

A Retail Frame of Mind



EVERYBODY EATS HERE: Arcade Café has become an increasingly popular lunch spot for both onsite staff and those from nearby businesses in Santa Clara.

EPICUREAN GROUP

Upscale Eatery Serves Growing Corporate Complex

Arcade Café emphasizes scratch-cooked choices and local ingredients as much as possible.

Anthony Kresge is a familiar face in the Bay Area culinary scene, most recently as executive chef of Shadowbrook Restaurant, a locally prominent eatery in Capitola, Calif., on Monterey Bay in Santa Cruz County.

At Shadowbrook, Kresge overhauled the traditional menu with a series of newly created dishes influenced by his culinary training in Italy.

That same approach has now been brought to a corporate dining location in Santa Clara, where Kresge oversees the Arcade Café inside the fast-expanding Menlo Equities office campus. Arcade is the only onsite dining venue for the complex, which currently is made up of three multitenant buildings with a combined population of around 1,350.

Arcade Café is operated by Epicurean Group, a fast-growing foodservice man-

agement company that operates onsite dining at colleges and private schools as well as corporate sites. In 2015, it ranked No. 36 on *FM's* Top 50 Contract Management Companies listing with 2014 revenues of \$46 million.

The café is currently serving about 250 covers a day for lunch and 350 total each day, including evening catered events. That is expected to grow as the site population expands, says Epicurean Group CEO Mary Clark Bartlett.

"People have been moving in [to the building complex] later than they should, but in the meantime we are seeing people coming over from other nearby companies because they love the food," she says.

Bartlett estimates the site population at the complex could potentially reach 5,000 to 6,000 once everyone is moved in, but the lunch hour is already seeing a crush.

Possible solutions to ease that crush range from offering discounts to entice some diners to come earlier or later than the peak period, to a possible expansion of the café's current 8,200-square-foot footprint or adding satellite sites as the complex grows.

One thing not in dispute is the draw of Kresge's food, which ranges from everyday staples like a full salad bar, burgers and grab-and-go sandwiches to daily specials, including vegetarian options, based on what ingredients are available locally, something the café emphasizes as much as possible.

On a recent week, the specials menu included a Moroccan spiced grass-fed tri-tip sandwich with English cucumber-fall tomato relish and mango chutney spread; a noodle bowl with braised beef, microgreens, pickled vegetables, sprouts and savory broth; chili crusted

tofu with microgreens, pickled vegetables, sprouts and savory broth as a vegetarian option; and cannelloni with mushrooms, ricotta and melted fennel served with steamed summer kale (also vegetarian).

There are also occasional special event menus to further break up the routine. Recent examples include Chocolate Milkshake Day and, for Sept. 11, a Windows on the World Tribute menu featuring classics from the doomed eatery at the top of the World Trade Center (with all profits going to the World Trade Center Memorial Fund).

For customers, it's quite a deal for such quality, with a variety of price points from which to choose.

Diners order at the counter, and there is indoor and patio seating available. There is also an adjacent 730-square-foot media room for meetings the café caters.