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Enclave An in West L.A.

by Shelby Gleba,
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Lifescapes International

PHOTOS BY PATRICK TANG

The South Bay region of Los Angeles is so named because it contains the southernmost portion of the Santa Monica Bay, which forms the western boundary of the metro area.



Newly introduced to this region is The Enclave, a 2.5-acre site in a corporate campus between two towers with 500,000 square feet of newly renovated A-class office space. When Lifescapes International started to conceive of the landscape architecture for this project, they focused on giving tenants and guests an escape from the outdated concept of plain, mundane office environments and, at the same time, give local residents a sense of community.

The results are new, hip and fresh - a break from the expected. For example, chef-driven restaurants and local culture were all curated to drive creativity and innovation.

The Structures

To provide food and beverage retail and social offerings to the nearby office tenants, as well as the surrounding community, approximately 25,000 square feet of buildings were designed and constructed, which now house carefully selected chef-focused restaurants that offer an array of options from casual dining, coffee shop and bar alternatives as a draw.



Previous Page: Located between two A-Class office towers in Los Angeles's South Bay area, this 2.5-acre retail center known as The Enclave was built to offer food, beverage and socialization opportunities to the nearby office tenants, as well as the surrounding community. Branching out from the center's corridor, pathways lead to the restaurants that office workers and locals frequent. There is approximately 25,000 square feet of food and beverage retail and 25,000 square feet of collaborative outdoor social space with ample seating. The architecture for the buildings in The Enclave restaurant retail center was the work of 5+ Design. Landscape architecture firm Lifescapes International designed the landscape area for The Enclave, the exterior of the commercial buildings' entrances, the entry experience from the street to the lobbies and the walking paths from the existing parking area to the commercial buildings and the retail center. The focus of the project was to give tenants a modernized office retail experience and provide guests with a sense of community.

The architecture by 5+ Design encourages outdoor use. Since the pandemic was at the forefront of everyone's mind when designing the project, flexibility was critical. The landscape architecture had to complement the indoor/outdoor environment. In the food and beverage retail space, fresh air patios spill out of the restaurants. It was also essential to work functional and collaborative workspaces into the design of the retail area.

The architecture includes large, folding barn doors in the restaurants which allow dining areas to spill out to patios for indoor/outdoor experiences.

In the nearby office tower buildings, the main lobbies now have retractable walls with garden exposure. This provides fresh air and views of the newly added colorful gardens that appear to be spilling out from inside. Crassula ripple jade, Agave

americana 'Mediopicta Alba' (Century Plant), Kalanchoe Blossfeldiana (Tiger yellow), sedum coppertone, and White Striped Tasman Flax Lily provide the layered carpet for the towering olive tree in the center of the gardens.

At the Heart of the Center

There are many entrance points to the restaurant retail center. Guests entering the plaza are greeted by an array of native plant materials and majestic Medjool date palms and the outside walls are lined with colorful murals, but the courtyard is where the action takes place.

Twenty-five thousand square feet of outdoor collaborative work and social space with ample seating creates "destinations within destinations" for guests and nearby employees.

Two organic orchards and herb gardens are located alongside the office buildings,



offering seating among citrus trees and herb planters. Tenants can enjoy a fresh orange on their lunch break and take in the sweet-smelling fragrance of the fruit tree.

Multi-functional, flex spaces provide eclectic and fun areas for socialization, games and meetings. There is high speed Wi-Fi, charging stations, and sound throughout the retail center, which incentivizes people to spend more time outdoors.

The gathering spaces are designed for various sized groups, so you can have an intimate gathering of two or an assembly of a large group. For instance, sitting on a bed of decomposed granite is a “conference table,” a long, rectangular table under a custom-designed shade structure in the middle of the plaza that can host employee gatherings.

Tenants can take a break from work and just enjoy a game or two. Recreational activities include ping-pong, four-in-a-row, cornhole, and stack and tumble towers. The games are all custom made with the logo and colors of the property imprinted on them.

Robert Ruth, the president of the developer, The Ruth Group, emphasized, “The Enclave was a collaborative effort by a talented team selected for their ability to create a special place for the local community and office tenants. The goal was to offer multiple offerings and activities in an innovative indoor/outdoor environment.”

A Sense of Discovery

The design was purposeful in that it wasn’t long and linear, but rather invites exploration. Creative traffic flow allows for nooks and new enticements around

Top Far Left: One of the four entrance/exit points, the east side entrance from one of the commercial buildings, features a variety of native plants, Medjool date palms, and spherical bollards – a reoccurring design theme. Custom made fencing provides transparency so people can see into the center, as well as providing security.

Bottom Far Left: A colorful mural greets visitors at one of the four entrance points. A commitment to contemporary art was a key part of the design. The wall murals throughout the property are the work of Sarah Roberts & Kenyan Armitage. The planter in front of the mural was installed with green carpet natal plum, variegated flax lily, new gold lantana, and yeddo hawthorn.

Center: This café seating is an extension of one of the restaurants. The metal and wood custom shade structure was conceived by the site’s architect 5+ Design as an extension out from the building.

Top & Bottom Right: A brightly-colored, cylindrical water fountain (one of three fountains in the center) lines a patio seating area set upon earth-toned flagstone (top right). New Zealand flax (phormium) were installed in the larger cylinders.



Top: Designed for outdoor meetings, gatherings and parties, this conference table, which was custom made by Gaudenti & Sons, the project's general contractor, sits under a custom shade structure (also built by Gaudenti & Sons) on a bed of decomposed granite. The hardscape is patterned concrete, not pavers. In the foreground planters, the tall cacti are Euphorbia ingens "Candelabra Tree" with senecio serpens (blue chalksticks) as ground cover. The chandeliers/lanterns were provided by the owner.

Bottom: This planting area is adorned with a camphor tree, a water fountain that features repurposed musical instruments and concrete water basins clad with tile. The metal and wood shade structure was again designed by 5+ Design who supervised its construction.

Center: Two firepits were specified for the outdoor retail campus, each were situated on artificial turf (for durability) and outfitted with colorful Adirondack chairs. This firepit area also includes imaginative bean bag chairs called "outdoor round poufs."

every corner. Inspirational quotes carved into the pavement provide motivation and "Instagrammable moments" as you weave throughout the center.

The spaces are defined by different ground covers to make them feel intimate and separate. Rich flagstone in hues of earth tones provide a carpet to a dining patio, giving it an elevated flair. QVC pavers provide texture, concrete gives function to the pedestrian areas and decomposed granite provides softness in the game areas and under the conference table.

There is artificial turf (selected for durability) under the ping-pong table and specific seating areas. Even the bollards are fun and unique! Their large spherical shape mimics the circular motif around the property.

The various seating around the center has different perspectives, so some people can sit low in a reclining chair, while others sit at café tables with a higher vantage point. There are also two fire pits surrounded by colorful, eclectic rocking chairs, bean bags and Adirondack chairs, offering guests an opportunity to enjoy the outdoor experience even on the chillier Southern California evenings.

There was a commitment to contemporary art with engaging wall murals by artists Sarah Roberts & Kenyan Armitage. Also, multiple creative water features zig-zag throughout the property. One such fountain features repurposed materials (musical instruments) as art, another is made from vibrant, colorful cylinders in varying heights (with phormium/New Zealand Flax growing out of the larger cylinders), and



a third features bright yellow spheres (reminiscent of The Enclave logo's color).

An elephant wall mural welcomes guests from the parking lot, and an art installation reflecting the Southern California lifestyle is made of surfboards in an array of patterns and colors hanging on the wall near an entrance/exit point.

Sustainability was a top priority at The Enclave. The property features abundant parking (1,600 spaces with EV charging) and has a dedicated area for third-party food delivery/pick up drivers. There are 30 colorful, on-site bikes free to tenants for easy transportation in the area, as well as a waterless car wash. Dogs are also welcomed, and furry friends can romp in the many outdoor common areas.

The Enclave is a vibrant restaurant retail center which is the antithesis of the mundane work courtyard of yesteryear. The mix of dining

alternatives, diverse seating options, indoor/outdoor experience and creative workspace make it a wonderful blueprint for future developments. 🌿

TEAM LIST

Developer: The Ruth Group
Landscape Architect: Lifescapes International

DESIGN TEAM:

Project Management:

Mike Meyers, Senior Principal/Sr. Project Director
Fernando Ortiz, Project Manager

Design:

Alvaro Amador, Senior Principal/Landscape Architect

Planting Design:

Roger Voettiner, Executive Senior Principal/VP of Horticulture

Field Administration:

Patrick Derry, Horticulture/Field Specialist
Architect: 5+ Design

General Contractor: Gaudenti & Sons
Landscape Contractor: Gaudenti & Sons

Lighting: Oculus (initial consulting)

Fountain Contractor: Gaudenti & Sons

Irrigation Contractor: Russell Retan Group
Artwork: Sarah Roberts & Kenyan Armitage

Top: The second firepit has Adirondack rocking chairs. Next to this area is a water fountain with spherical water basins that reflect the The Enclave's bright yellow logo. The logo is exemplified on the extra large connect-4 (inset). Some of the basins are planted with *Abelia grandiflora* 'Kaleidoscope.' The cobble for the fountain is from Southwest Boulder.

Bottom: The two main office tower lobbies have retractable walls that let fresh air in and spill out to gardens that feature an olive tree surrounded by *Crassula ripple jade*, *Agave americana* 'Mediopicta Alba' (Century Plant), *Kalanchoe Blossfeldiana* (Tiger yellow), *sedum coppertone*, and *White Striped Tasman Flax Lily*.