

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2011

FOOD ARTS

AT THE RESTAURANT AND HOTEL FOREFRONT

KITCHEN SOLUTIONS

TOP DESIGNERS SHOWCASE
NEWEST HITS

Hospitality Champs of 2010
Bespoke Cocktails
High-Tech Wine Service

EDWYN SALMON
FISH MERCHANT
BILLINGSGATE
LONDON

EAST DEVON SHELLFISH
BUDLEIGH SALTERN
DEVON

EAST DEVON
BUDLEIGH
DEVON

CHIC *Sleek* Practical

EQUIPMENT FIVE TOP KITCHEN DESIGNERS

ZERO IN ON THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES OF
THEIR LATEST PROJECTS. MERRILL

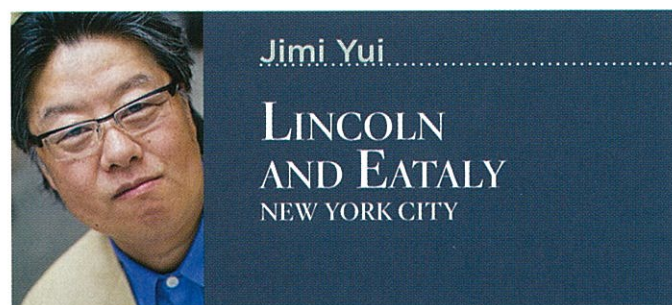
SHINDLER LOOKS BEYOND THE BLUEPRINTS. ►



The state of restaurant kitchen design is an almost mirror-perfect reflection of the state of the American economy. On the one hand, high end kitchens have, if it's possible, become even more high end. Just consider the kitchen **Jonathan Benno** commands at **Lincoln** at Lincoln Center in New York City—a kitchen of such modernistic design that it appears to float in space. Which, as kitchen designer **Jimi Yui** explains, it essentially does.

At the other end of modern kitchen design, chefs are cutting corners everywhere they can. Where they'd take over an existing kitchen and gut it, they now set themselves and their staff to the task of cleaning, scrubbing, and reconditioning equipment from another era. Savvy kitchen designers are busily scouring eBay for used equipment—kitchen designer **Mark Stech-Novak** explains how chef **Michael Tusk** of **Quince and Cotto** in San Francisco found a used Bonnet cooking suite—an entire cooking suite, with a rotisserie!—on eBay. It had been bought new for L'Orangerie in West Hollywood. And when L'Orangerie closed, the owners offered it for sale online. “They could never have afforded it new,” says Stech-Novak. “The shipping cost plenty. So did the installation. But there was still a huge savings. The most popular eBay items for restaurants may be Carpigiani gelato makers. They appear online all the time. People buy them for their restaurants, and then can't figure them out. And you can get them for a song.”

Which is why we've opted to look at the creation of a wide range of restaurant kitchens—from multimillion dollar stages that turn cooking into performance art, kitchens elegant enough to be in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, to kitchens created on the fly, with cult followings so devoted that reservations are the near side of impossible. As ever, it's the chef who matters. But a nice Molteni suite never hurt.



When asked what the cost of the kitchen was at **The Patina Group's Lincoln**, a representative of the center would only say that the remodel of the entire Lincoln Center complex is costing \$1.2 billion. According to the *New York Times*, the cost of the restaurant is \$20 million. It wasn't until I asked chef/restauranteur **Joachim Splichal** that I got a more reasonable response: He says the cost of the kitchen was about \$1.2 million.

But then, for that \$1.2 million, kitchen designer Yui created not just a kitchen—but a dramatic example of culinary design—a kitchen that seems to hover in air. It was, as he explains, the only kitchen that would work inside a restaurant



surrounded by glass. And it almost didn't happen at all:

“We started the project nearly three years ago. At the time, Lincoln Center Development Project was speaking to several operators from a whole slew of companies. Patina was selected, since they already operated restaurants there. Then, the restaurant was going to be a spin-off of Splichal's **Patina** in Los Angeles. We went through many iterations of the project. At one point, there was going to be a single kitchen in the basement—and no kitchen of any sort upstairs. No visible kitchen at all. We knew that Patina was going to need a finishing kitchen upstairs. We insisted on that. And because it's a glass pavilion, it made sense that the kitchen be a floating island within this shell.

“Joachim was happy to have an open kitchen—to see that the food being cooked tells a wonderful story. We talked about the cuisine being based on Patina, which has a kitchen open to diners at the chef's table. The geometry was such that we needed to create something rectilinear. We wanted to create a standing sculpture that floated. It doesn't touch anything but the floor. In a perfect world, we wouldn't even have a hood. And we built it so the hood isn't attached to the ceiling. It appears to be suspended in space. It's held in place by metal straps. And in many ways, it doesn't touch the ceiling. The ducts go down, not up. If they went up, they'd go through the lawn [roof]. ➤

"The notion was that the kitchen would be organized as a brigade kitchen with islands that represented the various stations—the *saucier*, the *garde-manger*, the *pâtissier*, the *poissonnier*, the *entremetier*—all the classic cooking stations. It's organized visually so you can see everything that's going on, like the Patina kitchen. And then, suddenly, the announcement was made not to do that kind of kitchen—but a Benno kitchen. We were in the latter half of the project schedule by then. So, we regrouped. Everyone was thrilled to death by this new concept. There was a lot of excitement. But we needed to understand what was now needed.

"We realized that as an Italian trattoria, we had to halt and rethink things. We started thinking in a pasta-centric way. We had no tools to do pasta. And so, we reorganized to insert a pasta station. It wasn't that difficult. We had to simply shift the uses around—it took up a protein station. Fish and meat became one station instead of two. Just reassigning and tweaking. But the way the rectangle of the kitchen fit—that didn't change. But we *did* have to change the utilities within the infrastructure, which was not easy.

"In truth, the kitchen is very traditional. Any European cook would understand it immediately. I'm not sure I can say this is a departure as kitchens go. There's always the need to be cognizant of green issues and try to be as energy-saving as possible. Lincoln Center didn't legislate, interfere, or try to control the kitchen. But Jonathan wanted his designer to be energy-conscious. So we used a parallel refrigeration system. Parallel systems consume a lot less energy than traditional refrigeration systems. And our exhaust systems have intelligence in them to change the volume of air circulated, so the impact is minimal.

"My favorite piece of equipment is the Emiliomiti pasta machine," noting that it costs \$3,500. "It's the best pasta equipment



Lincoln. Photo by Joseph Scafuro.

Equipment—Lincoln

Combi oven **Rational**
 Convection oven **Moffat**
 Cryovac **Koch**
 Flattop **Jade**
 Freezer **True**
 Fryer **Jade**
 Ice cream maker **Carpigiani**
 Pasta machine **Emiliomiti**
 Refrigeration **GEA FES/Bohn**
 Refrigerator **True**
 Six-burner range **Jade**
 Slicer **Berkel**
 Walk-in **American Panel**

available. It's the one **Michael White** uses, a darling of the Italian chef community. It just makes fabulous pasta. Very Italian.

"And I always use combi ovens, since they're incredibly versatile and very energy-efficient. I like the Rational and the Blodgett. And I like that we created an iconic kitchen for an iconic chef—a jewel box of a kitchen for Jonathan to cook in."

At the same time that he was working at the high end of Italian cookery at Lincoln, Yui was creating the kitchens—the many kitchens—for **Oscar Farinetti**, **Mario Batali**, **Joe Bastianich**, and **Lidia Matticchio Bastianich's** mega-Italian market, **Eataly**—a duality of projects that could have left him with a case of aesthetic whiplash, except that he was having so much fun doing both.

"At the other end of the spectrum, Oscar, Mario, Joe, and Lidia took over a whole block of New York City, 50,000 square feet, and created a market that's chaos mixed with food. It's the flip side of the Italian restaurant spectrum, totally the other side of the universe from Lincoln," Yui says.

"Eataly is a totally innovative business, a grocery store mixed

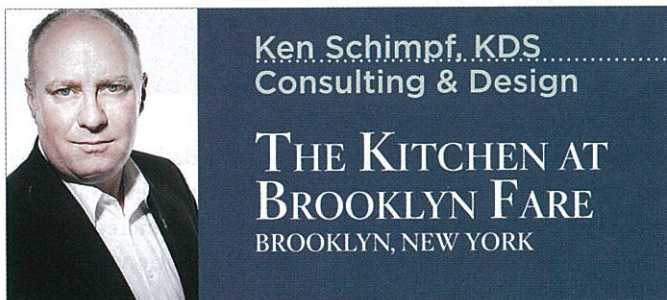
Equipment—Eataly

Braising pan **Vulcan**
Combi oven **Electrolux**
Cook-and-hold cabinets **Alto-Shaam**
Cryovac **Koch**
Double convection steamer **Vulcan**
Flattop **Electrolux**
Freezer **True**
Fryer **Electrolux**
Pasta cooker **Electrolux**
Refrigeration **GEA FES**
Slicer **Berkel**

with full-blown restaurants, each existing on its own, but under one roof. And we had a massive space to work with.

"But as it turns out, when you mix all these elements together, you run out of customer space quickly. You get stopped at the front door like a club, with a line waiting on the sidewalk to get into a grocery store.

"There are five different restaurants, each with its own individual kitchen. There's **La Piazza**, **Il Pesce**, **Le Verduce**, **La Pizza & Pasta**, and a cafe—all of which sit on top of a downstairs production kitchen. This is anything but precious in its design. The excitement and the chaos are amazing. We finished Eataly and Lincoln at the same time. We had the virtue of seeing the contrast. Such different objects in space. Such different experiences."



There are just 18 seats at **The Kitchen at Brooklyn Fare**. Which is eight more than there used to be before kitchen designer **Ken Schimpf** of **KDS Consulting & Design** was called in to expand chef **César Ramirez**'s Michelin-starred outpost on Schermerhorn Street in Brooklyn. Going through his notes, Schimpf found that the kitchen/dining room (they're one and the same) cost about \$250,000 to remodel. As he points out—"not a big number compared to other restaurants—but as cost per seat, pretty expensive.

"The Kitchen was already an existing business when I was called in. It had been cobbled together—it was functioning, but it wasn't very attractive, and wasn't what the chef wanted.

"I was brought in last April and told they wanted to main-

tain the concept, increase the seating from 10 to 18, which is what their business plan was, change out the cooking battery, except for the combi and the tilt skillet, to a Molteni range, and the place needed to look like a jewel box. Which is not what it looked like when I walked in.

"I was told that they needed to spend what they needed to spend, but not a Lear. It's a \$135 prix-fixe tasting menu. He does one seating, or one seating with a partial turn, and it doesn't include wine. So, that's a lot of money to spend. But they were getting amazing reviews. They needed to look better.

"For the Molteni, it was a wall suite, so the depth was not so dissimilar from that of a normal kitchen—it's a small suite for a small space. It wasn't that hard to bring in—they have double doors. There was an existing hood that was not particularly attractive, and the rear wall was stainless, like from a lower end kitchen. It had a large walk-in with a Galvalume exterior that was one of the walls of the kitchen. And we needed to both camouflage the rather pedestrian tilt skillet and reclaim that footprint as a work surface during service.

"I did that by fabricating a stainless-steel drop-on counter with a stepped-up area in the back to conceal the large unattractive hinging of the skillet's cover. During service this is the dessert station.

"Then, we had to reduce the size of the walk-in because the chefs didn't need that much room, which allowed us to increase the space to 18. We clad the outside of the Galvalume walk-in with stainless steel and trimmed it with two-inch mirror polish framing. We carried that across the face of the hood and the bare wall behind the equipment. I think it came out really beautiful.

"In terms of energy, Molteni is going to consume what Molteni consumes. We didn't really have the opportunity to go green. For the refrigeration I added two small compressors. The dish machine was existing. I try to use a heat reclaim system on my remote refrigeration. That way, the compressors tend to work with fewer repair issues.

"But mostly, I did what the chef wanted. I don't think the idea is for me to impose my artistry on a chef. I work for the chef, he doesn't work for me. And can I get a reservation? Well, if I can't, it's because I didn't do my job right." ➤

Equipment—The Kitchen at Brooklyn Fare

Combi oven **Hobart**
Espresso machine **La Cimbali**
Freezer **Traulsen**
Ice cream machine **Carpigiani**
Range **Molteni**
Refrigeration **Perlick**
Salamander **Molteni**
Tilt skillet **Groen**
Walk-in **Bally**



Executive Chef Martin Heierling, Super Potato, Creative Kitchen Planners, Duray/J.F. Duncan

SENSI
LAS VEGAS

There are four kitchens at **Sensi** in the **Bellagio**, each with numerous sub-stations. And every dish created in those kitchens passes through the “community table” overseen by the expeditor. This would be simple enough if the dishes arrived in a finished form. But in numerous cases, they arrive in bits and pieces—a culinary jigsaw puzzle that has to be assembled in a matter of seconds by the team of finishers who hover around the table—finishers who would have nothing to do if the expeditor had not ordered the various ingredients from different parts of the kitchen, which is a sprawling glass maze that’s more a kinetic sculpture than a space in which food is prepared.

When a dish is ordered, the expeditor divides it into its requisite parts, and, working with the chef de cuisine, puts a delivery time on each ingredient and places the order from each station. He then coordinates the arrival of each ingredient. From beginning to end. All night long. He’s like an air traffic controller who monitors every flight in and out of a busy airport. It’s something to behold. And it’s something you can’t help but behold. For the kitchen at **Sensi** is a massive glass box in the center of the restaurant, where every table has a front row seat. And where several tables are actually within the glass box itself.

Equipment—Sensi

Bread & pizza ovens **Wood Stone**
Charbroiler **Bakers Pride**
Convection steamer **Alto-Shaam**
Fryers **Molteni, Cecilware**
Induction units **Magnawave, Sunpentown**
Live seawater tanks **Sea Water Visions**
Low temp cooking **Polyscience**
Pasta & ravioli machines **Moschetti**
Pastry ovens **Eurofours**
Plancha **Molteni**
Refrigeration **Traulsen**
Salamanders **Equipex Precision**
Slicer **Berkel**
Sorbet machine **Taylor**
Stoves, pasta cookers, wok station & ovens **Molteni**
Tabletop refrigeration **Silver King**
Tandoor ovens **Doughpro**
Vacuum machine **Berkel**



“It was definitely a learning curve for the first few days,” says executive chef **Martin Heierling**. “The first few days we weren’t there. We debriefed for hours at the end of each meal service. And we figured it out. It’s working. It’s working almost perfectly.” And in part, it works because Heierling designed the \$2 to \$3 million kitchen in tandem with **Super Potato** of Japan, **Creative Kitchen Planners** of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and **Duray/J.F. Duncan** of Downey, California. This is very much a chef’s kitchen, designed by a chef—but without that expeditor, it’s nothing.

“The question,” says Heierling, “is where the kitchen begins and ends. The interior design and the kitchen design are one and the same. There’s so much overlap with a project like this.



Sensi. Photos by Bill Milne.

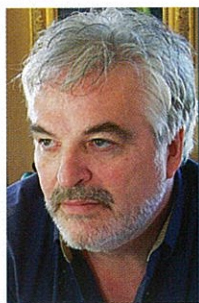
“The original concept started with **Mezza9** at the **Grand Hyatt Singapore**. They have nine kitchen stations. But their concept is different. Their food is all served family-style, not coordinated among four kitchens like us. It was a crazy idea. It still *is* a crazy idea. Nobody else does it this way. You sit in the restaurant, and you watch the show, and you understand why. It’s a very labor-intensive way to run a kitchen.

“There were a lot of challenges we went through. We changed the layout dozens of times until we found the one that worked. We’re not talking about stations—we’re talking about four different kitchens all working together. It’s hard to visualize that, even when you’re in the business.

“The innovation was the wireless speaker system so every-

one could communicate with each other. Everyone holds their place, they talk without even looking. It’s the ultimate example of teamwork. You must do what you must do, what you’re asked to do, without questioning your fellow chef. It has to be done immediately. No kitchen works like this. It’s all about trust. You must believe that everyone knows what to do.

“Of all the equipment in Sensi, I’d say the steamer is the one I could never live without. And I couldn’t live without the induction unit built into the countertop either. And the kitchen fridges that are built into the countertop and have no drawers to open, they’re on the top of the counter. There’s no time to open the drawers. It’s all top-of-the-line, all Molteni. It’s a show every night. People are so busy watching, they forget to eat their food.” ➤



Mark Stech-Novak.....
Restaurant Consultation
& Design

QUINCE AND
COTOGNA
SAN FRANCISCO

Mark Stech-Novak loves a challenge. And he's found there are few challenges more demanding than trying to do a kitchen that's both functional and green: "All that great ecological/let's-move-the-ball-forward type of thinking has been so difficult to implement because green is the first thing to get cut. All of that costs money. And these days, when it's not a bare bones essential minimum, it doesn't happen."

That said, he was thrilled to land a job doing "a two-level kitchen in Ann Arbor, Michigan, for the famed **Zingerman's**. We're doing UV hoods with a rooftop heat recover unit with Halton to use the exhaust air heat to preheat water for the HVAC system. We're also looking to use gray water recovery for plantings. It was exciting, since they had the budget—and the bean counters didn't cut it out."

He also found ways of saving money when he was asked back in 2006 to help chef/restaurateurs Michael and **Lindsay Tusk** remodel their San Francisco restaurant Quince. As Stech-

Novak says, "Little did I know that the actual project would open at the end of 2009 in a completely different location, with the addition of a cafe next door.

"The original Quince was a tiny space, booked every night. When Michael served me a 14 course tasting menu, it was apparent that the site was not capable of supporting Michael's extraordinary talents. We tried more than a dozen permutations before it became clear that the space and the landlord had little capacity for such a sea change of design.

"The Tusks found their current Jackson Square home in a defunct concept that had good bones. Hoping to keep the costs in line, we looked at keeping the hoods, getting the multiple level changes to work, and utilizing as much of the infrastructure as possible.

"The design was solid, getting better with each iteration right up to the day Michael found that there was a Bonnet range suite and rotisserie for sale on eBay. It was in great shape, albeit a shape totally different from that we had planned for. The price was too good to pass up, and the windowed kitchen on Pacific Avenue cried out for something as lovely and elegant as a dazzling blue Bonnet.

"As a kitchen designer, I am often creating space for chefs starting out starry-eyed on their first restaurant. With Michael, the concept of where he wanted to go with this new site was crystallized in his mind: three-star quality and service and no compromise. His plans constantly ran headlong into budget constraints, but in the end, compromises were found and made



Cotogna. Photo by Eric Wolfinger.



Quince. Photo by Marion Bremner.



Cotogna. Photo by Eric Wolfinger.

Equipment—Quince and Cotogna

Quince:

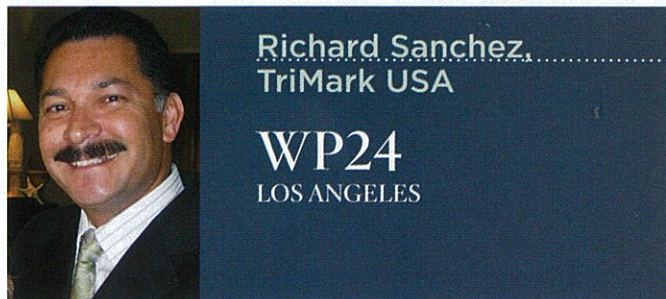
Bake oven **Doyon**
 Bar **Perlick**
 Combi oven **Rational**
 Cooking suite 1 **Bonnet**
 Cooking suite 2 **Electrolux**
 Exhaust canopies **Streivor Air Systems**
 Fabrication **Seaport Stainless**
 Holding cabinet **Winston Industries**
 Rotisserie **Bonnet**
 Salamander **Equipex (Sodir)**
 Wine cellar **Cellar Masters**

Cotogna:

Bar **Perlick**
 Cooking line **Jade Titan**
 Espresso machine **Synesso**
 Exhaust canopies **Streivor Air Systems**
 Fabrication **Seaport Stainless**
 Grill & rotisserie **Universo SRL**
 Pasta cooker **Rosito Bisani**
 Pizza oven **MAM**
 Slicer **Berkel**

acceptable. The pastry oven was not from France but from Canada. Other finds are from eBay; the times dictated such measures.

"And concerning the adjacent Cotogna, it's no afterthought. It's a well-planned, beautifully executed design collaboration between my associate Alec Bauer and Michael Tusk. The two restaurants share large parts of the kitchen, which is another way of saving money. With Quince cranking on all cylinders, the beautiful Italian oven and grill at Cotogna could be brought in and fired up. In this case, there was no compromise." The final cost of doing the kitchen for the two restaurants is about \$600,000.



Richard Sanchez.....
 TriMark USA

WP24
 LOS ANGELES

Like Lincoln in New York City, **WP24** in **The Ritz-Carlton Los Angeles** didn't begin as **WP24**. (The name translates as **Wolfgang Puck 24th floor**.) And like Lincoln, the arrival mid-project of a gold standard chef changed everything—and brought the cost of doing one restaurant kitchen on top of another restaurant kitchen to an estimated \$750,000. As kitchen designer **Richard Sanchez** of **TriMark USA** explains, he changed things as much as things could be changed without knocking down the hotel and starting all over again.

"Originally, the idea was that it would be a Ritz-Carlton-style restaurant kitchen. But owner **AEG** decided it should be a showplace and went looking for celebrity chefs who would add a unique appeal. We had built a Ritz-Carlton kitchen during the initial construction, using all the Ritz-Carlton kitchen criteria. And then we had to stop and rethink it when **AEG** came to an agreement with **Puck**. We had a basic kitchen in place. What was missing was the final equipment selections. So, we had half of one kitchen, which we had to turn into another kitchen.

"Doing a Chinese restaurant took a lot of improvising, trying to work within the mechanical restraints that the space was set up for. We had a restaurant that had a certain amount of gas BTUs and electric all engineered into the space, based on our experience of building Ritz-Carlton restaurants. Essentially, engineering had dictated what could be done.

"Luckily, we had planned on putting in a cooking suite. We had the footprint for that suite. And we knew the Chinese restaurant components had to fit within that footprint. And we got lucky—because **Montague** makes a cooking suite that includes a wok range. And since the adjacent **JW Marriott** used **Montague** in their restaurants, it made sense from an engineering and maintenance point of view. **Montague** was on the approved



WP24. Photos by Karyn Millet.

Equipment-WP24

Convection oven **Montague**

Fryer **Pitco**

Griddle **Montague**

Mixers/slicers **Hobart**

Ranges **Montague**

Refrigeration **ColdZone**

Refrigerator/freezers **Traulsen**

Salamander **Montague**

Suite **Montague**

Wok **Montague**

list of manufacturers for the hotels and for Puck's **Fine Dining Group**. There was agreement, a convenient marriage.

"What we wound up with is an assembly of woks, a large wok range, and a Shanghai wok station, which is single-handed woks. The other critical piece as far as Wolfgang Puck goes is the Montague Legend Steakhouse Broiler, which they use in their other restaurant concepts. But ultimately, we came up with a really unique set-up for cooking in a hotel kitchen.

"And it wasn't always easy. And it's not just a restaurant, it also supports the 26th floor pool deck. We couldn't make it all fit—the exhaust had to be located where it was located because of the mechanical room above it. And above that is the pool. So, there were structural issues. And one of the more complex challenges is that Ritz-Carlton and Wolfgang Puck both have their operating criteria. We had to merge them together. Which was not always easy. Let's just say, battles had to be picked." ■