

MO Studio

The Realm of Cognac

Invited by Ningbo Mingxuan Liquor Co., Ltd., MO Studio has crafted a brand-new Cognac experience space for its represented brand, Hennessy, at Mingzhouli in Ningbo. This is not merely a boutique project, but a spatial exploration centered around "time, senses, and memory"—a design experiment where physical space intertwines with spiritual depth.

Facing a local market context relatively unfamiliar with Cognac, the client hoped to convey Hennessy's brand spirit—heritage, nature, and craftsmanship—to the public in a more emotional, vivid, and immersive way through spatial design. The project's goal goes beyond product display; more importantly, it aims to evoke resonance, convey emotion, and educate the market. Therefore, MO Studio proposed the strategy of the space as a "Silent Academy," hoping that every visitor stepping inside will embark on an immersive brand journey, silently comprehending the essence of Cognac culture.

Located within an urban commercial complex, the space spans a mere 42 square meters, with an unalterable facade and an irremovable structural column inside. Faced with these constraints, MO Studio did not view them as obstacles, but rather transformed them into props for spatial storytelling. For instance, the load-bearing column was redefined as a wooden stake supporting grapevines, which also symbolizes the smoky aroma within oak barrels during the Cognac aging process—a crucial source of its flavor profile.

To enhance visual guidance and immersion, the spatial walls feature an inward-tapering design, giving the entrance a ritualistic sense of "being invited in," while structurally reserving hidden storage space to achieve a balance between function and aesthetics. Although compact, the space creates a sense of breathing room and layering through rhythmic volume and circulation planning.

To express the rich yet mellow, profound yet translucent character of Cognac, the design employs highly symbolic materials. Handcrafted resin simulates the luster and flowing state of Cognac, symbolizing that the birth of every drop has weathered countless cycles from sunrise to sunset, and hinting at the slow, transformative aging process within oak barrels. It also abstractly visualizes the flavors of Cognac: the fragrant aromas radiating from the liquid—honey, black pepper, chocolate, vanilla, and fruit. The stone floor simulates vines breaking through the earth, paired with 24 metal inlay strips that symbolize the Twenty-Four Solar Terms and the passage of time.

The spatial circulation is arranged around the bar, with the central scene as the core, complemented by metal lines of gradient rhythm and open wine cabinets, guiding visitors step-by-step into Hennessy's sensory universe. Seated at the bar, light and shadow flow across the

every Moment is an Opportunity

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resin wall panels, and the metal lines on the floor gleam with a golden radiance, as if the scales of time are frozen beneath one's feet. Retrieving the wine, holding the tray, raising the glass—the liquid glows in the light, the air brims with aroma, and memory overlaps with the senses, forging a poetic brand experience.

MO Studio envisions the space not merely as a display of brand image, but as a vessel for the public to understand Cognac culture and realize the philosophy of time. The space is no longer a tool for sales, but a ceremonial journey leading to emotion, nature, and craftsmanship. As the designer states: "The most moving space is never just the answer to a problem, but an experience with a lingering resonance." In this Hennessy experiential space meticulously woven with narrative, materials, and light, time is endowed with touch, scent, and temperature, becoming a visible, tangible, and evocative spiritual journey from the perspective of Eastern culture.

Technical sheet

Official Project Name: Hennessy Ningbo Mingzhouli Experience Space

Location: Mingzhouli Shopping Center, Ningbo, China

Client: Ningbo Mingxuan Liquor Co., Ltd. (Regional Distributor for Hennessy)

Design Team: MO Studio

Project Type: Retail / Brand Experience

Space Area: 42 m² Completion: 2024

Design Scope: Interior Design, Spatial Concept, Custom Furniture

Design Collaborators: Shanghai Shengxiang Metal Decoration Co., Ltd., LUXFACE, Ningbo Zherui Decoration Design Co., Ltd., M2S STUDIO

Photography: Munan