



**Rana Florida**

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## **Creative Spaces: Creative Restaurants (PHOTOS)**

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How much will your sweetheart spend on you this Valentine's Day?

Somewhere in the neighborhood of \$102, according to an annual U.S. National Retail Federation survey, and that includes gifts, entertainment, and meals. There are any number of restaurants with top ratings and celebrity chefs that you could go to. But this year, why not seek out a restaurant that's a bit more out of the mainstream? Why not choose a restaurant where the experience begins before you've even reached your table and engages not just your senses but your sensibilities too? Now that's a romantic idea.

With the help of [Steven Pedigo](#), my colleague at the [Creative Class Group](#), this installment of Creative Spaces assembles the world's top 10 creative restaurant spaces, places that highlight creativity, art, design, sustainability, and the surrounding landscape.

*Read more: [Valentine Facts at WomansDay.com](#).*

*Our next Creative Spaces will feature parking garages. Please send your favorite photos and ideas to [steven@creativeclass.com](mailto:steven@creativeclass.com).*

# Restaurant en Kwekerij De Kas (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)



Adapted from a circa-1926 greenhouse that once belonged to Amsterdam's Municipal Nursery, De Kas is situated in Frankendael Park, between the Rembrandt Tower and the 19th-century facades of Watergraafsmeer. It is an oasis of calm and beauty, both in its stunning dining room, designed by Piet Boon, and in the fragrant herb garden outside.

*Photo credit: Flickr user Berend B*

## Redwoods Treehouse (Warkworth, New Zealand)



Not so much a restaurant as an intimate, private dining room that's available for groups of up to 30, the Treehouse nonetheless offers about as unique and memorable a dining experience as you are ever likely to have. A striking, pod-shaped structure built high up in a redwood tree, access is provided by an elevated tree-top walkway. Oh, yes, and the food is quite good, too.

*Photo credit: Flickr user Craigsyd*

## Ithass Undersea Restaurant (Rangali Island)



Sixteen feet underwater, with glass ceilings and walls, the Ithass Undersea Restaurant is like no other five-star restaurant in the world. While you and your date are savoring your Maldivian-Western fusion cuisine and cocktails, you can enjoy the 180-degree views of reef and marine life. The marine life, no doubt, will have just as much fun watching you.

*Photo credit: Flickr user Destinology Holidays*

## Home Delicate Restaurant (Milan, Italy)



Designed by Riccardo Salvi and Luca Rossire's Logica Architettura, Home Delicate restaurant serves slow food in an atmosphere that is crafted to give the feel of both a public space and an intimate private home. Its hallmark is eclecticism: minimalist, high modernist, and 19th century features all comport comfortably together.

*Photo credit: Blog.gessato.com*

## Mestizo Restaurant (Santiago, Chile)



Mestizo's design is based on Smiljan Radic Clarke's winning entrant in an architecture competition that challenged designers to create a space that incorporated imagery from elsewhere. The black concrete ceiling beams and granite boulders are integrated into the structure. The result is a contemporary twist on the classic outdoor pavilion that is seen in parks everywhere -- except that this one serves exquisite meals.

*Photo credit: Flickr user John Zacherle*

## Tori-Tori Restaurant (Mexico City, Mexico)



Mexico City's premier Japanese restaurant is in a dramatically landscaped house in a former residential neighborhood. But Rojkind Arquitectos and Esrawe Studio outdid themselves with its completely transformed interior, creating unique furniture for its dramatic terraces and light-filled rooms, which receive and follow the exterior, but with subtle and unique contrasts.

*Photo credit: [Paul Rivera](#)*

## Nomiya/Palais de Tokyo (Paris, France)



Architect Pascal Grasso's temporary, transportable restaurant on the roof of the Le Palais de Tokyo Museum is big enough for twelve diners and affords panoramic views of the Seine and the Eiffel Tower. A glass cabin with a perforated metal screen hiding the cooking area, it is brilliantly illuminated with colored LED lighting.

*Photo credit: Flickr user SweedyMick*



## Ella Dining Room and Bar (Sacramento, Calif.)



In pursuit of "rustic luxury," the Dutch design firm UXUS lined Ella's walls and ceilings with 500 salvaged antique Hungarian shutters. Plush ottomans and reclaimed wood stools surround traditional country tables. Custom LED steel discs and simple white pendants provide light.

*Photo credit: Flickr user UXUS Design*

## Textile Pavilion (Luxembourg)



The restaurant inside the I.M.-Pei-designed MUDAM (Museum of Modern Art) was designed by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec. Located under a high glass roof, their challenge was to create a friendly atmosphere in a monumental space; they met it by building miniature textile-covered pavilions that filter and soften the light. Its long tables are made of Douglas fir.

*Photo credit: Flickr user claude05*

## Pio Pio (New York, N.Y.)



Most Pio Pios (the restaurant is a chain that started out in Queens, and they are all over the city) are not known for their elegance. They are big, crowded, raucous places where families come to enjoy fantastic Peruvian food. But the Pio Pio in Hell's Kitchen, designed by Sebastian Mariscal, is really something special: a stunning space filled with gorgeous woods, polished marble, and rough concrete.

*Photo credit: Flickr user Doloreseric*