broughton and Aspen Skiing Company have collaborated on multiple projects and time and again, the process has been seamless. They take into consideration the guest experience and the flow of operations, both of which are evident in Ajax Tavern's redesign."

SUSTAINABILITY

With the renovation of Ajax Tavern, The Little Nell has also embraced a renewed commitment to sustainability centered on the hotel's efforts to become a single-use plastic-free property. Ajax Tavern has taken several initiatives in this vein including removing single use plastics for guest supplies and replacing them with compostable packaging from straws to to-go containers. Ajax Tavern outfitted the front line staff with up-cycled shirts and sweatshirts for uniforms, made from 189 pounds of plastic and nets removed from the ocean. Coffee pods were replaced with ground coffee beans, annually saving 10,000 plastic pods from being used. The Little Nell is a partner with Rock Bottom Ranch as our local farm, situated just 20 miles west of the hotel, which provides fresh vegetables and produce in the growing months for each of our restaurants. Year-round, they make good use of the compost generated from food waste from the dining outlets both at the hotel and at the top of the mountain, which are all managed by The Little Nell.

This initiative is in synch with artist Paula Crown's SOLO TOGETHER series of sculptural installations, including one that measures nine feet tall and ten feet wide, set in front of Ajax Tavern. Crown challenges viewers to reevaluate the impacts of throwaway consumerism with this sculpture entitled Jokester. It is bright red and crumpled. By giving such an ordinary object such import and scale, Crown is forcing us to reconsider it. Is a discarded plastic cup really so inconsequential? Jokester may be outsized when compared to actual SOLO Cups, but given their ubiquity—and potential permanence—is it the real cups' presence on the planet that is truly out of scale? As Crown has said about her motivation for the work, "Single-use plastics and our insatiable appetite for natural resources continue to threaten our pristine landscapes, and frankly, our existence."

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Ajax Tavern Images: <https://aspensnowmass.imagerelay.com/sb/100ac244-ec37-416d-906a-086f24c713b0/tln-ajax-tavern-2019>

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About The Little Nell

Cosmopolitan yet intimate, contemporary yet timeless, The Little Nell invites guests to experience Aspen's only Forbes Five-Star, AAA Five-Diamond, ski-in/ski-out hotel – a Relais & Châteaux resort. For more information and for reservations, please call 888.The.Nell (888.843.6355). www.thelittlenell.com

About Rowland+Broughton

Rowland+Broughton Architecture / Urban Design / Interior Design is a progressive, high-design firm of more than 40 design professionals. With studios in Aspen and Denver, Colorado, our combined mountain and urban sensibilities inform and enhance a wide spectrum of projects, including custom residential, commercial, hospitality, interior design, and new town and institutional master planning. www.rowlandbroughton.com