

In Good Taste

Discover who put the grand in La Grande Orange and the modern in Modern Steak



Principal at **Hayes Architecture/Interiors**, Cathy Hayes is the go-to architectural designer for top Valley restaurateurs such as Lenny Rosenberg (**Delux Burger**, **Revo Burrito**), LGO Hospitality (**La Grande Orange Grocery**, **Chelsea's Kitchen**) and Sam Fox (**Modern Steak**). Recently, she sat down to dish about her favorite projects, as well as preview her next showstopper, a downtown eatery inspired by some of the United States' oldest restaurants.

You made your mark crafting hotel interiors—what was your first standalone restaurant?

La Grande Orange, followed by Chelsea's Kitchen and DeLux Burger pretty much simultaneously. At Chelsea's we had to push the city to move the building closer to the canal. I wanted to emphasize one of the few water features we have in this town, and also capture the beautiful sunsets over the canal. DeLux was a nod to the spaces I grew up with in Chicago, with a long, linear bar on one side and as many people as possible stuffed into the other side.

What was the inspiration for that gorgeous white-steel-wrapped patio at Modern Steak?

That was a solution to a very problematic site—facing south (into the sun) and overlooking a parking lot. After designing the shade structure, I actually took pictures of sun patterns dappling through my neighbor's tree, and fed it into a computer program to create a variety of organic patterns.

And the infamous pink ladies room?

We wanted to create a real powder room where women could sit and chat in style, so we added a sofa and chairs and made it very spacious—the stalls even have a place for your purse.

So what's next?

Aside from another project for Lenny Rosenberg, I'm focusing on Chop House, Sam Fox's new restaurant at CityScape in Downtown Phoenix. I'll be visiting several of the oldest restaurants in Boston and New York, and I'm excited to take those inspirations and turn it into something new.