

LIZABEIRUT

*design by Maria
Ousseimi*



**a flying
elephant*

ليزا

TUESDAY TO SATURDAY, 12:30 - 3:30 & 8:00 - 11:30
BRUNCH SATURDAY AND SUNDAY FROM

Metropolitan Club, Doumani Street, Traud, Achrafieh, Beirut +961 1 208 108 / +961 71 71 71 05 / press@lizabeirut.com /

12:00
CLOSED ON SUNDAY EVENING &
MONDAY



LIZA, THE BRAND

LIZA BEIRUT marks the latest venture for the LIZA brand. Since the creation of LIZA PARIS in 2005, the brand has seen consistent growth through the development of its various ventures, namely the L DE LIZA (a bakery-sandwich bar), LIZA CHEZ VOUS (catering) and MEZZA LIZA (delivery service based on the Lebanese concept of small plates 'mezzes'). The latest concept, CANTINE LIZA, is slated to open in Paris in the Spring of 2014.

LIZA BEIRUT IS... A MEETING POINT

“EVERY ROOM STANDS ALONE AND YET PLAYS A PART IN THE BIGGER COMPOSITION. LIZA BEIRUT IS WELCOMING, INVITING...MOMENTS ARE SAVOURED AND PROLONGED...LIZA BEIRUT FEELS LIKE A PLACE WHERE ONE WISHES TO LIVE.” *Designer Maria Ousseimi*

A RESTAURANT INSIDE A HOUSE

LIZA BEIRUT opened its first Lebanese outpost on November 7th, 2013. Prior to this, on October 31st, the restaurant hosted the Beirut Art Center’s annual gala diner; a gathering for lovers of contemporary Lebanese art and design. This event took place at the suggestion of Maria Ousseimi, member of the executive committee of the BAC and LIZA BEIRUT designer.

Located in the heart of the prestigious Achrafieh district, in the hills near the shore, the sprawling 500 sqm restaurant is housed in a historical venue.

Chafic El Khazen, founder of Sky Bar and a LIZA BEIRUT partner, discovered this magical space on the first floor of Metropolitan Club. The first governor of Greater Lebanon had lived there for a few years; followed by the Bustros family, who was there until 1995. According to Ziad Asseily, co-founder of the LIZA brand, “the fact that the building was a family house, full of history and life, was something that really resonated with us. We wanted to perpetuate through the space’s new incarnation.”

This attitude of home, history and preservation continues behind the scenes in the restaurant’s kitchen. Asseily claims that his primary ambition is to share Lebanese cuisine the way he loves it: fresh, light and generous. “Through LIZA PARIS I was able to transfer to our customers the taste of Lebanese cuisine, in particular the classics. This is a constant challenge here and elsewhere. It is also a learning experience, prompted by uncompromising standards in regard to quality and fresh products.”

MARIA OUSSEIMI IS... NOT AN INTERIOR DESIGNER

Serendipitous circumstances brought Maria Ousseimi to LIZA BEIRUT.

With a Master's degree in Economic Development from Columbia University, as well as other degrees in philosophy, film and writing, Ousseimi began designing interiors by chance, through friendships...and their appreciation for her impeccable taste and delightful persona. "As I am not a professional interior designer, I felt responsible for every detail even the aprons or the color of the staff shirts."

LIZA BEIRUT founders and owners Liza and Ziad Asseily knew and loved her work—her creativity and inspiration, her dislike for the overly sleek and static.

Ousseimi is a free spirit, constantly traveling, a nomad at heart. But fortunately she was seduced by both the space and the project and agreed to sign on.

NOT TOO SERIOUS

The resulting aesthetic at LIZA BEIRUT is one of playful randomness where work of Lebanese artisans is combined with that of designers who are friends from here and abroad.

LIZA COLLABORATES:

BEIRUT

As in Paris, owners Ziad and Lisa Asseily celebrate their appreciation for the talent of designers of their generation. The lighting: Cai light, Tom Dixon, Over the Counter. The wallpaper: Idarica Gazoni. The furniture: Maria Ousseimi, Bokja, Orient499, Ginnette Gemmayze, Italy Saarinen, Karim Chaya. The accessories: Hubert Fattal, Rasha Nawam and Marilyn Massoud, Hassoun de Saifi, Abdallah Hatoum for Orient 499. Identity and visual communications: vit-e

The restaurant maintains the structure of the Lebanese traditional houses of the 19th century; several rooms are symmetrically arranged on the three sides of a large central hall (the Dar), having a triple glazed arcade leading onto a narrow balcony. Only the doors were widened to allow more light to enter. In order to create a sense of movement in the vast space—500 square meters (5400-square-feet) overall with 7-meter-high ceilings—a story was defined for each room.

“We did not get obsessive about the design,” says Ousseimi. “Everything is a bit tongue in cheek; delightful and somewhat impish.” For example, the large flying elephant hangs from the ceiling of the Dar: a wire sculpture that she designed as a reference to the colloquialism that the Lebanese, through their extreme knack for the fantastic, can make elephants fly.

THE DESIGN IS... NOT MINIMALIST

Main Room, Banana Room, Money Room, Building Room... At LIZA, there are no curtains. Throughout the rooms, the lighting, created by the architect **Jan Van Lierde (JVL Studio)** and the volume of the space set the tone.

Patterns cover the walls, creating an illustrated story. This decision was born from ceramic artists **Maryline Massoud and Rasha Nawam's** highly work of tottering, burned and cracked Beirut building blocks, from a highly acclaimed exhibition that began at the Beirut Art Center in 2011 and then went on to tour worldwide. Photos of this work run on the walls in the Building Room and are reflected in the mirrors in the bar designed by **Karim Chaya** as well as in the Main Room, which is styled as a hotel lobby.

The Money Room is a dimly lit space with simple wooden blinds; the atmosphere is sweet and nostalgic accented by strong, colorful custom wallpapers by the Italian designer **Idarica Gazzoni** featuring soil-cement tiles and enlarged ancient Lebanese Liras.

The Banana Room is a beautiful room especially designed for the large buffet brunches held on Saturdays and Sundays. Through the walls, we are taken to the Southern Lebanon through the large green banana tree leaves and the lamps evocative of Casablanca, the Michael Curtiz film starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman. **Hubert Fattal's** giant stars hang brightly, adding sparkle to evenings at LIZA BEIRUT, just as they do in LIZA PARIS, and ultimately express Ziad and Liza Asseily's appreciation for the sparkle of life and the talented stars around them.





Ziad Asseily



Maria Ousseimi









Building room



Hub.r1 Fattal's stars



Bar



Money Room



Banana Room

PRESS

BEIRUT

bouchra@sky-management.net
+961 3 281 032

INTERNATIONAL

press@lizabeirut.com
+961 1 208 108