

the canopies



In situ - An al fresco dining in Saigon city

Federico and Valerio have a friendship of 20 years since they were children in Pitigliano, a small city of Tuscany. The passion for Italian cuisine brought them to enter the F&B industry and experiencing different hospitality professions.

Their working journeys have taken them to many countries: Italy, Spain, Australia, Singapore, and Vietnam.

In Vietnam, inspired by the fresh, home-cooked cuisines from their hometown Tuscany, with the concept of Al fresco dining, they have chosen a garden as the venue for their restaurant in Saigon - a vibrant city in the South.

Since 2015, they have set up a restaurant nestled in a garden surrounding by hedgerow and several trees and shrubs. Only the kitchen was enclosed, the dining area was completely outdoor, without any roof.

But there is the fact that the rainy season in a tropical city like Saigon usually lasts 6 months, and such an outdoor dining area has encountered several significant problems.



Existing site, taken in Summer 2021



Under-construction, taken in Autumn 2021



In connection with landscape



Nestled in a tranquil garden of Saigon city, the project is about the extension of a restaurant, with the wooden roof emerges and gracefully blends into the surrounding trees.

In this situation, landscape is a part of architecture. The trees themselves bring the pictorial sense of façade, dividers and shadows

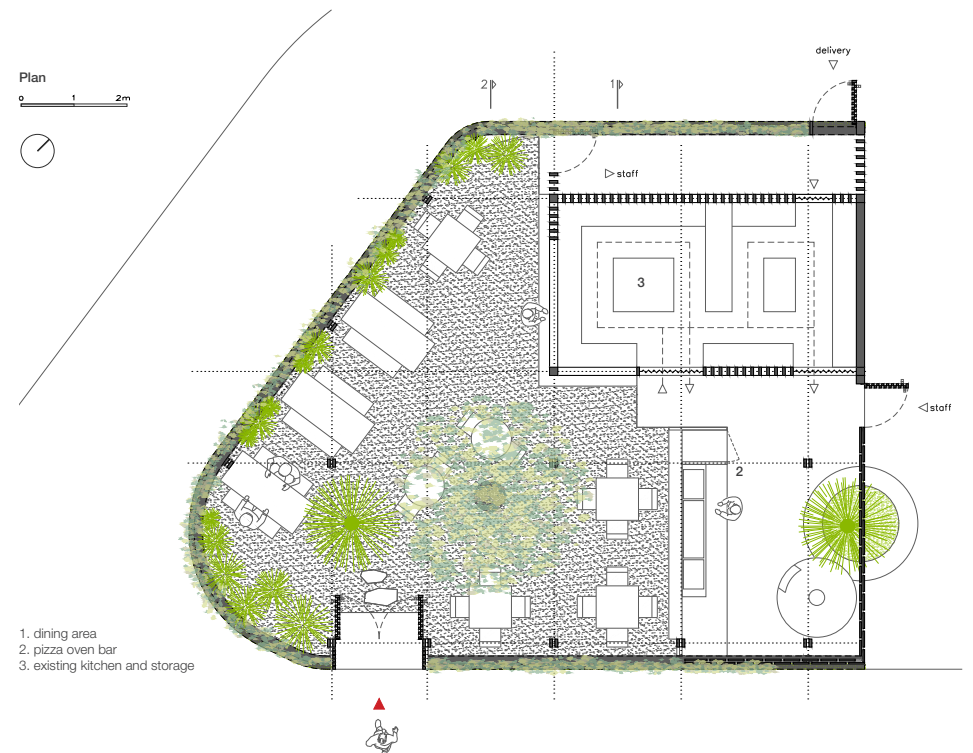
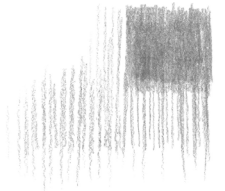


A matter of material and structure

In the midst of the natural setting with overgrown trees, a clear framing structure will be the element restructuring the disordered and disjointed pieces of the surrounding trees and the trees inside the restaurant.

The material and structure have to come from the place.

A frame with equal column steps have been set up based on the existing measurements of the existing kitchen, in order to re-shape the space which is a natural setting, included different sizes of the trees






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Artisanal Italian Cuisine

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The front view after renovation

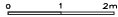


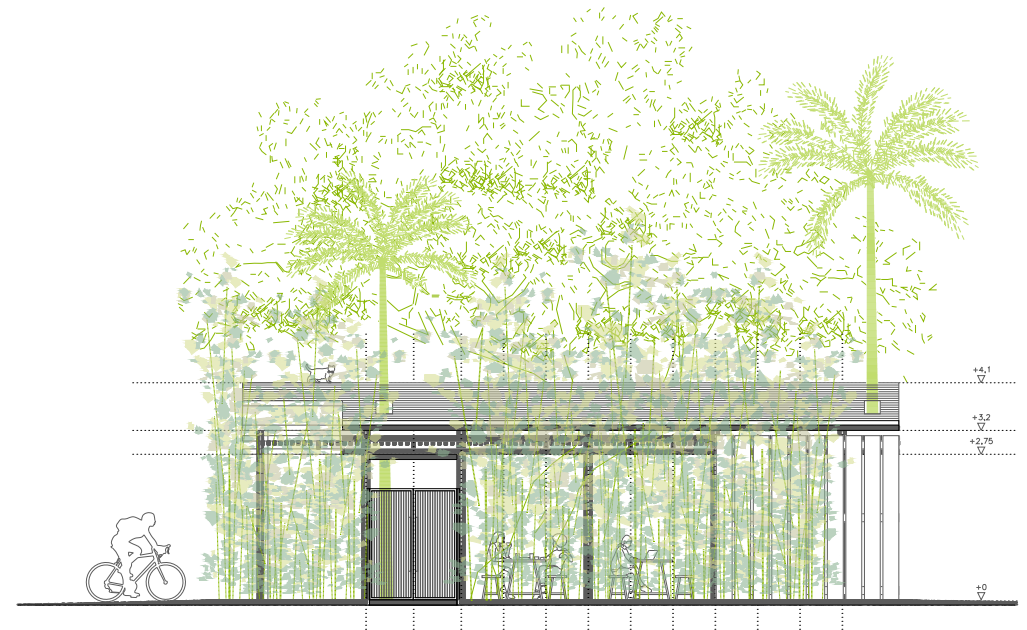
The front view after renovation

Facing to the hot and humid climate and the 6-month rainy season of Sai Gon city, the extension project needs to meet the requirements of shading, avoiding the rain, making the best use of the existing fit area, but not losing the atmosphere of an al fresco dining in a garden. And after all, the inner space needs to be cool.

For this extraordinary context, a structure of 2-layer wooden roof has been used to adapt to the weather and the style of restaurant.

Which the lower layer is “the filter”, with longitudinal wooden beams and louvers. And the upper layer is “the cover”, with wooden panel shingles.

Elevation


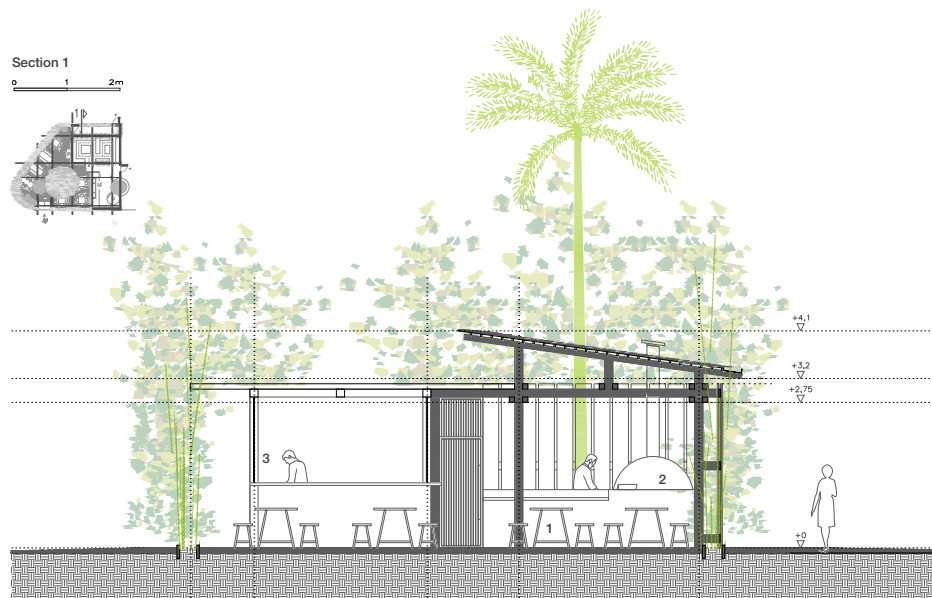


the canopies



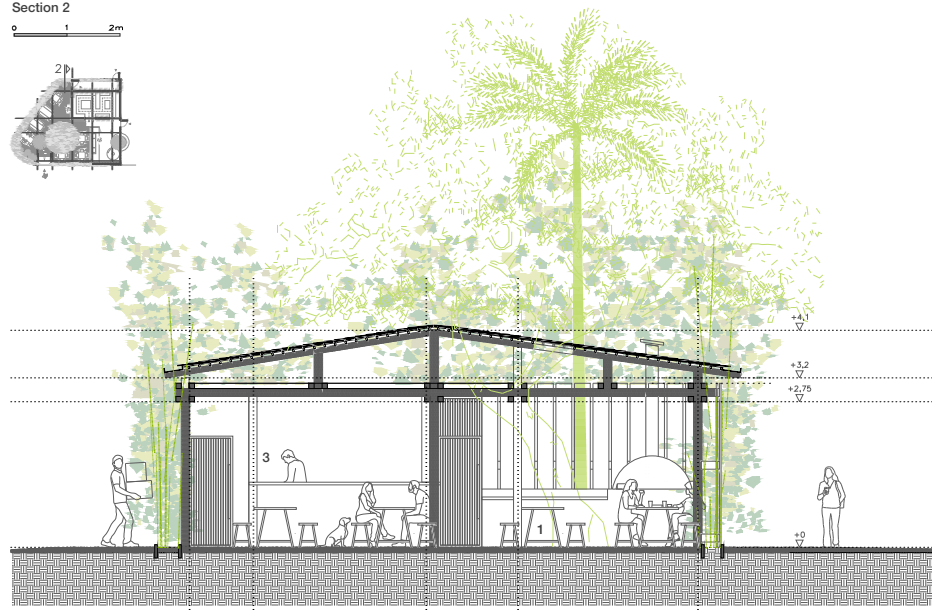
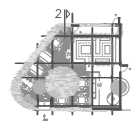
Section 1

0 1 2m



Section 2

0 1 2m



- 1. dining area
- 2. pizza oven bar
- 3. existing kitchen and storage

To build an extension in this "Soft Architecture", the important thing is to find a right measure, the right quantity, the right material which is most appropriate to the substance of the landscape.

The architecture is not objection.

It dissolves itself into the landscape.





An artificial canopy amongst the natural canopies

From inside, the architecture only presented itself as the ceiling. The restaurant's facade is created by the natural setting. The floor is maintained as a garden, with gravel, boulders...





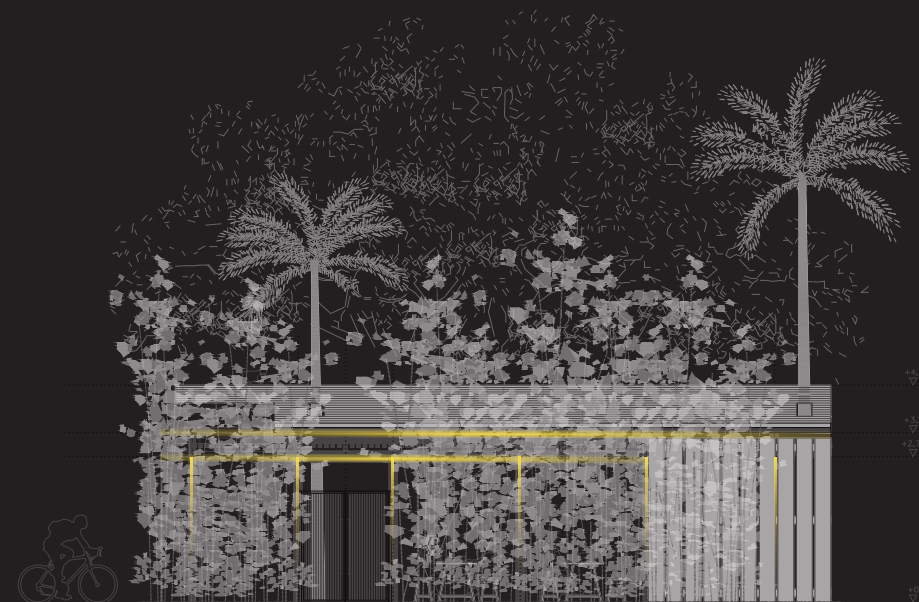
Al fresco dining by night

The scenario of lighting design aims to create coziness and intimacy for the dining place, as well as emphasize the structural frame amongst the surrounding trees, through the luminaires nestled in the columns.

Besides, the light from the downlights installed on to the timbers partially illuminates the ceiling, and some spotlights placed along the hedge to highlight the restaurant area.

The lighting color temperature has been chosen from 2500-3000k, to adapt to difference functions of kitchen, storage, staff area and dining area. And all are top-down directional lights placed higher than human eye level, to ensure all light is glare-free.

Lighting scenario



Now the wooden roof seems to be protected by the trees, but the relationship will eventually be reversed, and a space will appear to be defined by the architectural structure as much as by the canopy of the trees.



Project Name: The canopies
Office Name: Atelier Nguyen Pham
Firm Location: Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam
Completion Year: 2022
Gross Built Area: 90m²
Project location: Saigon (Ho Chi Minh city), Vietnam
Program: restaurant extension and renovation
Contractor: Zen Art
Photo Credits: Giuseppe De Francesco, Ly Cao, Robert Cashman

