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bells & whistles subtly fuse japanese influences into blue ocean sushi interiors

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 photography by [jennifer puno](#)

los angeles-based design studio [bells & whistles](#) were charged with the refurbishment of **blue ocean robata + sushi bar in carlsbad, california**. while instilling a new perspective and identity, the designers presented an interior that has culminated a new and non-traditional approach for a japanese eatery.

'the opportunity to complement the expectation– defying cuisine offered at blue ocean with a similarly unanticipated space was an exciting challenge.' said bells & whistles principal designer **barbara rourke**, who, along with co-principal jason st. john, responded with a conceptual approach both modern and uniquely oceanic.



a finely-cut geometric walking establishes the entrance to the restaurant

the interiors subtly draws influence from the ocean and aspects of culture from japan. the entrance is highlighted by a protruding, timber entryway displaying geometrical cut-outs on each side. along with the landscaping which mimic corals beds, the internal program continues with the oceanic theme throughout. the open-plan seating arrangement is organized underneath an origami style ceiling where delicate bubbles of air hang above. the play in timber textures and the consistent facet theme is portrayed on various wall surfaces in the restaurant, and in turn, gives a comfortable and subtle insight to japanese dining.



the eatery offers communal and separate dining options

‘the modern, geometric design is inspired in no small part by its location; the tidal plains of carlsbad state beach and the rich marine ecosystem that inhabits the coastal kelp beds,’ continues st. john. ‘the sunlight, energy and colors of southern california provided a rich tapestry of tones and shapes that drove the design process.’



the mixed timber blocks which makes up one side of the wall gives warmth