

Fumi Coffee

Location / Shanghai, China

Area / 355 square feet (33 square meters)

Designer / Alberto Caiola

Client / Fumi Coffee

Completion / 2016

Photography / Dirk Weiblen

Fumi Coffee is one of the most stylish additions to Shanghai's booming café scene. The highlight of this design is no doubt the wall of Bialetti Moka light fixtures; other eye-catching design features include the black waves hovering up on the ceiling, the sleek metallic tables, stools, and counter, and the front window that folds up completely on warm days. Celebrating coffee's intangible pleasures, Italian designer Alberto Caiola translates coffee's aromatic vapors into a sculptured ceiling that is the centerpiece for the café. Gently sloping away from the counter, the striking installation becomes at once a canopy and a stage for baristas to perform their art. Rich and dark in color, the ceiling's "fumes" evoke the depth of the drink itself, winding up and beyond the venue's glass façade. Lending a sense of movement to the entire space, the installation creates a partially covered area for attractive outdoor seating in warmer weather. An eye-catching wall installation comprises an explosion of iconic Moka coffee pots in various sizes. Their presence is intensified by a large mirror spanning the space, amplifying the objects into a love letter to Italy's signature brew.

To create the illusion of a larger space, furniture is finished with a reflective surface. The design approach sees fittings effectively blend in to their surroundings, all the while offering alternative vistas to guests, whether they are standing or seated. Seating areas are partitioned to allow for a diversity of functions. A communal table is positioned in the middle of the space. Additional bar stools line the right-hand side of the café. A stark combination of textures creates contrast, with sleek new elements positioned against stripped walls exposing the building's shikumen bricks (a traditional, turn-of-the-century housing style, typical of Shanghai). Painted white to reflect natural light, they complement the space's large bi-folding window for a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

01 / Entrance

02 / Wall installation



