



Creating an Asian street food experience

For this retail fit-out project, Natureworks created a colourful Asian laneway food precinct in the Stockland shopping centre near Cairns. Stockland engaged Natureworks to create an Asian street food experience in a new extension to the existing food court. The laneway precinct has five food vendors offering tasty street-style Asian cuisine.

Our project challenge was to create the feel and vibe of a traditional Asian street food market in a modern retail space. Above all, we wanted it to be an enjoyable experience for customers.

For this project, the main components we created were: shopfront facades, Foo Dog sculptures to guard the entrance, and themed street poles to simulate the character of an Asian streetscape.

Natureworks designed two decorative, stylised feature entrances at either end of the laneway. The front entrance looks like a typical Asian temple gate. Additionally, we hung over 70 traditional silk and paper illuminated lanterns all along the laneway. This gave the precinct its name – **Lantern Lane**.



Lantern Lane is in the Stockland Shopping Centre at Earlville, near Cairns. For info see lanternlane.com.au/



Designing and building Lantern Lane

To construct the entrance facades, we installed a structural steel post and beam framework. After that, we added a roof frame, roof tiles, aged timber columns and beam cladding. The facade is made from a variety of materials – fibreglass, lightweight polyurethane and polystyrene foam, ply sheeting and bamboo panels. Our artists used creative paint finishes to achieve the final aged and antiqued look.

Each entrance has large golden temple guardian lions (Foo Dogs) sitting atop golden plinths at either side. The Foo Dogs and plinths were new pieces that we sculpted, made into moulds, cast in fibreglass and finished with gold leaf paint. We have since added these pieces to our collection (available as male and female **Foo Dogs** in gold or stone finish).

Adding a touch of realism

If you've ever been to an Asian street market, you'll know spaghetti-like overhead wires are often a feature of the streetscape. To create that effect in Lantern Lane, we attached over two kilometres of faux electrical wires to old-looking telegraph poles. We were able to source existing steel light poles and add fibreglass skins to create an aged look.

To enhance the effect, we added well-worn street lights, junction boxes, ceramic insulators and other electrical paraphernalia. This shows that it can be possible to achieve an authentic look without creating everything from scratch. Such details don't always cost a lot, but they can make a big difference to the overall experience!



A male Foo Dog guards the right of the main entrance



A female Foo Dog guards the left of the entrance



Customers gather outside the entrance to Lantern Lane



The Foo Dogs stand on a majestic gold plinth



Close-ups of faux roof tiles and weathered wood beam