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Art

of the

Interior

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Issue 82

The Great Indoors

Sep / Oct 2011

ISSN 0007-1226 • www.artsandculture.com • 0007-1226 • 0007-1226 • 0007-1226





Jazz up the java

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"In Mexico, we have our own take on drinking coffee," says Hector Esrawe of his recent Latin American reinvention of the coffee-house experience. "We have been consuming products like *café de olla*, *chocolate caliente*, and *horchata* since childhood." Café Cielito – the concept Esrawe created in collaboration with Ignacio Cadena – is a modern interpretation of the cosy *cafetería de barrio*, a traditional family-style coffee house that caters to neighbourhood residents.

Spotting a gap in the market, the designers played on nostalgia. Within a year of the launch, no fewer than 15 Café Cielito shops had appeared in Mexico City. Besides serving local treats and home-grown quality coffee, all cafés feature wooden furniture, bright Mexican fabrics and coloured concrete floors of the type found in classic haciendas. "Cielito rescues

the aesthetic values of our folk culture," says Esrawe. "Its neo-retro style fuses graphics from the colonial era with the contrasting colloquial language of the popular street market and tiny *tienditas* [convenience stores]." If Starbucks is not your cup of tea, try Cielito – the Latin alternative.

esrawe.com
cadena.asociados.com



Despite graphics that evoke the Spanish colonial era and the aesthetic of local markets and neighbourhood stores, Cielito is a thoroughly modern take on Mexican style.