



RETAIL DESIGN INSTITUTE  
**STORES**  
OF THE YEAR /49

FEATURING WINNING PROJECTS FROM  
THE RETAIL DESIGN INSTITUTE'S INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION  
AND, FROM BRAZIL: 2019 PRÊMIO DE DESIGN DE VAREJO!



# Birkenstock

Venice, Calif.

Design: **TPG Architecture, LLP**, New York City

Photography: **Birkenstock USA**





Birkenstock Orthopädie GmbH & Co. KG is a shoe manufacturer headquartered in Neustadt, Germany. The company sells sandals and other shoes known for

contoured cork and rubber footbeds that conform to the shape of their wearers' feet. They also sell legwear, belts, and bags, and

skincare products developed from cork.

In 2018, the shoemaker opened its first freestanding store in the U.S., on Spring









Street in New York City's SoHo neighborhood. As part of its retail strategy, a second U.S. location was selected on Abbot Kinney Boulevard in Venice, California. TPG Architecture was retained to provide full interior design, including fixture design and architectural services, for the project.

The intent was to create an environment that is an authentic brand expression for Birkenstock's dedicated customer base, who knows the brand well, and that helps to define the brand's current DNA for those less familiar or who only know Birkenstock's earlier, earthy heritage. Among the beach boutiques and other internationally recognized retailers, the Abbot Kinney store is designed to reflect the Venice Beach lifestyle and local architectural vernacular, and also honor the iconic footwear company through incorporating brand elements that were used in the New York flagship.

The store and overall design concept is based on the century-old bungalows that are scattered throughout the eclectic neighborhood. To restore some of the building's early 20th-century character, postmodern stucco elements on the façade's exterior were removed and replaced by clapboard siding to match existing earlier siding found on the rear of the building. Also, the smallish existing windows with high sill heights were







replaced with large panes of glass, offering clear views of the interior. Inside, the welcome area reflects the decor of a “California-bohemian” inspired home with a light palette, plants, colorful rugs, and soft lighting. With exposed beams above and weathered white wood panels lining the walls, the 1,535-sq.-ft. space embraces a casual coastal aesthetic, echoing the area’s prominent skate and surf culture.

With the goal to have the overall design “not look like a shoe store,” but have a more comfortable residential feel, the design team developed a family of fixtures that break from traditional methods of shoe display featuring lines of shoes on horizontal shelves. A mix of shadow boxes, credenzas, and live edge tables satisfy the SKU requirements of the client yet feel more like furniture in a home. The use of horizontal shelving was limited and strategic. This design reflects Birkenstock’s newer fashion-forward, casual hip, chic,





lifestyle-driven identity. Past the sales area, the outdoor patio is designed as a lounge/living area and event space. Thanks to the year-round warm weather, the space is used to host private events and brand partnerships. A mural by local artist Andy Davis enhances the patio space. The store opening also marks the U.S. launch of the Birkenstock Natural Skin Care line, prominently displayed in a back-lit fixture designed by Birkenstock.

The design team faced several challenges over the course of the project. The main challenge was to

create a store that honors Birkenstock's connection to California beach culture while embodying the core character of the brand. The team selectively blended prototypical elements and materials with the Abbot Kinney aesthetic. For example, a craftsman created a surfboard that hangs in a focal location, referencing the local surfing culture, but built from the iconic cork material used in Birkenstock sandals. And the overall palette is somewhat lighter and "beachier" in tone and texture.



The building was originally a residential bungalow, with a floor plan broken up into small rooms. The team had to scoop out most of the interior partitions, and a raised floor, to create an appropriately planned retail program and layout. The open-plan space still has a residential sensibility, which is conveyed through materials and lighting. Additionally, the small footprint and limited perimeter wall area made accommodating the desired SKU count challenging. The team added shelving capacity selectively in front of windows facing onto the courtyard, viewable from both courtyard side and store interior to address capacity.

#### Judges' comments

Beautiful space and spectacular use of a very small former

bungalow. The Birkenstock brand completely comes through but with a relaxed California beach type vibe. The fixturing is really well done and I just love the surfboard out of cork. The fact that they used just a photo of a man in Birkenstocks to indicate the men's area was really smart.

Feels very "on brand" and the fixtures are great representation of place. Great looking, simple and appropriate for the area.

The concept was very well delivered through the architecture, materials, and good use of details. The overall mood is well harmonized with the locals of the area.







# CREDITS

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All credits supplied by entrants as part of their submission package.

**Alaska Lounge, Seattle, pg. 8**

Seattle Tacoma International Airport  
17801 International Blvd, Seattle, WA 98158  
USA

**Category:** Concierge | Lobby | Common Area

**Completion:** July 11, 2019

**Design:** Graham Baba Architects, Seattle

**Client:** Alaska Airlines, Seattle

**Architect:** Graham Baba Architects, Seattle

**Executive Architects:** SRG Partnership, Seattle

**Consultants, contractors and trades:**

Hensel Phelps, Bellevue, Wash. (general contractor); Charlie Hellstern Interior Design, Seattle (interior design in collaboration with Graham Baba Architects); Niteo Lighting, Seattle (lighting); Mazzetti, Seattle (mechanical engineering); Stantec, Seattle (electrical engineering); Coughlin Porter Lundeen, Seattle (structural engineering); Ricca Design Studios, Brooklyn (foodservice consultant); Arup, Seattle (acoustical engineering); Integrated Design Lab, University of Washington, Seattle (daylighting consultant); Spearhead, Nelson, BC (entry desk fabrication); Graypants, Seattle (entry artwork); Resolute Lighting, Seattle (lighting fixture fabrication); Interior Environments, Seattle (custom furniture and built-ins fabrication)

**ALDI, Shanghai, pg. 16**

1st Floor, No.428 Jiangning Road, Jing'an District, Shanghai  
CHINA

**Category:** Supermarket | Grocery

**Completion:** June 1, 2019

**Design:** Landini Associates, Sydney

**Client:** ALDI China

**Architect:** Landini Associates, Sydney

**Consultants, contractors and trades:**

ALDI China (general contractor); Ambience Lighting (lighting fixtures)

**Birkenstock, Venice, Calif., pg. 24**

1208 Abbot Kinney Boulevard, Venice, CA 90291  
USA

**Category:** Specialty Softlines

**Completion:** August 1, 2019

**Design:** TPG Architecture, LLP, New York City

**Client:** Birkenstock, Novato, Calif.

**Architect:** TPG Architecture, LLP, New York City

**Consultants, contractors and trades:**

Alain Hirsch Construction Corp. (general contractor); RL Studio, Los Angeles (lighting); Inga Guzyte Art, Santa Barbara, Calif. (artwork); Mega Vision, Brooklyn (millwork\fixturing); Inspired Surfboards, St. Augustine, Fla. (artwork); Andy Davis Designs, Leucadia, Calif. (artwork)

**Cadillac House, Shanghai, pg.32**

2199 Jufeng Road, Shanghai  
CHINA

**Category:** Showroom

**Completion:** March 27, 2019

**Design:** Gensler, New York City

**Client:** General Motors Company, Detroit

**Architect:** Gensler, New York City

**Consultants, contractors and trades:**

Kangye, China (general contractor); Shanghai Xiandai Architecture, Engineering & Consulting (project management); Tongji Architectural Design (Group) Co., Ltd., Shanghai (architect of record; structural and MEP engineers); Meinhardt Façade Technology (Shanghai) Ltd. (curtain wall engineers); George P. Johnson Experience Marketing, xxx; (experience design; interior lighting consultant); Atkins Group, Shanghai (LEED consultant); Proteus Lighting, Shanghai (exterior lighting consultant); Shanghai Kangye Construction & Engineering Co., Ltd., Shanghai (interior contractor); Wah Heng Glass & Aluminum Products Shanghai Ltd., Shanghai (curtain wall contractor); Shanghai Encore Ltd., Shanghai (experience design contractor); The Pixel Lab, Duluth, Minn. (digital experience contractor); JAB Anstoetz Furniture, Bielefeld, Germany (furniture); Vola, Horsens, Denmark, (plumbing fixtures); Blu Bathworks, Burnaby, BC Canada (plumbing fixtures); Kohler, Kohler, Wis. (plumbing fixtures); Corian, Wilmington, Del. (solid surfacing)