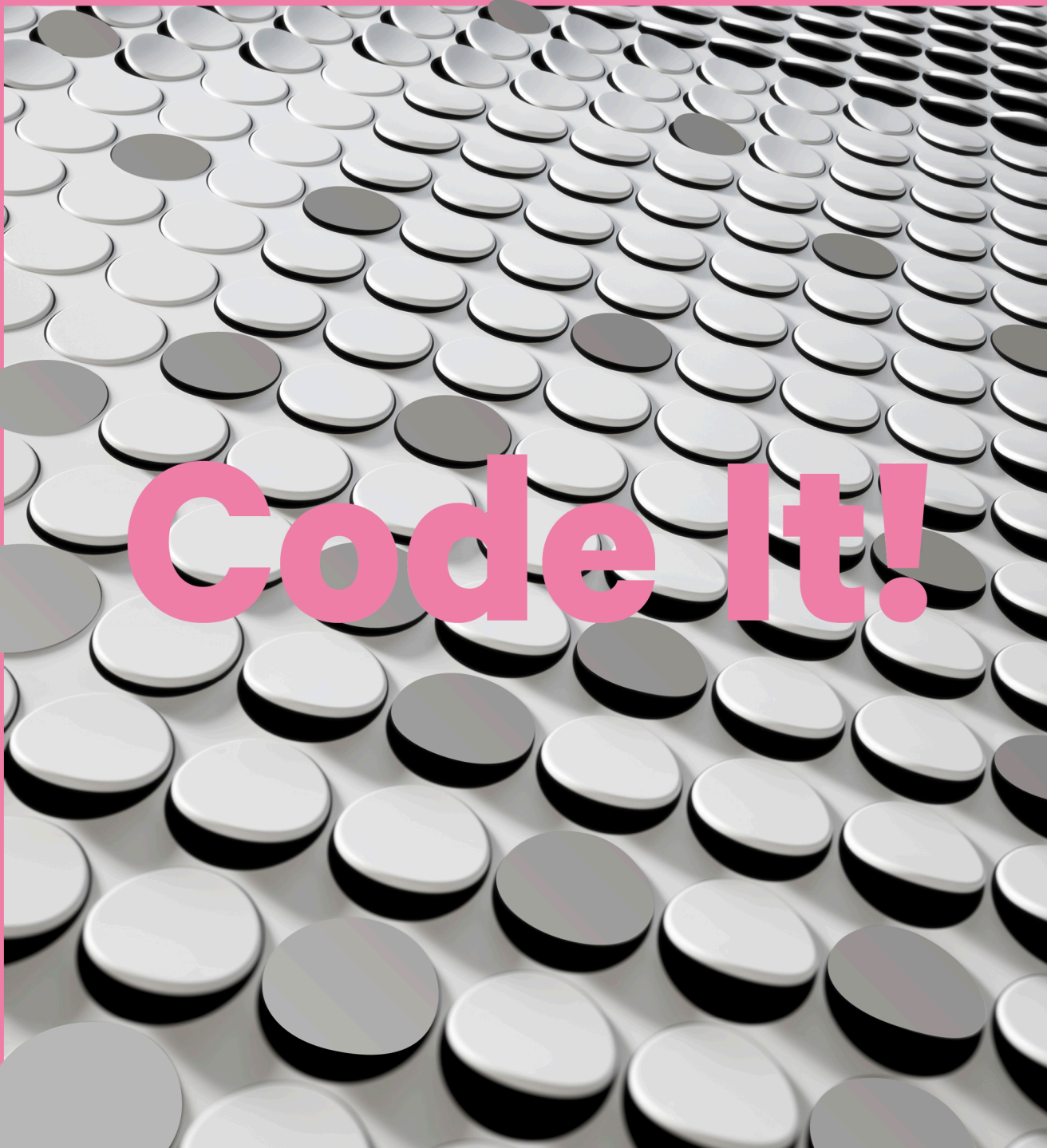


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At T2B in Sydney, tea is prepared at a cast-concrete bar that is reflected in angled mirrors on the ceiling, while attractively packaged teas are displayed on shelves.



High Tea Down Under

Landini Associates' design for a T2B teashop rivals the look of local coffee bars.

Words **Chris Scott**
Photos **Sharrin Rees**

An overdose of coffee bars on the high streets makes the arrival of a refreshing tea bar a welcome relief. T2B is the retail venture of T2, an Australian premium tea company that's been in business for 17 years. Prior to the opening of a teashop and bar in a Sydney shopping plaza, Landini Associates had designed T2's new headquarters in Melbourne, where the tea-bar concept was tested.

'Nothing they do at T2 is obvious, but it's always emotionally correct,' says Mark Landini of Landini Associates. In designing the atypical 50-m² space, he chose his favourite materials: cast concrete for the main bar, where brews are theatrically prepared, and steel for the narrow bar where brewing activities can be followed over a cuppa. The whole show is reflected in angled mirrors overhead.

Playing a strong role are graphic touches applied by Landini in collaboration with T2's in-house graphics team. Attractively packaged teas are displayed on oxidized-steel shelving, bold concrete letters on a paint-splashed façade form the signage, and stylishly handwritten information completes the picture.

The recent acquisition of T2 by Unilever would seem to portend a more global presence for T2B, which could well convert coffee drinkers with its slogan: tea is cooler than coffee...

landiniassociates.com