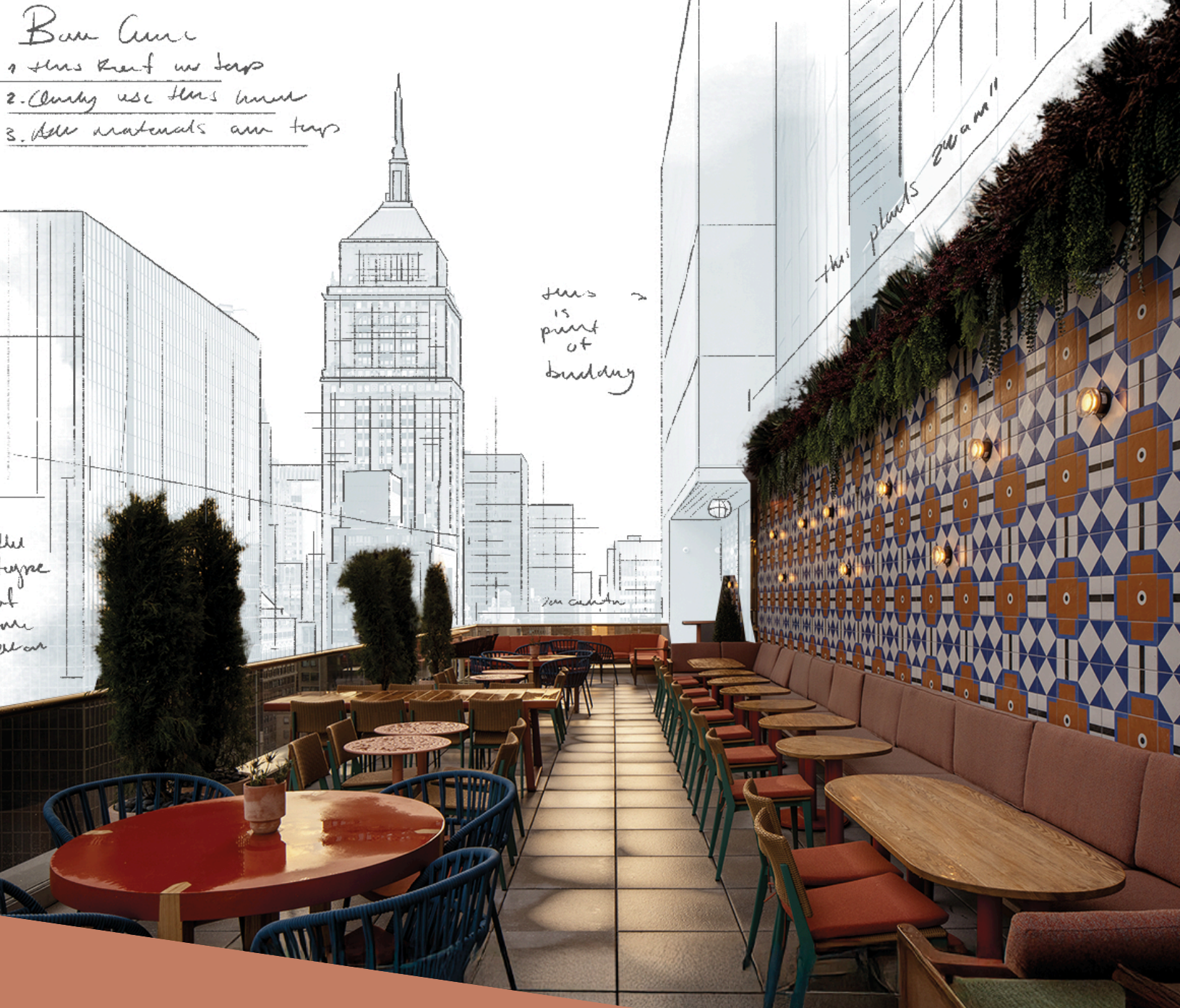


*Bar Area*  
*1. Glass front no top*  
*2. Clearly use glass panels*  
*3. Add materials and top*



# Case Study

How Dutch East Design Specified a  
**455-Item Rooftop Venue in 6  
Months Using DesignSpec**

# About the Project

Bar Cima is a mezcaleria and rooftop cocktail lounge on the 28th floor of the Grayson Hotel in Midtown Manhattan, offering one of the few vantage points in that part of the city with simultaneous views of both the East River and the Hudson. The project was developed in partnership with Fortuna Group and Apicii Group, and Dutch East Design served as the studio of record for interiors, naming, and branding across all four food and beverage venues within the hotel.

Bar Cima was conceived as a narrative-driven space rooted in Mexican heritage and the culture of mezcal. Rather than defaulting to the familiar visual tropes of a mezcal bar, Dutch East Design created something more deliberate: a rich, layered environment with a palette of deep soil tones, agave green, and night-sky blue, brought to life through custom millwork, Aztec-inspired concrete blockwork, mirrored ceilings, and a service-only bar that maximized the intimacy and allure of the space.

## Client Profile

### Designer:

Larah Moravek, Dutch  
East Design

### Project:

Bar Cima, Grayson Hotel, Floor  
28, New York City

### Project Type:

Luxury rooftop bar and  
terrace, full interiors, naming  
and branding

### Project Scale:

62 interior seats (1,600 SF) plus  
54 exterior seats (1,200 SF)

### Timeline:

6 months from concept  
through documentation, 4  
F&B venues total

### DesignSpec

#### Features Used

FF&E Schedules, Budget  
Estimation, Custom Spec  
Attributes, Report Templates,  
Spec Linking, Excel Export

# The Challenge

Bar Cima was as technically demanding as it was creatively ambitious.

- **Significant Physical Constraints**

The rooftop location presented a series of structural and spatial challenges: low ceilings, a narrow interior footprint, dominant elevator infrastructure, MEP configurations that limited flexibility, and strong directional light flooding from a single elevation. Every design decision had to solve a real constraint while preserving the atmosphere of exclusivity the concept demanded.

- **An Aggressive Timeline Across Four Venues**

Dutch East Design had six months from concept through documentation to deliver all four food and beverage venues within the Grayson Hotel, with Bar Cima among the priority venues flagged by ownership. A team of six worked with focused reviews two to three times per week, expanding during the documentation phase. There was no margin for disorganization.

- **A High Volume of Complex, Layered FF&E**

Bar Cima's design language required a wide and nuanced material palette: custom banquettes, patina brass and copper metalwork, blackened steel, alabaster stone, graphic tile, specialty fabrics, decorative lighting, outdoor-rated planters, and more. Across 19 distinct spec categories, the project generated over 455 individual specifications that needed to be organized, linked, budgeted, and communicated to purchasing agents, contractors, and ownership at different levels of detail.

- **Multiple Stakeholders Requiring Different Information**

With ownership, operators, purchasing agents, and general contractors all requiring project documentation, the team needed a system that could produce the right report for the right audience quickly, without rebuilding or reformatting data from scratch each time.

# Why DesignSpec

Dutch East Design is one of DesignSpec's earliest adopters. The decision to move to the platform came after years of using an industry-standard alternative that had shifted its focus toward sales rather than the needs of working designers. What drew Dutch East Design to DesignSpec was the confidence that the platform would evolve in response to the profession rather than around it, a confidence rooted in a direct relationship with the founding team.

That bet has paid off. DesignSpec is now central to the studio's daily workflow, and Bar Cima is a direct demonstration of what that looks like at scale.

## **From Concept Through Documentation in One Platform**

DesignSpec entered the Bar Cima workflow at schematic design and remained essential through final documentation. FF&E schedules and initial budget estimations were built early, giving the team and ownership a financial framework that tracked alongside design decisions rather than lagging behind them. As the project became more resolved, specifications became more detailed, with the platform scaling to match.

## **Customization That Matches Studio Standards**

Dutch East Design's specifications are known in the industry for their precision and depth. DesignSpec's custom attribute functionality allowed the studio to build their own specification standards into the platform, ensuring that every spec reflected their exact requirements while still benefiting from the platform's guardrails and structure. The result is a system where, once studio standards are established, outputting and linking specifications becomes highly efficient.



## **Linked Specs for Custom Furniture and Lighting**

One of the most operationally significant features for Bar Cima was DesignSpec's specification linking. For custom furniture and lighting, where multiple specs must travel together to vendors and fabricators, a single checkbox links all related specifications automatically. Vendors receive everything they need collated and complete, with no manual assembly required.

## **Report Flexibility for Every Audience**

Whether sending a high-level material overview to ownership, a detailed spec book to the general contractor, or a scope-specific package to a purchasing agent, DesignSpec's report templates allowed the team to generate the right document for each recipient quickly. The underlying data stays the same; the output adapts.

## **Excel Export for Calculation and Drawing Integration**

The ability to export specifications to Excel enabled the team to use spec data as a working matrix, running calculations and integrating results directly with project drawings. This created a live connection between specification data and construction documentation that traditional tools cannot replicate.

## **A Platform That Responds to Its Users**

Dutch East Design has experienced firsthand how DesignSpec evolves in response to designer feedback. When room number assignment was requested, the feature was announced almost immediately. When bugs were reported, they were resolved within a day. The ability to preview custom FF&E drawings and cut sheets within the platform, without downloading files, is another example of the kind of workflow improvement that comes from a product team that listens. For a studio that has been with DesignSpec from the beginning, this responsiveness is a meaningful part of the value.

# Bar Cima by the Numbers

The scale of the specification work on Bar Cima reflects both the complexity of the project and the efficiency DesignSpec made possible.

<b>19</b>	FF&E spec categories tracked across the project
<b>455+</b>	Individual specs managed across all categories
<b>90</b>	Seating specs coordinated across indoor and outdoor zones
<b>55</b>	Table specs managed across multiple seating configurations
<b>41</b>	Fabric specs specified and linked to furniture items
<b>37</b>	Lighting specs covering decorative and architectural fixtures
<b>108</b>	Pages of exported spec documentation generated by DesignSpec



<p><b>Efficiency at Scale</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 455+ specifications organized, linked, and documented across 19 categories within a six-month project timeline</li> <li>• FF&amp;E budgets generated and updated continuously from existing spec data, keeping ownership informed without additional effort</li> <li>• Spec linking for custom items eliminated manual assembly of vendor documentation packages</li> <li>• Excel exports enabled spec data to feed directly into drawings and calculation workflows</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accuracy and Accountability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Custom spec attributes ensured every specification reflected Dutch East Design’s precise studio standards</li> <li>• All team members worked from the same live, cloud-based system regardless of whether they were in the office or on site</li> <li>• Multiple tailored report formats gave every stakeholder exactly the information they needed, without over- or under-sharing</li> </ul>
<p><b>A Platform That Grows With the Practice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feature requests from Dutch East Design have directly influenced DesignSpec’s product roadmap</li> <li>• New hires arriving at the studio already familiar with DesignSpec reflects how widely the platform has been adopted across the industry</li> <li>• The studio’s established standards within the system mean each new project builds on the last, compounding efficiency over time</li> </ul>

“How do you even sleep at night? DesignSpec is such a fluid and expandable platform with excellent programming to allow designers to do their best work at a project scale much greater than the individual.”  
 — Larah Moravek, Dutch East Design



## The Outcome

Bar Cima opened as a jewel of a space: a mezcaleria that evokes Mexican heritage without relying on cliché, a rooftop lounge that makes its physical constraints disappear into its atmosphere. Guests who arrive at the 28th floor of the Grayson Hotel encounter something that feels intentional at every turn, from the Aztec-inspired concrete blockwork of the arrival corridor to the mirrored ceiling that captures the Manhattan skyline above the bar.

None of the challenges that shaped the design are visible in the finished space. That invisibility is itself the achievement, and it required not just design talent but operational precision: a team of six, moving fast across four venues, producing documentation that left nothing to chance.

“Once our studio’s standards are set up in the system, the time required to output, link, and correlate specifications is super efficient. It is a workhorse.”

— Larah Moravek, Dutch East Design

“Being able to produce basically any data set requested by a contractor, client, or purchasing agent at the press of a button, at each stage of the project, is a huge value-add.”

— Larah Moravek, Dutch East Design

## Looking Ahead

Dutch East Design continues to grow its practice on DesignSpec, with the studio’s standards embedded in the platform and a team that uses it every day. As the studio takes on increasingly complex hospitality projects, the combination of customization, automation, and responsive product development keeps DesignSpec at the center of how Dutch East Design works.

**See how DesignSpec can transform your next project:**

**[Start a Free Trial](#)**