

Category: 8 – Best Building Project – General Contractor (Under \$10 Million)

Contractor: Haselden Construction

Project Name: Matsuhisa - Denver

Conceived by Chef Nobu Matsuhisa, Matsuhisa Denver is an upscale Japanese restaurant on the street level of Steele Creek, a luxury apartment building also constructed by Haselden, in the heart of Cherry Creek. The space includes a 3,000 SF commercial kitchen—the largest of all the Matsuhisa restaurants in Colorado—and 4,800 SF of public spaces housing a dining room, private dining room, liquor bar, sushi bar, Zen garden, and wine room. Additionally, the restaurant provides delivery services to the Steele Creek apartments located above the restaurant.

Positioned on the ground floor of a tenant-occupied apartment building, the restaurant's location provided significant challenges as we did not want construction to inconvenience the occupants or impose safety hazards. This meant keeping noise, odors, and vibrations associated with construction as minimal as possible, while also keeping all life safety systems up and running at full capacity. We accomplished these objectives in several different ways. The first was to work non-traditional construction hours. This allowed residents to enjoy quiet time into the morning when, on a typical construction site, work would be well under way. We also utilized alternative tools that offered the benefit of being less noisy; for example, instead of a jackhammer we used a core drilling machine. Safety measures included setting up containment—a temporary barrier on the façade of the restaurant—any time we worked on the exterior.

Creating this space—specifically the kitchen—over an existing slab presented its own obstacles. Due to the nature and the size of the kitchen, over 80 new penetrations to the existing slab (which housed live utilities such as electrical and fire alarm) were required. To accomplish this without damaging these utilities, we used ground penetrating radar (GPR) to locate and work around the underground pipes, cables, and wires. This process necessitated a high level of coordination with the MEP engineers and installation team, as well as the structural engineers to ensure accurate placement of the penetration and to avoid costly rework that would be necessitated should any incorrect penetrations occur.

As evidenced above, exemplary project management and team interaction was crucial to this project's success. Because of the short five-month duration of the project, subcontractor coordination took place on a daily basis. The use of high-end natural materials, a large number of craftspeople working simultaneously in a relatively small space, and an aggressive schedule combined to create an exceptional project that required a high level of collaboration between trades. Prior to beginning each significant portion of work, we held meetings attended by each project team member having a direct role in the outcome of that portion of work. The team members discussed all salient features of that scope of work, reviewing contract requirements, schedule, testing requirements, quality expectations, and any other items necessary to ensure the work was organized and conducted in a manner that ensured a successful outcome. An initial review was conducted shortly after construction started to establish that all commitments made in the pre-phase planning meeting were understood and implemented. Throughout construction, Haselden's project manager reviewed each subcontractors' operations on a daily basis. These inspections were designed to ensure that all the proper and necessary steps were taken to accomplish an expeditious close-out of each scope of work. We reviewed the status of as-built drawings, operations and maintenance data, and required submission of warranty documentation, all with an eye toward close-out. We documented, corrected, and kept a log of all quality deficiencies and their resolutions.

The restaurant's unique design features inventive uses of wood throughout the space which welcomes guests to this warm and inviting atmosphere. Extensive use of reclaimed teak on the walls and floor throughout the interior provides an elegant setting, and the Zen garden with a waterfall that flows from the ceiling is a calming design element.

All-natural finishes permeate the space from floor to ceiling. Reclaimed teak planks from Indonesia clad the walls and much of the floors, as well as veneer on the doors. Other areas of the floor feature Basalt tile. The windows are adorned with laser-cut screens that allow in light while still giving patrons privacy from passers-by.

The innovation in this project lies in the juxtaposition of these design elements. The bar area remains modern with TVs, but is still kept in line with the Zen feel because the TVs retract into

the ceiling, hiding them when not in use. The Japanese and Coloradoan design elements meld perfectly throughout the space; for instance, the Zen garden rock, while inspired by Japanese artist Masatoshi Izumi, was selected from a local supplier and quarried here in Colorado. Even the liquor bar takes industrial steel and combines it with teak wood, two highly contrasting materials that are blended together to create a truly cohesive look.

Other elements were also designed to acknowledge the Colorado locale. The back bar wall is clad in leathered Sandalwood sandstone quarried from the Western Slope. The sloped acoustic ceiling is reminiscent of the Rocky Mountains visible to the west.

Since the site is oriented on the corner of a busy intersection, it was important to focus the guest experience internally. This is accomplished by cloaking the windows in a custom designed wood screen system. The pattern is inspired by the traditional Japanese Asanoha, or hemp leaf, pattern. It is layered to create visual texture and becomes more open at the top, allowing for a glimpse of Colorado's bluebird sky during the day.

While the high-end details were challenging to install in the short time frame, the project team's attention to detail and quality is apparent throughout the space and the project was brought in on time.

With the safety of our clients and team members paramount, Haselden developed a rigorous and comprehensive safety policy that addressed safety on every level for this project. Before construction began, our superintendent worked in conjunction with the corporate safety department to build a site-specific safety policy crafted to capture the project's unique characteristics. Detailed safety training for all subcontractors and team members occurred regularly.

Before any team member arrived on site, they received at least 10 hours of safety and health training to prepare them for proper hazard recognition and reporting abatement techniques. When they arrived on site, both Haselden team members and our subcontractors then received site-specific safety training including emergency action plans and owner policies. Weekly and

monthly safety and health training meetings were conducted to address various topics and any concerns that arose. Ongoing training and certification for Haselden team members and subcontractors helped to promote the significance of a safety culture at the project. Additionally, newly-hired team members wore red hardhats so field managers could easily identify who to closely mentor.

ComplianceWISE Technologies was used at this site. This is a safety management system that generates detailed digital reports which allowed us to communicate accurate assessments of potential regulatory risks to the project team and home office within a secure environment. Corrective actions for all findings were tracked from discovery to completion to assure risks were fully mitigated and never ignored. The project team performed weekly inspections and corporate followed up with weekly audits of those inspections.

Haselden logged a total of 2,852.5 hours on this job with zero lost time hours and an OSHA recordable incident rate of zero.

Named one of the 12 Hottest New Restaurants by Zagat, Matsuhisa is living up to the hype. The team set out to create a space that continues to evolve the concept of the Matsuhisa culture for the newest location. In order to remain true to the Japanese culture, a thoughtful, unique, humble, and purposeful design was sought. Using the design team's travel experience in Japan, and the rhetoric of owner, they developed a clear concept.

A space emerged that is welcoming and inviting for guests. Utilizing deliberate textural contrast and carefully designed lightscapes, the ambiance for an exquisitely designed sushi restaurant that elevates Denver's culinary palate was born. A soothing, natural backdrop provides an elegant setting for the unique food presentation. Reclaimed Indonesian teak unifies the design as the floor, many walls, ceilings, bar, and millwork were all custom crafted from the same material. The sliding partition walls are also teak with resin panels that have a compelling story of their own: trimmings of prayer paper made by monks in the Himalayas is pressed into the resin. The paper is handmade from shrubs indigenous to the area.









