



RESTAURANTS

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Banyan's Extreme Makeover: Before and After Photos

See how the legendary Hamersley's Bistro space was transformed.

by **CHRISTOPHER HUGHES** • 10/27/2015, 6:00 a.m.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY JARED KUZIA

Exorcising the ghost of a gastronomic landmark requires more than a new coat of paint. That's what Rebecca Roth Gullo discovered when her Gallows Group purchased the legendary Hamersley's Bistro space in 2014. To jettison the French Provincial vibe, she collaborated with Sousa Design (Alden & Harlow, Sweet Cheeks), swapping wainscoting and white linens for salvaged wood and faux snakeskin. "We have the utmost respect for Gordon [Hamersley] and what he did for the area," Gullo says. "We could never replicate what he did here, nor would we want to. I mean, it was eponymous. We had to start over."

Details:

1. Sinewy willow-branch light fixtures and reclaimed wood from a Kentucky horse farm replaced wrought-iron chandeliers and painted beams.
2. To create a "living" space, Gullo lined the walls with white and yellow birch trunks, and decked the dining room with orchids, terrariums, and ferns.
3. Gullo had to lobby hard for her furniture of choice: chairs and banquettes sheathed in faux snakeskin. "This was a huge fight between me and the architect," she says.
4. The sounds of dancers, singers, and other upstairs neighbors at the Boston Center for the Arts are now muted, thanks to \$75,000 worth of Tectum sound proofing panels.
5. To make room for a six-seat chef's counter, wine refrigerators and two kitchen entrances were ripped out. "Having three doors into a kitchen is a luxury these days," Gullo says.
6. "The refrigeration was antiquated. There was no fryolator; there were 36 burners," Gullo says of the kitchen overhaul. "It wasn't the type of cooking we're doing, which is very à la minute."



Colorful dragons salvaged from the bow of a Thai sailboat grace the private dining room.



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Hidden in this triptych by Somerville artist Markus Sebastiano is a photo of Gullo's two daughters and the blackbird logo from the Gallows Group's neighboring doughnut shop.

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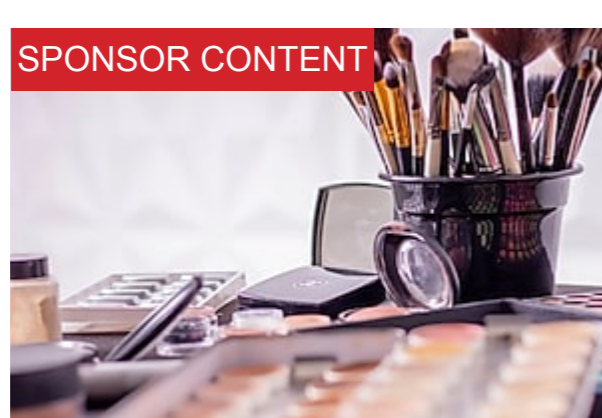
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