

# NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Reid Park Zoo guests now dine in a “greener” environment

Service Systems Associates (SSA) continued its efforts in the green building movement when it opened the renovated Zoofari Market at the popular tourist attraction, Reid Park Zoo in Tucson recently.

The 2,200 square-foot restaurant incorporated many green concepts in construction and design, from building materials to interiors as well as lighting and more. The restaurant also provides indoor air-conditioned seating for around 100 zoo guests. Previously, guests approached a window in the stand-alone building to order and pick up food, and then ate on an outdoor patio.



Guests enjoying the new Zoofari Market café (above)

The Zoofari Café “before” (left)

Zoofari Market Café “after” (below)



### SSA ECO MISSION:

SSA's eco mission is to conduct our business in an environmentally responsible manner. It is our policy to champion and support the conservation efforts of our host institutions and educate our guests, vendors, and our employees to continuously improve our environmental and social performance.

Our sustainable policy and mission is committed to the following key values:

- A commitment to comply with legal and voluntary commitments to protect the natural environment.
- A commitment to help prevent pollution wherever possible through practices such as resource efficiency, reducing emissions, and reducing solid waste.
- A commitment to continuously improve our environmental performance.
- A commit to share information with our host institutions, guests, vendors, and employees.

“Our company’s goal is to conduct our business in an environmentally responsible manner, and it just made sense when we started the planning process for this project to do everything we can to lessen our impact on the environment. As a result, this restaurant design reduced our carbon footprint and used sensible building materials,” said Tim Brantley, SSA Senior Vice President & Chief Operating Officer. Kevin Jones, SSA Executive Vice President, Culinary Operations said they started the green process at the Reid Park Zoo by making decisions such as choosing building materials that were sustainable and healthy to the environment as well as recycling much of the demolition debris. He added that the company used products that followed LEED certification elements when available. The Leadership in Energy and

SSA’s eco mission and corporate responsibility statements can be found at [www.kmssa.com/responsibility](http://www.kmssa.com/responsibility)

Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System provides a set of standards for environmentally sustainable construction. “We expect to learn and grow from this effort and apply our expertise to future projects,” Jones said.

Green initiatives included:

- **Energy**– improved energy efficiency with the use of passive solar, natural light, compact fluorescent and LED lighting and Energy Star kitchen equipment.
- **Material and resources** – used primarily building materials and furniture regionally sourced as well as sustainably harvested, many of which incorporated recycled materials.
- **Indoor environmental quality** – enhanced air quality by using low-emitting glues, operational clerestory windows, and “living” natural clay wall treatments and other materials.

SSA General Manager at Reid Park Zoo Jason Stover, said the new Zoofari Market is absolutely great and will be good for the city-owned zoo. He reported that the zoo staff is enthusiastic about the facility.

The restaurant is the focal point in the main entrance as the stucco-sided building blends in with the architecture style of the zoo as well as the surrounding area. There are two adjacent outdoor patios, which provide seating for an additional 100+ guests as well as a private area for birthday parties and other events.

Stover added the restaurant also uses products that are safely biodegradable under normal landfill conditions. This includes “paper” products made from sugar cane fibers and new “plastics” made from corn/potato starches and are made into cutlery, straws, cups and bowls.

### Interior Elements

The attractive, yet functional restaurant combines green initiatives with proven culinary management techniques to offer a high-quality experience for guests. Starting with the new menu that features taste-tempting delights to satisfy every appetite, including pizza, pasta, burgers, hot dogs and deli sandwiches and ending with the new layout that offers “action station” where weekly specials are attractively presented as well as grab and go stations for sandwiches, salads and other pre-made products, the restaurant showcases numerous green elements.

Many of the materials used contain recycled content. The wood used during construction was sustainably harvested.

The interior walls are covered with a natural clay product comprised of 70% post-industrial recycled content from marble quarries. The clay releases negative ions that combat the positive ions released by electrical appliances, repelling dirt and dust, thus improving indoor air quality.



**American Clay**  
 The “original sustainable building plaster.” It consists of rock and post-industrial shell waste crushed into sand.

*It has a significantly lower carbon footprint than any other interior finish product.*

- Features:** - 100% Natural - Non Toxic - Mold Resistant  
 - Absorbs Odors - Easy to Repair - Zero VOC's  
 - Temperature & Humidity Buffering  
 - Contributes up to 7 LEED Credits



*Made-to-order culinary action stations*



The tables and chairs were re-purposed, which kept them out of a local landfill. Also, the original concrete pad was coated with a water-based colored hardener in a decorative pattern, eliminating the need to replace tile or carpet in the future, thus keeping used product out of a landfill.

The center decorative panel of the cash wrap is constructed out of 3-Form Varia Eco-resin, which is 40% pre-consumer recycled content. This product qualifies in five categories for LEED certification. The cash wrap tray slide is made out of 95% natural quartz, a non-porous material that requires no sealants or polishing and is a low-emitting material. Finally, the newest LED tape technology was used to light the cash wrap.

*Cash wrap, with 3-Form Varia Eco-resin panels*



A decorative wall mural provides a focal point for the restaurant. The mural contains sustainable products, such as Dakota Burl, a bio-based composite made from sunflower hull, and wheatboard, a renewable agricultural resource made of wheat straw. Both materials actually have a negative greenhouse gas contribution during their life cycles. Accents include pieces of 3-Form Varia Ecoresin that were purchased from the company's reclaim center, which keeps scraps out of the landfill.



*Wall mural and bamboo panels (left)*

The seating design is flexible as it's managed by moveable divide panels created from bamboo poles, a readily renewable resource.

SSA management plans to promote the green aspect of the restaurant and the sustainable practices used by the culinary team through the use of educational signage.



*Mural detail (center)*



*Decorative, coated concrete pad (right)*



Reid Park Zoo, founded in 1965 with a collection of birds, prairie dogs, farm animals and a few squirrel monkeys, has expanded to a 17-acre campus that houses hundreds of animals in naturalistic exhibits and annually hosts nearly 500,000 visitors.

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**Service Systems Associates** manages retail and culinary operations at museums, botanic gardens, zoos and aquariums in the United States, including the Reid Park Zoo, Tampa's Museum of Science & Industry, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Denver Zoos, Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium and Monterey Bay Aquarium. The company is a national leader in visitor service operations for cultural attractions, serving over 17 million guests annually. For more information, please visit the website at [www.KMSSA.com](http://www.KMSSA.com).