

Special Feature

Restaurant Forum

of Central Florida

GALVINDESIGNGROUP

Designing through sound, light & vision



Tom Galvin, FCSI
Kitchen Design Extraordinaire

By Jeannine Gage



Roy's brings Euro-Asian upscale dining to Central Florida ▲

So, you are a professional chef You are overseeing one of the hottest new dining rooms in town. You are expecting at least 200 hungry diners tonight who expect all the hoopla and glory, and of course, they want it in a timely and efficient manner.

The orders start coming in. No problem at first. Then, the saucier needs the salamander but his eyebrows are singed while passing too close to the grill. The salad maker needs something from the walk-in but can't get it open because the dishwasher has decided this is a good place to stack plates. You are in dire need of a sauté pan but can't get to it without getting intimate with your sous chef. It's a disaster. Who you gonna call? Tom Galvin.

Galvin is a professional kitchen designer and consultant. He will turn your kitchen into a lean, mean, cooking machine. Ticket times shrink. Employee fatigue disappears. Guests are happy. How does he do it? To put it simply, he puts everything in the right place. To

delve a little deeper, he takes into consideration just about every factor that will affect a restaurant's success and figures out exactly how it fits into the master plan.

"Tom is a superb designer," says Johnny Rivers, Executive Chef/Owner of several Central Florida restaurants. "He takes a Ford and turns it into a Mercedes." Manny Garcia, chairman of the board of Culinary Concepts, Inc. agrees. "Tom Galvin is a very talented and creative kitchen designer, Garcia said. "He understands the culinary perspectives of an operator's viewpoint. A hands-on designer, Tom learns our methods of operation and easily adapts to our menu philosophy. He's great to work with and we look forward to working with him in the future on our upcoming projects."

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Galvin, who after spending 20 years working for Darden Restaurants and Hard Rock Café Int'l., established his own company, Galvin Design Group, has shown hundreds of restaurateurs around the world how to make the most of their space, equipment and everything.

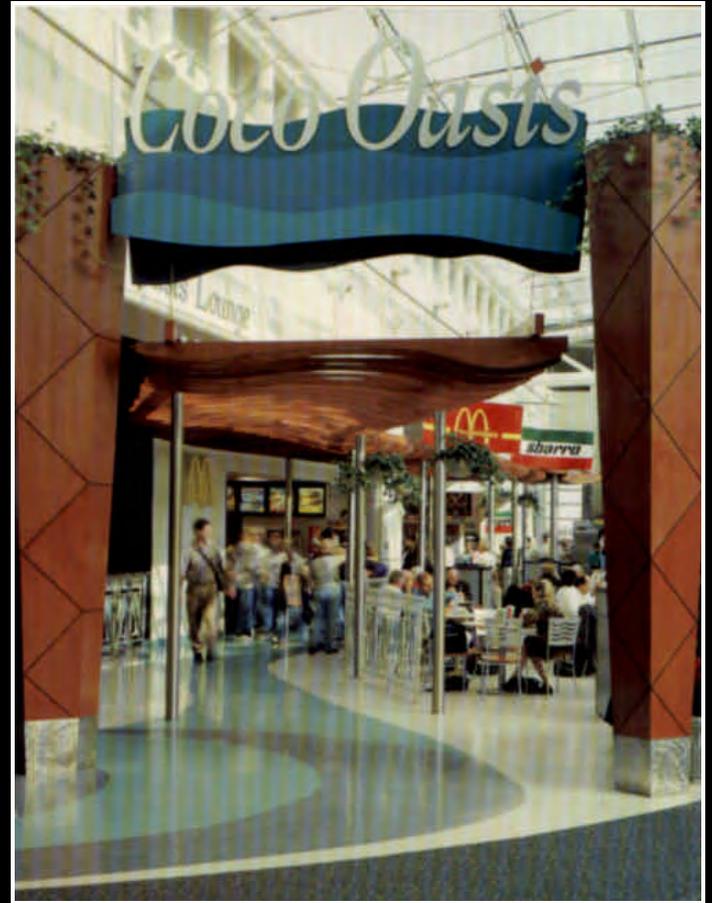
Restaurants from Red Lobster and the Olive Garden to NBA City and Johnny Rivers' Smokehouse have benefited from Galvin's expertise."

Design entails a lot of things," Galvin says. "A good designer can control how fast a customer walks into the space, what they're going to order, the amount of money they're going to spend and the length of time they're going to stay."

Lighting, the amount of cushioning in a chair, the color of the walls, all these things, so often overlooked, will affect a restaurant's success, according to Galvin. While his company sticks to kitchen design, Galvin has a large network of architects, interior designers, artists, lighting, sound experts and others that he brings into the mix. A conceptual team or think tank, so to speak. And how important is this to someone opening a new restaurant? "You learn from your mistakes," Rivers said. "In the end, it's worth the money to do things right."

Tyrone Nabbie, president and managing partner at Levy Restaurants, said Galvin's ability to work with the complete team is his greatest asset. "He has this incredible ability to bring talented people together who work as a tightknit team," Nabbie said. "Sometimes this business is all about juggling relationships and Tom is the best."

Rivers said that professional kitchen designers have been around for a long time in the huge chain companies, but now even first-time and small restaurant



▲ *Coco Oasis rings "Quick Service" to a new level*



◀ *Chef Johnny Rivers branches out with his culinary expertise to the Orlando International Airport*



▲ *The world's largest Hard Rock Café/Concert Hall at Universal, Orlando. The cuisine at the Café, Concert Hall and Banquet Facility is prepared out of one prep/production kitchen.*



NBA City at Universal, Orlando. This themed restaurant was designed with an emphasis on food preparation — One of the first of its kind.

WE
MANAGE
THE
BUDGET
BY
MANAGING
THE
DETAILS

The kitchen at Pebbles in Winter Park, Florida was re-designed with the flexibility to handle the restaurant's substantial increase in business.



owners can benefit from the services Galvin provides. "Tom can show anyone how to save money."

Galvin, who studied architecture with an emphasis on restaurant and kitchen engineering and design at Kent State University, says the first part of the design stage is a careful analysis of the menu. He determines what equipment is needed to create each item and any accompaniments. Then, he can determine not only how often a particular piece of equipment will be used, but by whom and when.

"Tom has cooking experience, which helps," said Tony Pace, Chef and Owner of Culinary Concepts. He has worked with Galvin to design the Grand Bohemian Hotel, opening soon in Downtown Orlando. "He understands the importance of analyzing the menu and organizing the kitchen around it. I have seen so many people who don't do that and end up being totally lost."

But Galvin's experience is not just based in cooking. "Tom's expertise runs the gamut from conceptual to technical," Nabbie said. "He is meticulous and confident in his work."

Pebbles restaurant in Winter Park features new Key West decor.





Sound

Light

Vision

▲ Zazarac, A new upscale "New Orleans-Creole style" restaurant

The next step is a conceptual layout. "We still do ours by hand," Galvin said. "Everyone else uses computers, but I find my clients can better relate to a quarter-inch scale plan. I can change things around, I can sketch in front of them."

John Cooper, president of Zazarac, a "Southern Louisiana-style restaurant" in partnership with Outback Steakhouse, said he appreciated Galvin's hands-on work. "We made a lot of changes, but Tom always turned them around very quickly," Cooper said. "He is very responsive."

Being responsive, however, does not mean being a pushover. "Sometimes it takes a while for a client to trust me, especially one that has never used a designer before," Galvin said. "But when they realize I know what I'm doing, we work together very well." Cooper agrees. "Tom holds the line on things he feels strongly about," he said. "But, he's also very cooperative."

Although the kitchen is specifically designed to match the requirements of the menu, Galvin realizes the same menu may not be in use in six months. Therefore, his kitchen designs are flexible. Pieces of

equipment, many that have several uses, can be easily moved. The placement of additional water, gas and electrical outlets has been well thought out. "The most challenging part of my job is working with these changing menus," Galvin said. "You have to maximize the potential of every single item in the kitchen."

After the client signs off on the conceptual layout, the

design goes to CAD (computer automated drafting).

"We work with eight production houses around the country" Galvin said. "I carefully pick one to match the client's personality so they will understand each other."

Galvin's job doesn't end there. He stays with the process until the last piece of equipment has been perfectly placed. So the saucier can get to the salamander, the salad maker can open the walk-in and your relationship with the sous chef will remain strictly platonic. "I want to design kitchens that make everyone happy," Galvin said. "The employees, the guests and the owners. That's what I love about my job."

For more information, call Galvin Design Group at 407-654-8766 or visit their website at www.galvindesigngroup.com.

