

Project Profile



Betting big

California's Valley View Casino undergoes major food service expansion, upgrade

By Theodore Barber

California's San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians operate the vibrant **Valley View Casino**. Recently, the complex completed a major expansion with emphasis on foodservice and an upgrade in gaming and guest amenities.

The original structure was an existing composite of building patchwork. The non-smoking floor was a temporary sprung tent structure. The main floor was outdated and scarred with previous efforts to keep the space comfortable for the guests and team members. There were only two food outlets — a buffet and snack stand.

The challenges were significant from the start. The civil contractors hit granite that required blasting activity, resulting in months of delays and costs. The Casino Development Group switched architects, added new consultants and augmented the previous designs to better reflect the tribe's character. When you throw in the back-to-back years of southern California wild fires that literally touched the facility, there was nothing this group couldn't overcome.

The foodservice design and strategy was most complex. In addition to adding gaming space, the main thrust of the expansion was to increase the food and beverage options available to the guest. In order to keep pace with the milestone schedule, the drawings had to get out in front of the MEP design trades while not impeding the construction progress. Change in design was constant. There were more than 90 bulletins issued during construction.

Valley View Casino was known for its quality of food, and the daily edict was not to jeopardize this most crucial balance of Valley View Casino's core competency — keeping the guests and team members fed. The first step was to design a temporary kitchen, scullery, storage and service area that would enable the existing kitchen to be dismantled. We collaborated with **Anthony Matthews**, vice president of food and beverage, and **Josef Pilz**, the executive chef, to design a temporary tent kitchen capable of producing food for 3,000+ guests and team members each day with the ultimate number surpassing 4,000+.

Key Players

Owner:
San Pasqual Casino
Development Group
Valley Center, Calif.

Architect:
JCJ Architecture
San Diego, Calif.

Food Service Designer:
Theodore Barber & Co.
Largo, Fla.

General Contractor:
Kitchell Corp.
Sacramento, Calif.

The foodservice design entailed a steak house exhibition kitchen; team member café; a pizza shop; 24-hour casual restaurant; a gelato, pastry and coffee shop; a massive buffet; signature lounge; main stage lounge; non-smoking lounge, VIP lounge; production kitchen; bakery; butcher shop; two garde mange suites; liquor control system and main warehouse.

The production kitchen was designed to provide property-wide preparation, as well as to support the main buffet as its direct kitchen.

The buffet was designed with satellite kitchens at each station; there is a broiler, pizza oven, Chinese woks and sauté, pastry finishing and crepe-making stations. The dessert area boasts two large chocolate fountains. Within the production kitchen a cook chill/freeze system was designed, complete with pumps, kettle agitators and two roll-in shock freezers with three temperature settings. The kettle agitators are a new folding design rather than the vertical spiral beater, paddle and hook design.

To support the bulk cooking, the kitchen is equipped with two roll-in combi-steamer-ovens, six rack combi-steamer-

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ovens, pressure fryers and high-capacity skillets. The bakery is designed with a double-rack oven, matching proofer, high-capacity sheeter/cutter and a three-deck hearth/steam oven. The 140-quart spiral mixer is supported by a water chiller and heater blending station to provide the most appropriate water temperatures for the dough being produced. The bakery has a separate chocolate room, equipped with a two-kettle re-circulating chocolate tempering machine, wet kettles and a glazing spray machine.

The all-stainless-steel refrigerated butcher shop is provided with a vacuum pack machine, band saw, meat grinder, automatic patty forming machine slicers and needle machines.

The steakhouse, known as **Black and Blue**, features an open-flame oven in the dining room, a working wine cellar and two exhibition kitchens. The dining room is adjacent to the horseshoe-shaped bar, equipped with a liquor control system. The carbonated drinks and liquor are all pumped from separate pump rooms through a series of overhead beverage conduits with runs of several hundred feet.

The refrigeration for the foodservice areas is supplied by two independent racks; one is a parallel system positioned on grade, and one is a roof-mounted standard design rack with multiple compressors.

One of the new technologies featured throughout the



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kitchens are the several exhaust hoods that are equipped with UV cassettes. This option is capable of removing the grease particles from the exhausted air; thereby reducing the need for routine duct cleaning and the reintroduction of grease-laden air back into the casino through the HVAC and return systems. In addition, the elimination of grease throughout the duct system provides a first-line defense for fire prevention and safety. **CK**

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