

Seeking Some Food for Thought?

By Maya Meinert on August 31, 2010 1:07 PM

After two years of waiting for a new, permanent gathering place, the University Park community now has the Ronald Tutor Campus Center - and one of its most exciting aspects is the food being served.

While some of the restaurants are familiar to USC students, faculty and staff - Carl's Jr., Wahoo's Fish Taco and Traditions have all either returned from their spots at The Lot or moved from other areas of campus - other eateries are new to the Trojan Family.

California Pizza Kitchen offers salads, pastas, sandwiches, soups and - what else? - pizzas in the ground-floor food court. CPK's signature original BBQ chicken pizza and original BBQ chicken chopped salad are fixtures on the menu. Another addition is Panda Express, the fast-casual Chinese food concept famous for its orange chicken. The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf also has a spot in the food court, its second at USC (the other location is housed in the USC School of Cinematic Arts).

Seeds Marketplace, a convenience store stocked with grab-and-go items as well as made-to-order foods such as sandwiches and salads, is adjacent to the Commons Food Court on the ground floor.

Outside the main food court area are two restaurants with exciting concepts: Lemonade and Moreton Fig.

Lemonade, which serves salads, stews, breads, sandwiches, sweets and house-made lemonades in a sophisticated cafeteria environment, is located on the second floor of the campus center at the top of the Steps of Troy.

This is the fifth outpost of the L.A.-based mini-chain founded by chef Alan Jackson, who recently appeared at the new USC location, making sure service was up to par. Menu items range from a salad of Israeli couscous, wild mushrooms, parmesan cheese and truffle vinaigrette to a red miso short rib pot roast. And true to its name, there is a daily selection of gourmet lemonades with flavors such as cucumber mint, ginger peach and watermelon rosemary.

Moreton Fig, located near the new Epstein Family Alumni Center, is the center's sole table-service restaurant, replacing the sit-down concept of the old Upstairs Café.

USC Hospitality teamed up with the award-winning Lark Creek Restaurant Group to develop the new restaurant described as sophisticated yet affordable. The 8,000 square-foot, LEED-certified venue was named for the two towering century-old Moreton Bay fig trees - saved during the building's construction - standing in front of it. The opening of the restaurant represents a homecoming for Lark Creek CEO Michael Dellar '70.

Moreton Fig will be open for lunch and dinner with an abbreviated menu available between the two periods. The menu includes vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options, as well as hamburgers and other hearty entrees. Highlights include jalapeño-honey cornbread, blackened mahi mahi sliders and crispy skin lemon-and-garlic-roasted organic chicken with pumpernickel spaetzle and green tomato.

The restaurant, which includes a private dining room, plans to offer outdoor grilling on game days as well as seasonal food festivals.



Lemonade serves its many offerings in a sophisticated cafeteria environment on the second floor of the Ronald Tutor Campus Center.

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