

restaurant development + design

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

TIME SAVERS

Get Projects Done Faster

p48

Restaurant Reclamation p40

The Rise of Bar Dining p26

SEARED

**One&Only Palmilla Resort/Jean-Georges Vongerichten
Los Cabos, Mexico**

Following extensive damage by recent hurricanes, New York-based designer Jeffrey Beers of Jeffrey Beers International was called on for the remodeling of One&Only Palmilla, a full-service, luxury seaside resort in Los Cabos, Mexico. Part of that project included designing SEARED, the premium steakhouse headlined by Michelin-starred Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten where dry-aged steaks star along with fresh Baja seafood.

Opened in April 2015, SEARED is light and elegant with warm, creamy colors and Mexican-inspired materials and design highlights. But take one step inside, and there's no mistaking the fact that Vongerichten set out to create a serious steakhouse. A centerpiece of the front of the house is a glass-walled meat cellar that puts the restaurant's prime Porterhouse, Kobe Tomahawk, Wagyu A5 beef and grass-fed New York strip steaks on display.

While it makes a distinctive visual statement, the 8-by-10-foot cellar is also a functioning dry-aging room. Its design and construction required careful consideration to ensure success on both levels, according to Beers. "It takes a bit of work to do a room like this properly," he says. "Yes, it needs to look good, but temperature, humidity and condensation are critical details. Those are the starting points. From there, we decided to create a much more modern, tailored approach to the presentation of the meat than what's traditional — almost like a sweater or watch display at an upscale retail store. Its design is much more front-of-the-house driven than chef-driven, but Jean-Georges is very happy with it and so is his marketing team because it



Designer Jeffrey Beers took a high-end retail display approach to the glass and bronze dry-aging case at SEARED, an elegant Jean-Georges Vongerichten restaurant at the One&Only Palmilla resort. Photo courtesy of One&Only Resorts

generates so much buzz. Everyone who comes into SEARED comments on it and goes up to take a look inside."

The dry-aging room — held at a constant 30 degrees with 85 percent humidity — is encased in double-glazed insulated glass and framed in bronze. Positioned near the entrance, adjacent to the kitchen and off one of the main dining areas, it's visible to all diners from the front while its back wall opens to the kitchen for easy accessibility.

While environmental controls were critical, Beers knew cooling and condensing units would detract from the look he sought to create. "We ended up concealing those units in the ceiling and floor so that guests get a very clean, retail display-style view of the meat," he says. "We've designed a lot of high-end retail stores, and the design of the meat case follows that aesthetic — almost like a display case at Barneys." +