



# this old warehouse

## A San Diego restaurant digs deep to find beauty

By ALIA AKKAM  
Photography courtesy of MIKE NEWTON PHOTOGRAPHY and CECE CANTON PHOTOGRAPHY



**When Robert Amick**, owner and founder of Atlanta-based Concentrics Restaurants, gave Bill Johnson, longtime collaborator and senior principal of Atlanta design firm the Johnson Studio, a call, Johnson was intrigued. “Bob’s restaurants are always interesting—and challenging,” he says. His current project was no exception.

Amick explained he was once again joining forces with Richard Blais of *Top Chef* fame—Blais has worked with Concentrics for nearly a decade—but this time in San Diego, in partnership with Juniper Hospitality’s Michael Rosen, to open Juniper and Ivy.

An American restaurant on the fringes of the city’s Little Italy neighborhood, Juniper and Ivy is set in an expansive 1920s-era warehouse that required a robust overhaul from Johnson and his team. “It was a decrepit old building with water-

1. Juniper and Ivy’s artwork, curved banquettes, and hickory tables juxtapose with the existing structural elements of the warehouse space.

2. Windowpane check-patterned curtains separate the private dining space from the rest of the restaurant.



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## Juniper and Ivy Restaurant San Diego

### Owner

**Michael Rosen, Juniper Hospitality**

### Management Company

**Concentrics Restaurants**

### Architecture and Interior Design Firm

**The Johnson Studio, Atlanta**

### Architecture and Interior Design Team

**Bill Johnson, Brittany Lavier, Keith D. Schutz, Anita Summers, and Karen Teske Blue**

### Architect of Record

**Matthew Ellis, Bluemotif Architecture, San Diego**

### Contractor

**Wheelihan Construction**

### Purchasing Firm

**Direct Source**

### Lighting

**The Johnson Studio**

### Engineering

**Dodd & Associates (structural); Mitchell Mechanical; Drum Plumbing; and Empire Electric Company**

### Kitchen

**Atlanta Fixture & Sales Company**

### Graphics and Exterior Signage

**Boy Burns Barn**

### HOST/ENTRY

#### Custom Metal Screen

**Puzio's Iron Studio**

#### Host Stand

**Jimmie Martin**

#### Lighting

**Robert Abbey**

### BAR AND LOUNGE

#### Furniture

**Domitalia, Arteriors Contract, Noir/CFC, Global Views, Georgia Cabinet & Supply, and Sandler Seating**

### Textiles

**Architex, Joseph Noble, Cortina Leathers, and Osborne & Little**

### Lighting

**Leucos and Architectural Cathode Lighting**

### Flooring

**The Rug Company**

### MAIN DINING ROOM

#### Furniture

**Calligaris, Domitalia, Georgia Cabinet & Supply, and Sandler Seating**

#### Textiles

**Joseph Noble, Architex, Alice's Designs, and Zoffany**

#### Lighting

**Bocci and Century Industries**

#### Tile

**Fireclay Tile**

### SECOND LEVEL DINING

#### Furniture

**Calligaris, Georgia Cabinet & Supply, Sandler Seating, and Arteriors Contract**

#### Textiles

**Joseph Noble, Alice's Designs, and Zoffany**

### PATIO

#### Furniture

**Triconfort, Dedon, Jane Hamley Wells, Westminster Teak, and Beaufurn**

#### Rugs

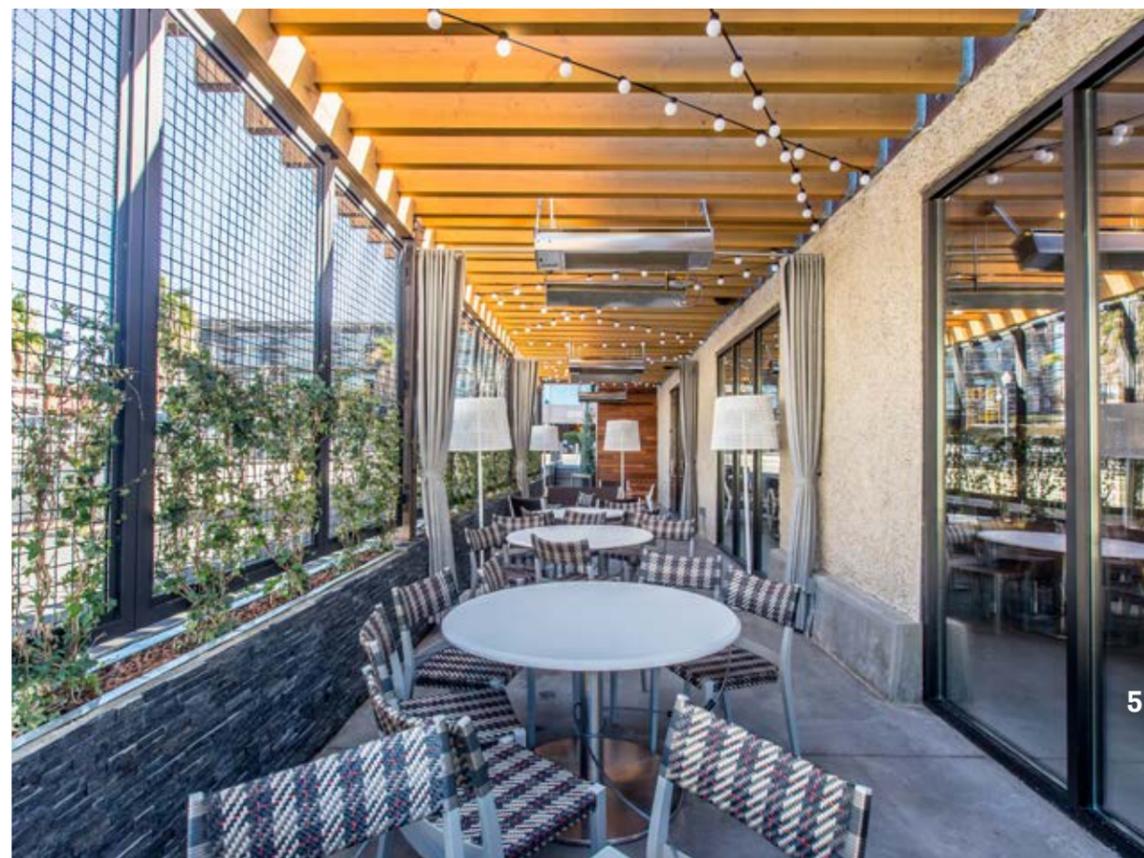
**Liora Manné**

#### Drapery

**Alice's Designs**

#### Lighting

**Vibia**



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stained wood, and we wanted to turn it into something chic and inviting, not kitschy," Amick says.

Johnson was aghast when he first saw the structure's deteriorated state. "It looked neglected and it was filled with junk, but through all that you could tell it had personality," he recalls. He managed to preserve the concrete shell and vintage skylights, but the space's greatest discovery, he reveals, is the original, exposed sawtooth redwood ceiling. "It has this great geometry."

Through seating of various heights, Johnson says, the 8,000-square-foot space unfolds. There is the elevated bar with acrylic LED tube lighting; Blais' showplace kitchen surrounded in glazed brick; the private dining area, sealed away by windowpane check-patterned curtains; and an outdoor patio flaunting a planter wall of stacked, recycled granite countertops.

But the light-filled dining room, with its durable hickory tables, vibrant artwork, shiny cream leather, and curvy banquettes provide the most poignant juxtaposition with the warehouse's industrial origins. Says Johnson, "You can't build that kind of character." hd

johnsonstudio.com; juniperandivy.com; concentricsrestaurants.com

3. Custom wine storage anchors the bar's lounge area.

4. Acrylic LED lighting is suspended over the elevated bar.

5. The restaurant's patio features more varied seating and a planter wall of recycled granite countertops.

6. Counter seating in front of Richard Blais' showplace kitchen offers a different dining experience.