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***Bottega Americano* Brings ‘Food Hall’ Style Dining to California**

Outdoor European markets are inspiration for interior designer Thomas Schoos

At *Bottega Americano*, food is the star. That was the vision interior designer Thomas Schoos had when approached to create an environment for this large restaurant and marketplace in the Thomas Jefferson Law School in San Diego. Drawing on his memories of bustling outdoor markets that spring up in the plazas of towns and villages across Europe, German-born Schoos wanted the restaurant to tap into that excitement of watching food being prepared up close and personal. “I want *Bottega Americano* to be a place where people are shopping, socializing and eating at the same time,” explains Schoos, “with plenty of things to see, smell and taste on all sides.”



To create this, Schoos realized that he should keep the design simple so that the food would “pop.” The large space is surrounded by “food bars” where people can watch different dishes being prepared, including yards of colorful pasta drying in racks, fragrant cheeses on shelves and in display cases, sausages hanging behind the salumeria, pizzas cooking in the large exposed oven, and piles of desserts at the dessert counter. Guests can also buy food to go or shop in the retail area. In contrast to all the color and texture of the food, the design is kept simple, with a mostly black-and-white color scheme.

Simple need not mean boring, however. For instance, the countertops and many tables are black-and-white, but they are made of white Carrera marble with intricate black veins, adding variety and elegant polish. Another intriguing black-and-white element is the signature floor tile that Schoos Design created for the restaurant. The tile interweaves images of fruits, vegetables and cooking utensils into an intricate graphic pattern that references both modern cooking and ornate old-world design, with the restaurant’s initials in the center. This signature graphic also makes appearances as a sort of coat-of-arms above the pizza oven, on uniforms and aprons, and in the menus and other printed materials. As Michele Parente of the UT-San Diego said about the use of branding: “The classy *Bottega Americano* logo is everywhere...yet it never feels excessive. That’s what classic styling will do.”



To warm up the atmosphere, Schoos adds a number of organic, natural elements such as stacks of raw logs that completely encase the support columns, looking like giant stacks of firewood going to the ceiling. Many light fixtures are made from wicker, looking like hanging baskets. And live trees appear here and there in large clapboard planters. For a touch of elegance, polished brass teardrop light fixtures and glittering glass lanterns hang in bunches like stars.

A final ornamental element that evokes the restaurant's European heritage is the large mural that covers one wall of the restaurant (and an interior hallway) featuring vintage photographs of Italy and Italian personalities of the 1950's and 1960's. Besides fitting the black-and-white color scheme, this photo wall makes the connection with Italian style and culture explicit, with images of celebrities, colorful characters, romantic encounters, evocative architecture, vintage Fiats and, of course, the iconic Vespa.

To see more images of the restaurant, please visit the Schoos website at <http://bit.ly/1yUwZGW> .

About Thomas Schoos

Thomas Schoos is known as designer of some of the most successful hospitality venues in the U.S., ranging from *Tao Restaurant and Nightclub* at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, which has been the top-grossing restaurant in the U.S. every year since it opened in 2005, to *Searsucker* in San Diego, voted by Open Table as the second most popular restaurant in the country in 2011. Schoos has partnered with celebrity chefs like *Iron Chef* Morimoto and *Top Chef's* Brian Malarkey to design numerous restaurants in many cities, with dozens more planned. Last year, two of his restaurant designs – for *Herringbone* in La Jolla and *Figue* in La Quinta, CA – were nominated as finalists in the Gold Key awards for fine dining, comprising two of the three nominations in the category! In November 2014, Schoos won the Gold Key Award for Best Casual Restaurant Design for *Puesto* in San Diego. Schoos is also an accomplished artist with many of his large-format paintings on display in public spaces around the world.

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For more information on Schoos products and designs, to acquire high resolution photos, or to interview Thomas Schoos, please contact the Schoos PR department by email at pr@schoos.com, or call Matthew Hutchison at 323-822-2800. Information is also available on the Schoos Design website at www.schoos.com.