

CAMPUS DINING

by design

ALFERD PACKER RESTAURANT & GRILL AND BABY DOE'S COFFEE & BAKERY at University of Colorado Boulder Memorial Center

Photos courtesy of Porter Khouw Consulting, Inc.; photography by Brian Sendler, Bri Sen Photography

At the University of Colorado Boulder's University Memorial Center (UMC), the Alferd Packer Restaurant & Grill—named after Colorado's most famous cannibal—and the adjacent Baby Doe's Coffee & Bakery—named after Elizabeth "Baby Doe" McCourt, who married Horace Tabor, Colorado's most prominent "Silver King"—were outdated and featured inefficient designs. A \$1.5 million renovation to bring quicker throughput and an overall increase in customer satisfaction was completed in the fall of 2010.

According to Albin Khouw, senior vice president of Porter Khouw Consulting, Inc. (PKC), the main highlights and results of the project included:

1. Improving the visual connection between the seating area and servery. This was accomplished by removing the curved glass wall that screened the servery from the dining room. An arched opening was created in the existing wall at Baby Doe's to improve visual connection with the customers.
2. Improving flow inside the servery. The size of the servery was increased significantly by removing the curved glass wall. The cashier stations were decentralized and a few more points of sales were added to help with the throughput. Redesigned stations allow for greater circulation and more efficient traffic flow within the servery.
3. Improving efficiencies by relocating some of the stations for greater access. An added island with a self-serve salad bar became the centerpiece of the new servery. "Salads, soups, and grab-and-go items have become our highest sellers," says Robin Margolin, UMC's director of foodservice. "Hamburgers used to be king!"
4. Improving ease of circulation and enhancing lighting to allow the food to stand out.
5. Updating dining rooms to make them more flexible for use for overflow catering or rain backups for large events.
6. Combining the coffee shop with the main marketplace area to allow for expanded service on weekends and off times, with minimal labor.



Baby Doe's Coffee & Bakery can be accessed from the grill or the public hallway to the east to increase customer throughput. Images above the arched entryways from the east remind visitors of Baby Doe's and the town of Leadville's history.



THE MANY OFFERINGS

The 5,500-square-foot food court, now referred to as a restaurant and grill, offers everything from salads and burgers to homestyle comfort foods. In addition, grab-and-go items, including pastries, bagels, sandwiches, ice cream, chips, yogurts, and candy, are available for customers' quick stops between classes and meetings.

Stations include:

- El Canibal—Made-to-order Mexican specialties and homemade guacamole and salsa
- The Tabor—Three choices of entrees ranging from homestyle comfort foods to international cuisine
- Al's Greens—A 75-foot-long soup and salad bar
- Slumgullian Grill—Grilled burgers, chicken tenders, cheese sandwiches, and fries
- Al's Lodge—Made-to-order vegetarian and meat paninis
- Soup & Chili Bar—Various selections daily
- Baby Doe's Sweets & Treats—Fresh pastries from the in-house bakery
- Grab-n-Go—Packaged fresh sandwiches and pre-made salads

"Customers are very happy with the fresh, open floor plan," Margolin says. "The food looks much better because of the improved lighting. Returning alumni have had many positive comments, including, 'I can't believe this is the same place.'" In addition to appealing to customers, the open floor plan makes it easier to accommodate special events with large groups of people eating at the same time.

Above: The salad bar features fresh ingredients and freshly prepared salads for make-your-own creations.

Inset: The 5,500-square-foot servery's design encourages efficient throughput and station visibility from everywhere in the space.

The project also included a redesign of Baby Doe's Coffee & Bakery so customers can easily access it from the grill, and to improve customer throughput. It was previously a stand-alone unit, and prior to the renovation, lines often snaked through the store, particularly during peak meal periods. The redesigned unit offers fresh-brewed organic, fair trade coffees, specialty coffee drinks, and freshly baked cookies, desserts, muffins, and breads. In addition, it displays a variety of bottled beverages, energy bars, energy drinks, and snacks.

"The design is very clean, but still rustic enough to convey Colorado heritage," says Khouw. "This was important to students."

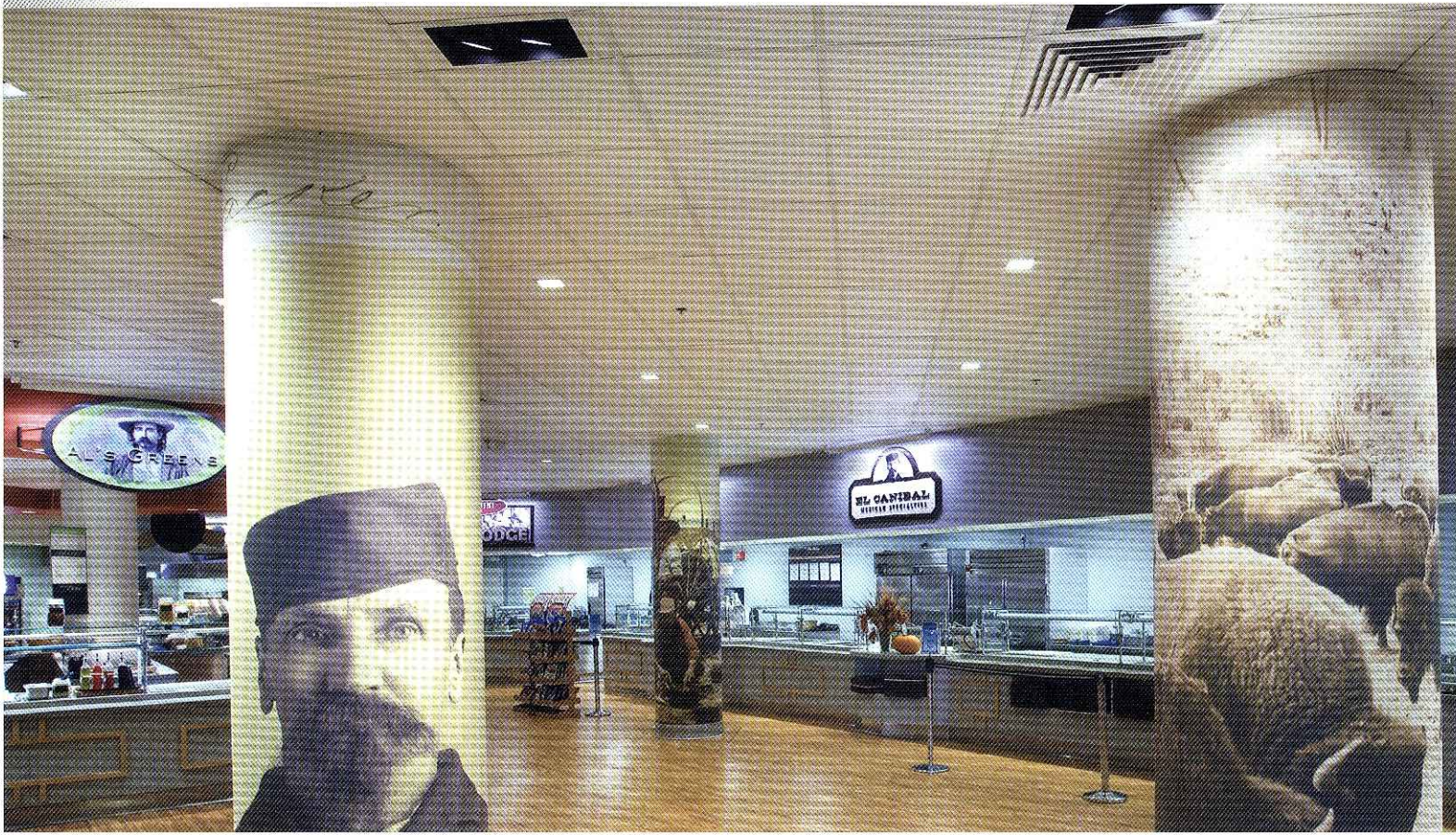
In the dining room, the fireplace is a favorite gathering place, especially in the winter. The raised platform provides performance space for special functions and flexible seating for up to 560. Sustainability is an important facet of the project. UMC foodservice has built-in composting, recycling, and trash stations, uses less-toxic cleansers, uses washable towels for cleaning, and follows water and energy conservation measures. Sustainable design strategies include recycling of the construction debris and old foodservice equipment as well as the use of materials with recycled content and LED accent lighting. It is part of Partners for a Clean Environment (PACE), a voluntary partnership of Boulder County businesses and local governments dedicated to a better environment.

This retail space requires three to 25 staff members to operate, depending on the time of day and level of business. Approximately 1,000 customers are served per hour in busy periods.

Operating hours are: 7:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Friday; 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Saturday; and 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Key people involved: Carlos Garcia, director, University Memorial Center; Robin Margolin, foodservice director; David Schafer, principal architect, OZ Architecture; Nathan Miesen, project architect, OZ Architecture; Jan Peck, interior designer, OZ Architecture; Albin Khouw and Ron Lisberger, foodservice consultants, Porter Khouw Consulting, Inc.; Jeff Jesse and Justin Hafer, Cator Ruma Engineering; Ben Nelsen, Martin/Martin Structural Engineering; Marty Gregg, ArtHouse Graphic Design. ♦

In the servery, portraits of Alferd Packer and other early settler images remind customers of its historic namesake.





The inviting entranceway to the restaurant and grill offers customers a sneak preview of what they will experience.