

COAST TO *coast*

There is no stopping the brakes at concept store Coast Cycles, which sees a café, gallery and bicycle workshop integrated within a cool, minimalist interior

TEXT Ho Pei Ying PHOTOGRAPHY Justin Loh



Unless you are a serious bike enthusiast or a zealous café hopper, hearing the name 'Coast Cycles' might not ring a bell. And the far-flung location in sleepy town Siglap is not exactly the most accessible.

But for founder and owner Jansen Tan, there was no question of locating at any other place: "I grew up in Siglap, and now live about five to 10 minutes away by bike. This is a community that is built around cycling; it has become an integral part of our lives. Having Coast Cycles here brings together many like-minded people who appreciate good coffee and cycling as a lifestyle."

Coast Cycles opened back in May last year, and the store is as ambitious as concept stores go: it comprises three components including a café called Coast and Company, a gallery space displaying Coast Cycles bicycles designed by Jansen and his team, and a bicycle workshop open to servicing bicycles of any kind.

The bicycle brand started because Jansen wanted a "cool and urban" bicycle he could take out to meet his friends. He started designing a bicycle frame before realising it needed to match the rest of the components, and a complete product was developed, eventually becoming Coast Cycles' signature model, the Coastliner. And with the brand, came the concept store at Siglap. Jansen, who is also an ex-national cyclist, believes all the hard work placed into Coast Cycles is worth it: "Cycling has always been my passion. Being able to create this brand and this space is a dream come true."

AU NATURALE

For Jansen, cycling has always been a lifestyle. He wanted a bicycle brand and store that could provide a unified, engaging and end-to-end experience, which meant a dissociation with the layouts of conventional bike shops e.g., purpose-built and often packed to the brim.

The concept store at Siglap is thus unlike what we are used to seeing. Here, minimalism and stylishness, very much like the design of the Coastliner bike, rule. Speaking with designer Jasper Chia of FUUR Associates, he reveals that the design team opted for a raw materiality concept for Coast Cycles, which meant that many elements were left as it is. Thus steel structures were left exposed and only coated with

a matte protective layer, concrete walls were plastered but not painted, and parts of the original brick walls lay visible.

The gallery sits at the second storey. There, the Coast Cycles bicycles, comprising not only the sleek Coastliners but also a series of fat bikes aptly named Goliath and the considerably milder Juggernaut, are displayed in a large, open space. Ask nicely, and you might be able to take the bikes out for a test-ride around the neighbourhood. The roof garden is located at the same floor. This green space helps to cool down the building while tempering the harsh, minimalist aesthetic. Connecting the two storeys together are the





Chicken Deck



garden's creeper plants, cascading down beautifully to form part of the façade.

The café is located right at the front of the building. Light filters in through large, round-top windows, their curves referencing the 'C' for Coast Cycles, while also softening the austerity of the raw concrete and black metal. Behind is the bike workshop, a messy space not unlike typical garages, but with a semblance of order thanks to the organisation of the tool board.

As the building is a shophouse unit, there was a tendency for the interiors to be darker. The design team thus incorporated skylights to bring daylight into the space. Original features from the shophouse were also kept, including a segment of the spiral staircase, which was repurposed into a structure for the bathroom sink.

BITE INTO THIS

Less than a year since it started out, the store has already launched a revamped menu in early December to replace the one done up by Chef Willin Low. Jansen explains: "We are constantly looking for new ways and dishes to engage our customers. [The new menu] allows us to let our regulars try out new things too."

Fashioned by popular coffee bar Chye Seng Huat Hardware's head chef Christina, and Chef Allan from Coast and Company, the new menu doesn't entail a very large offering—just six main dishes—but they are certainly attention-grabbing. A fusion between the East and West, the new menu sees flavours that locals are more accustomed to. We were particularly taken with the green dressing used for the Chicken Deck (S\$14), the chefs' take on the classic chicken sandwich. A closer inspection reveals the use of

coriander, pink onions and green chillis in the dressing. For people keen to have a bit of seafood, the Smoked Salmon Brioche (S\$14) is an interesting and surprisingly filling choice. The pretty dish features smoked salmon and cream cheese atop a brioche toast. The only gripe we had was that the cream cheese tasted a bit too much like mayo.

Not all the dishes we tried were stellar, however. The Babi Hitam (S\$10) for instance, a uniquely created dish inspired by the traditional pork bolognese that sees black pepper pork on Melba Toast, fails to satisfy as it was a smidge too salty. The latte (S\$5) too, while Instagram-worthy, was just ordinary. We won't recommend that you go there just for the food because we aren't crazy for it, but Coast Cycles is all about the experience, ambiance and the opportunity to test-ride some of the coolest bikes you'll ever see.

Coast Cycles
54 Siglap Drive
+65 6681 6681
Visit
www.coastcycles.com
for more information

Smoked Salmon Brioche



"I wanted it to be different from traditional bicycle shops, which are mostly functional and crammed. I see cycling as a lifestyle experience. With Coast Cycles, people who want to service their bikes can have a quick bite and coffee at the café. For those buying a new bike, they are guided through the selection process by the experienced team at Coast Cycles."

Jansen Tan, founder and owner of Coast Cycles