



AXIA TAVERNA, TENAFLY

Designed by Nelson Bicol, Tonychi and Associates,
New York, N.Y.

- The design concept behind Axia Taverna is simple, yet rooted in centuries-old Greek tradition: people congregating to enjoy *meze*, small appetizers often served with drinks. “This custom is about the gathering of family and sharing,” explains Nelson Bicol, design principal. “It’s about opening up your doors and being welcomed. And the architecture expresses that.” The fact that the eatery is housed in what was formerly a Colonial home enhances that friendly appeal, while oversize wood and glass doors draw patrons in. And the home’s former garage doors are frequently left open in temperate weather, revealing a cozy patio space.
- In keeping with the meze concept, “the dining room area has a long banquette around which everyone can gather, share food and interact,” the designer notes. “It’s very casual and relaxed.” A cushioned L-shaped bench with plump pillows curves along the wall and pairs with rustic walnut tables, able to accommodate an entire family or smaller parties.
- The cellular fireplace is an eye-catching focal point. “It’s like a beacon—it’s the first thing you see,” says Bicol. Diners can enjoy a libation by the modern structure or along the nearby bar that seats 10.
- Part divider, part piece of art, a glass case displays the restaurant’s wine offerings. The transparent edifice separates the bar from the dining room while maintaining the openness of the space.