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RESTAURANTS 2.0

Veteran Chains Continue to Invest in
Trendy and Emerging New Concepts

p32

Courting
Area Developers

p26

Cashing in on the
Container Craze

p52

BUZZ

who's doing what



Hyatt Century City Experiments with First-Ever Pop-Up Restaurant

A beta test of the Hyatt Regency brand, Viento, at the Hyatt Century City in Los Angeles was designed as a pop-up restaurant that can be periodically switched out to showcase different concepts through menu and design changes. As such, designers looked to develop a blank slate for the renovated space so that additional decorations could be added to create that changing concept. If successful, the hotel giant plans to roll out the pop-up concept nationally.

"We are taking a guerilla restaurateur approach where we want to always offer something fresh and new," says Jared Hobbins, director of food and beverage. "I thought it was important to focus on the talent behind our culinary team and what they feel passionate about. Many are classically trained, but a few also have Latin backgrounds, so we thought that would be perfect for the first concept."

Viento, the current pop-up concept, serves a dinner menu inspired by Mexican and South American cuisine and led by a rotating roster of Hyatt Century City chefs with oversight from Executive Chef Felix Nappoly.

That said, design was an important factor in the pop-up concept. Building off of the existing footprint and mid-century modern style, designers incorporated a 1950s and '60s color palette with retro orange, gray, teal and yellow and introduced staging and lighting that could be retracted or put away for breakfast and lunch service. Hundreds of votive lights create a Latin cathedral or grand square feel, while enhanced lighting on the garden patio — including orange pendant lanterns hung from a banyan tree — gives that breezy, romantic California atmosphere diners seek.

The hotel plans to introduce a new pop-up concept with an entirely new menu and design in the next four to six months. Inspired by the existing sushi counter at Breeze, Hobbins says the team has considered an Asian-inspired pop-up that will also incorporate Indian influences. Cocktail and wine lists will also be changed up to match the new cuisine. The design will stick with the retro supper club feel but feature additions reflective of the new menu.

International Coffee Chain Ogawa Debuts in U.S.

Ogawa Coffee, a Kyoto, Japan-based chain, opened its first U.S. location in Boston. The shop showcases a customized layout and design created by Boston-based architect and designer Takako Oji, who also serves as executive director of the coffee company.

In constructing the Ogawa Coffee Boston space, Oji used natural sunlight filters and stenciled walls to create this coffee grove "oasis."

The shop will also serve as a teaching lab with retractable stadium seating in front of the bar, offering customers a bird's-eye view of the baristas at work. When not in use for demonstrations, the seating can be pushed against the wall and the space converted to a stand-up bar counter. Furniture was designed to be modular for configurations to accommodate both individuals and large social groups.

