

SPECS/STORE DESIGN

True Food Kitchen



True Food Kitchen's eco-friendly, fresh design reflects its dedication to healthy eating.

By Samantha Murphy

A new concept in dining, True Food Kitchen, is designed to capture the essence of healthy and balanced living.

The modern, eco-friendly restaurant, which has seating for more than 130 guests inside and 90 outside on the patio, opened its first location at Phoenix's Biltmore Fashion Park last October. It is the brainchild of best-selling author and healthy-living guru Dr. Andrew Weil, who collaborated with well-known Scottsdale, Ariz., restaurateur Sam Fox, CEO and president of Fox Restaurant Concepts, on the project.

The design of the 4,000-sq.-ft. location supports and reflects the menu, according to designer Judith Testani of

Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Testani Design Group. Local and sustainable ingredients figure heavily in the entrees, which range from salads and sandwiches to organic meat entrees and low-calorie beer. True Food Kitchen bills itself not

as a health-food restaurant, but as a spot that serves dishes that happen to be good for you.

"To complement the menu, we went with a fresh and natural look," Testani said.

The color scheme alternates between bright and warm colors. The glass-accented walls are painted a fresh lemon-twist yellow, while a wall in the kitchen (visible from the dining room) is tiled in apple green. Light and dark wood tones run throughout the space, making the area feel warm and comfortable. In addition, three oversized custom circular light fixtures hang from the dining-room ceiling.

"The yellow back-painted glass walls

Project Resources

Design firm (Interior decor and graphics): Testani Design Troupe, Scottsdale, Ariz.

General contractor: TKI Construction, Merritt Island, Fla.

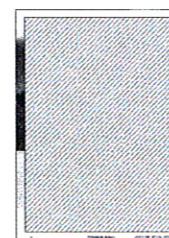
Architect: Evolution Design Inc., Tempe, Ariz.

Flooring: Carlisle Antique Oak.

Manufacturer and installation of signage: Signs of the Times, Phoenix.

Countertops: CaesarStone Inc., Phoenix.

Kitchen equipment consultant: Wild West Equipment, Commerce City, Colo.



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add a sheen and polished dynamic to the space as it contrasts with its surroundings, especially the wood-slat walls above," Testani said.

Testani also used natural tones for the counter tops. Quartz was chosen for the expediting counter, while white oak butcher-block makes up the bar top, three prep tables and tabletops.

"We wanted to keep the space open and airy," Testani said.

The layout allows the wood floors from the dining room to flow into the kitchen area, making the kitchen essentially a part of the dining space.

The dining room is not only inviting but also interactive. The space features two communal tables, as well as three food-prep tables so guests can see chefs at work.

The exterior is standard for an up-scale outdoor mall, but people who walk by are drawn to the energy of the space, thanks to its 1,000-sq.-ft. outdoor patio. The patio is surrounded by lush greenery, and the doors are flanked with unique rolling planters filled with herbs. Testani also selected patio furniture with cushions and umbrellas in True Food Kitchen's signature bright

lemon-yellow color.

The use of environmentally friendly materials reflects the restaurant's natural and healthy-eating focus.

"Since Dr. Weil is all about working toward a more balanced lifestyle, it was important for us that the restaurant reflect that balance," Fox said. "We made it a point to use energy-efficient, sustainable materials whenever possible."

Among the restaurant's eco-friendly materials are reclaimed wood floors, recycled quarry tiles and low-VOC paint. A good deal of the equipment is also "green," from waterless urinals and ultra-low-water faucets to low-voltage LED lighting and energy-efficient

kitchen equipment.

Additionally, as part of its membership in the Boston-based Green Restaurant Association, True Food Kitchen participates in a recycling program. The restaurant also has installed a water-purification unit that creates both still and carbonated bottled water in-house. Bottles are cleaned, sterilized and reused to eliminate plastic-bottle waste.

In a final touch, bamboo planters were used throughout the dining room to further evoke a natural and eco-friendly appeal.

"We wanted to add an extra sense of renewal and earthiness to the whole dining experience," Testani said. ■

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The restaurant features a natural decor with lemon-yellow hues; light and dark wood tones; and an open, airy dining area.

