

Special: IDEAS Conference Report

# FoodManagement

Ideas for Onsite Foodservice

December 2008

## Sandwiches *That* Sizzle



12 Hot Sandwich  
Recipes for 2009 **42**

Great Garden Parties  
at the National Gallery **28**

How Big is B&I? **10**



# A Whole “Lot” of Cookin’ Goin’ On

*USC marks time until its new Campus Center is finished with an awesome “temporary” dining venue.*

**T**hey unpaved the parking lot and put up paradise.

Apologies to Joni Mitchell, but that is a fine analogy for the University of Southern California’s new “temporary” dining venue, the Lot Marketplace.

Located on a former parking lot near Grace Ford Salvatori Hall, the 20,000-sq.ft. Lot is designed to fill the campus’s dining needs until the new Ronald Tutor Campus Center is finished in 2010. Then, it’s supposed to go away.

Well, maybe, says Trojan Hospitality Services Director Scott Shuttleworth. “We may well decide to keep it even after the Campus Center opens,” he offers. “There may be plenty of business for both to thrive.”

Certainly, the Lot is thriving right now, and little wonder. With high-end concepts like Wolfgang Puck Express, Baja Fresh, Submarina, ZAO Noodle Bar and Red Mango, national chain outlets Starbucks and



Carl’s Jr., plus an upscale c-store and the temporarily relocated Traditions pub (a campus institution), the place is a foodie funhouse that has drawn crowds of customers since its August opening.

Welcome to life at USC, which enjoys a public school sized student body (current enrollment: 33,500) with private-school sized disposable incomes. That means plenty of deep-pocketed customers for campus services.

It also means sky high expecta-

tions. Hence the absence of anything slapdash about the Lot, temporary or not.

“Our students would never stand for substandard facilities, even on a short-term basis,” Shuttleworth says. “Two years may seem like a relatively short time to those of us who work on campus, but to four-year undergraduate students, that’s half the time they’re here. And who wants to spend half their college years eating in a tent, especially with the tuition their parents are paying?”



## USC

### Fast Facts

- Name:** The Lot
- Size:** 20,000 sq.ft.
- Seating:** 350 indoor/140 patio
- Serving Hours:** 7 am - 10 pm (weekdays); 9 am - 5 pm (weekends)  
(Note: individual station hours vary)
- Amenities:** Eight serving stations plus a c-store, 6 50” flat screen TVs, complimentary wireless internet, four ATMs, Trojan Fresh Market farmers market every Thursday afternoon





**BIG TENT PARTY.** USC's "temporary" The Lot Marketplace is located in a sturdy tent-like structure that meets Southern California's earthquake-ready building codes and students' high expectations.

Despite the exterior shape, the Lot is no tent, if only because building codes in earthquake-threatened Southern California forbid flimsy structures. Rather, the "temporary" facility has a reinforced foundation, comprehensive plumbing and electrical systems and a shell made by a company (Sprung Instant Structures) that also made semi-permanent facilities in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Inside the structure and its distinctive 39-ft. dome, food stations line the perimeter of the elliptically shaped building, surrounding a central seating area that accommodates 350 diners (another 140

seats are available on the outside patio that rings the structure). Indoor diners can watch news and USC sporting events on six 50-inch flat-panel TV screens, or go online thanks to the complimentary wireless internet access available through the building and its patios.

Complementing the everyday fare is a weekly farmers market hosted by Trojan Hospitality Services. Called the Trojan Fresh Market, it brings growers and local producers from around the region to the McCarthy Quad next to the Lot, giving students a convenient way to purchase fresh, locally grown produce as well as specialty

## Building Boom

**USC Dining** has a dozen projects going on, involving some 30 concepts, Hospitality Services Director Scott Shuttleworth told FM in October. They include a food court in the new Ronald Tutor Campus Center, scheduled to open in 2010.

Meanwhile, at the university-operated Radisson Hotel at USC, his department just opened a full-service restaurant called McKay's, named for the school's legendary football coach. Another eatery, a sushi concept, is expected to open at the Radisson-USC in January.

Down the Figaro Street corridor and close to USC's basketball arena, the Galen Center, a new sports themed pub called Gastro Pub is opening to take advantage of the sports crowds. "We saw all these fans spending money coming and going from events and we wanted to get some of it," Shuttleworth says. (USC Dining does not operate the Galen Center's concessions, which is contracted to Aramark). The nearby Radisson, with its McKay's restaurant, is also well positioned to intercept Galen Center traffic.

On the campus, USC Dining opened the Shop Café in the School of Architecture building, while the School of Cinema will see a branded coffee bar early in 2009.