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## A CLASSICAL BUILDING IN SYDNEY'S CBD WELCOMES A MODERN RESTAURANT & BAR.



The bar, ABOVE, is separated from the dining room by a wall of white glass. TOP: classic damask tablecloths with Norman & Quaine chairs in chocolate suede. Lunch, Mon to Sat; dinner, Thurs and Fri. Browns, Level 2, Queen Victoria Building, Sydney, (02) 9269 0080.

HAVING ATTRACTED constant media attention in London and Europe for his bold stance on design, Mark Landini quietly arrived in Sydney with his family several years ago. "We decided to focus our energies on the business first and not publicity," says Landini. But it wasn't long before the talented designer set the Australian scene alight with his unique concepts. "What I'm enjoying is the opportunity to do clean, modern work. In Europe, we were known for modern installations within classical buildings."

Having completed Awaba, a beachside restaurant at Balmoral; the Volvo Gallery, now one of Sydney's hottest event and exhibition spaces; and the ultra-stylish Melbourne food emporium, Let's Eat, Landini was asked to devise a concept for an Italian restaurant and bar in the historic Queen Victoria Building. What

emerged was this cosy, glamorous look for Browns in dark chocolate and white.

The Romanesque building's decorative exterior domes were 'brought inside' by removing the ceiling. "Essentially, we stripped the whole space to let the building breathe." The placement of a suede-covered installation wall adds definition to the restaurant while separating it from the bar.

There are three distinct elements to Landini's design plan: a café spilling out onto the upper gallery level, a sophisticated bar in the middle, and a restaurant proper. The classic yet modern dining room is a perfect backdrop for chef Danny Russo's inspired Italian food. Slim suede bucket chairs surround tables clothed in double layers of crisp damask. Uplights and table lights create an atmosphere where attention is rightly focused on the food and the view.

SUSAN WESTWOOD