## The L.A. look? It's his

Dodd Mitchell is the reason hip restaurants are dressed in leather and shooting fire. And that's just the beginning.

These Staff Writer

To could be a hallucinogenic vision, maybe an oplum den inside a strip joint; Mirrored ceilings reflect red lights, peacock feathers tease tear-drop lamp crystals, and huge tassels shimmy at the comers of a bar that's papered in foreign currency and dressed to thill—it's wearing a burgundy leather corset.

But no, this plane is real: a restaurant called Chi at the West Hollywood Hyutt. The hotests restaurant desapond with the hotests restaurant desapond; single-lamped previving the Sunset Strip with credits including Le Dome, Ratana, Falcon and the Balbona Lounge.

Mitchell has added fire, water, leather and stone to more than two dozen restaurants and bars from Santa Monitor to Bevery Hills and beyond, and the names read like a stylish travelers must-see list; Didec, Vofa, Lounge 217, Linq, Gaucho Grill, Sushi Roku, Avenue, China One, the Crescent Lounge and Sieep.

He has created a particular LA, look.

Jame, Jaueno Grill, Sushi Roku, Avenue, China One, the Crescent Lounge and Sleep.

He has created a particular LA look, or at least, a delitious LA. style, since no two of his creations look the same, With hotel and restaurant projects on the books in New York, Mamri and Lascome a brand name. Maybe soon. To-defend the strength of th

Ashton, Justin and Jennifer

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TCHELL a boysh if alightly frayed 37, is alightly frayed 31, i

who was, until two weeks ago, his flanTilly is also an investor in Chi, his
most audicolus, and in some ways,
oddly personal, creation. Mitchell designed the table settings, graphics uniforms and even the bodies of the hiredhip. The Chi logo, in temporary taittoo
form, is applied to waiters' forearms and
the waitresses' lower backs, because.
Mitchell said, "guys are pigs," and look
at the waitresses as they leave.
"Every time they serve flood or walk
away, you get brand recognition," said
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## An L.A. creation: himself

HAT'S literally true. Mitchell has had no formal training. His approach isn't derived from any academic aes-thetic; it's almost entirely his

personal psychology.

Not long ago, Mitchell was like all the other hopeful L.A. guys struggling to get pust the velvet ropes and into places like the ones he now designs.

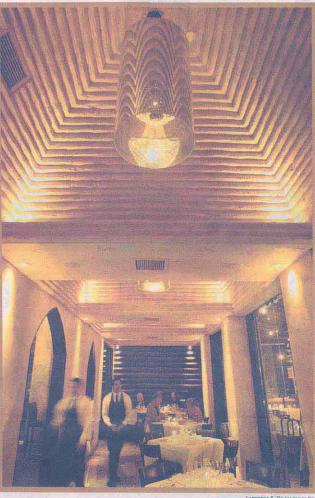
the ones he now designs.

He was born in Fresno, the son of a prizelighter and a hairdresser, and grew up in cities across the Southwest oil patch as the family followed a petroleum engineer steplather. He quit high



AT CH1: Dodd Mitchell didn't stop at designing the room. He put the restaurant's logo on the bodies of the wait staff.

school and came to L.A. At 19, he got a job sweeping up sets, and eventually, began designing them. Dyears ago: the His big break came of Lounge 217 in Bug by the search of Lounge 218 in Search Monitor Prieds Offreded Reew as operater set designer who was good and fast, and knew Hollywood lighting tricks that could make the palest night. The country of the search of the search



CABIN CHIC: Among the designer's projects is 25-year-old Le Dome in West Hollywood, completely renovated with a log-cabin theme in one part of the restaurant's dining area. The overall result, he says, is a "cluster of styles."



LORI SHEPLER IN ACCOUNTINGS: Dodd Mitchell, standing near the fire pit he designed at Chi, has no formal training. He was a set designer when friends friends set him up in his first job 10 years ago.

designed at Chi, has no formal training-friends set him up in his first 0.0 to years
At Le Dome, glass doors edge a sidewalk
patio that's open to the bustle of Sunset
Boulevard. His proposed pool, but and
Boulevard. His proposed pool, but and
Boulevard. His proposed pool, but and
Rossevelt involves a large, Jon-theBrossevelt involves a large, Jon-theparty fire pit surrounded by eabanas
with two-story curtains. To "get the
community together," he's designing a
movie screen near the pool. Bronzed
arrors will reflect the action above and
arround the pool and turn social moles
into party animals.

"When people go out, they want to be
seen." Mitchell said. Clear sight lines
open up his restaurants to the delight
of elebrity ubberneckers.
seen." Mitchell said. Clear sight lines
open up his restaurants to the delight
of elebrity ubberneckers.
be seen." Mitchell is not private jets and has
booked about \$225 million of projects
this year, it's not arrogance, said his
best friend and mentor, Adolfo Surnya,
an owner of Gaucheo Grill and Dolee.

"It's because he's insecure," said
surnya, who knew Mitchell as a struggling designer. Now valets park Mitchlife his private jet of the surney and
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elis vosa sed designer when friends of que en consideration of Caucho Grill in Brent-wood doubled the sales there. Surgya cod doubled the sales there. Surgya end the sales there is surgya to the sales the sales there is surgya of the sales of the sales the sales the sales and Mitchell have plans for a spa on Holywood Boulevard and for making the Bristol Hotel at 5th and Olive in downtown I.A. a hijh plotel.

New projects propose to surround clientis in the Mitchell mystique whether they're eating, drinking, sweating, sleeping, floating or flying. He's doing the interiors of charter jets and yachts for firms called Esstatsky and Escissea. Two spa projects are in the works. Day for firms called Esstatsky and Escissea. Two spa projects are in the works. Day proposed spaces of the sales of t



LAWRENCE K. HO Les Aug-les 71m.
NO MORE DOME: Space age
meets Golftic Tuscany at the bar in Le
Dome. Mitchell also had a hand in
designing the restaurant's menu.