designing

is cooking

a museum of gastronomy

by alwanlam
Designing is Cooking: A museum of Gastronomy

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture in Architecture

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key words
in-between spaces
experiences
forces
intersection
epicurious
Those who eat share a relationship with design. The Museum of Gastronomy, a museum located at the Washington D.C. National Mall, would dedicate a space to a full-sense experience pursuing a relationship between food, culture, and design. The National Mall is a symbolic setting dedicated to U.S. heritage via museums, memorials, and the honoring of legacies accessible to the public. As the U.S. is a melting pot of different nationalities, this museum would fill an open niche devoted to celebrating the cultural heritage of cooking throughout the cycle of food consumption.

As consumers, regardless of notice or intention, we have an intimate relationship with food as means of survival. Cooking, the method for preparing this vital element, is also an expression of culture, style, and use of available resources. In essence, cooking is an everyday design: a crucial aspect of our very survival.

Therefore:
food → cooking → design → survival → food → cooking

Similarly, it is the architect’s mission to reach an effective design with available “ingredients,” forces, or kit-of-parts within a project. In the Museum of Gastronomy, the architect would become the unifying source between a relationship literally built between food, people, and design in an interactive experience. This would result in a space dedicated to showcasing and combining the concept of “cooking is designing.”

Incorporating these components into a museum located at the National Mall would personify an experience of the cooking processes as a building block of every-day observation of design.
acknowledgment

I would like to express my gratitude to the following for encouraging, guiding, and supporting my project from inception to completion. It has been an honor for me to work with them and I hope this book reflects well on the investments they have made in me.

Lastly, I offer my regards and sincere thanks to all those who have supported me in any respect during the completion of this project.

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definitions

epicurious adj. describing the activation of senses in the pursuit of connoisseurism; in this case, the open-minded adventure and exploration of cooking as design

experience n. the interaction between the observers and their observations

forces n. the pressures that restrain and define design capabilities

in-between n. the overlapping area linking spaces that build a new understanding of boundaries and their relationships

intersection n. the physical form of where spaces attach or meet, connecting different experiences
RESEARCH Phase 01

topic selection
site medium
program choice
TOPIC Selection research phase part 01A
Inspired by the image on the opposite page, I would like to focus on a topic in which I call “the architecture of desire.” This topic will explore the feelings and emotions of being in a particular space. These feelings and emotions are enhanced by the human senses, with attention to touch and smell of materials, tasting the deliciousness of that design, and finally enjoying the noise and the voice that penetrate or reflect a particular material.

Integrating these two concepts - the architecture of desire and the experimentation of different materials - I would like to design and investigate a museum. A museum where one can experience a variety of emotions through different spaces and through a set of materials.
testing ingredients
set of cookwares
mixing spices
cooking techniques
delicious execution
to get a desirable sense
testing materials

set of equipments

programs arrangements

building techniques

desirable space

to reach an effective design
Map of the World Herb + Spices
personal interpretation while in the city of New Orleans
site selection phase
potential locations

01 [Midtown, New York City, New York USA] --
1 New York City boasts a large and diverse population with a rich cultural heritage.
2 Known as a hub for innovation, New York City embraces creativity and unique concepts.
3 A lot adjacent to the United Nations Headquarters provides an excellent location as a landmark promoting international relations.

02 [Fishermans’ Wharf, San Francisco, California USA] --
1 Wedged along the San Francisco Bay, Fishermans’ Wharf is home to a kaleidoscope of restaurants and stands that serve fresh seafood, organic vegetables, and fluffy breads.
2 The area is a recognizable attraction to foodies around the globe.
3 Picturesque location with panoramic views of the Bay, Alcatraz, the Golden Gate Bridge.

03 [National Mall, Washington DC USA] --
1 As the Capital of the nation, Washington DC represents the United States as a “mosaic,” of different cultures with varying experiences as exemplified by the museums chosen to represent the nation at the National Mall.
2 The National Mall is home to a variety of museums that embodies a variety of cultures symbolizing both separate pieces of American heritage and a homogeneous American culture, but not one that combines them multiculturally.
3 A Museum of Gastronomy at the National Mall would add a new dimension by adding a global element to DC as a center for education on national heritage and the American identity.
site analysis phase

the objectives:

1. create an **experiential understanding** of the city and the site through visitation, **analysis**, and precise documentation.
2. obtain an overview of **architectural elements** in regards to skin, space, and structural relationships.
3. possess a sense of **scale** and **spatial** relationships between existing buildings.
4. understand the **social conditions** between different identities within and without the site.
On Location
exhibitions
analyzing existing programs

In this phase I analyzed the social reactions of how people interact with the varying exhibitions and programs offered at the National Mall in Washington DC. Given that the National Mall receives approximately 24 million visitors from around the world each year [1], I wanted to observe the various reactions of these visitors as they experienced cultural showcases. Responses varied from emotional outbursts of happiness, remorse, distress, and celebration, experienced through contemplation, touching, tasting, smelling, and hearing the different exhibits.
how does the art of cooking define culture?
initial programming
QUOTE FROM AMBALL:

"The city is like a large house, and the house like a small city."

ONLY FIVE ITEMS + CONTINUING 5 COMPONENTS

PIELIT + PLAY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Area % of 5 Continents</th>
<th># of Kitchens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia 30%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa 18%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America 17%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America 12%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe 7%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Programs (as of 11/17/2009)

- Outdoor space (food festival)
- Main lobby (entry)
- 15 kitchens
- 5 Galaxies, 5 libraries, 5 gift shops
- Restrooms, mechanical rooms
- Indoor garden
- Water fountains
how does the art of cooking help me think of and understand the art of architecture?
DESIGN PhasE

part 02

reading theory
defining boundary
gastronomy museum
“Cooking, like architecture, manifests itself in building. The cook, like the architect, draws on an infinite array of creative resources, which make it possible to create wonders from basic construction materials. But even using the finest marble or the best caviar, success is not guaranteed. Architecture, like cooking, evolves and lasts in the form of memories, tastes, and temperatures.”

Ferran Adria, head chef, El Bulli Restaurant, Roses, Spain [2]
designing and cooking

designing vs cooking

designing IS cooking
DEFINING Boundary design phase part 02B
configuring shape + form

current: the Museum of Gastronomy must fit into the patterns already laid out at the National Mall
extracting rhythm + pattern

**objective:** create a unique volume that would retain the characteristics of the current site perimeters
existing site conditions

key
1 US capitol  2 east building of national gallery  3 PA avenue  4 national mall  5 museum of gastronomy
I believe that architects are always doomed to cook with ingredients that were purchased by others !!!
GASTRONOMY Museum design phase part 02C
The museum of gastronomy

is located in the Washington D.C. National Mall. Dedicated to a full-sense experience connecting the relationship between cooking and designing, this museum celebrates the cultural heritage of cooking throughout the full cycle of food consumption.

The subsequent pages illustrate the process of accepting and overcoming the following design challenges:

entry / circulation . structure / skin . facade / layout
design sketches
menu wall

herbs + spices garden

office space

loading area

dining space

exhibit area

food garden

theater building
“Finding the right suppliers and building the right relationships has taken many years and is an on-going pursuit. I invite you to join me in the experience of defining and growing the concept of Canadian Regional Seasonal Cuisine as each new discovery leads to its own unique rewards”

Jeff Tylor, chef, Domus Cafe, Ottawa, Canada [3]
“The process of lime-burning, the first step in making lime for architectural use is carried out in several ways. Whether done in the simplest manner, or in kilns constructed on the most scientific principles, it will still depend (both as regards the quality and quantity of lime produces) upon the kilnsman”

Fred T. Hodgon [4]
study models
building elements
perspective looking northwest
first floor plan

key
1 main entrance 2 fish pond 3 spice garden 4 loading driveway 5 apple trees
partial section + elevation, menu building
second floor plan

key
6 cooking theater
7 open restaurant
8 bridge walkway
9 menu building
section 2
section 3
south elevation
view from spice garden
perspective looking northeast
section at restaurant B, theater building
section at main corridor, theater building
partial framing plan, theater building
perspective looking southwest
view from PA avenue
sources

bibliography

4. Fred T. Hodgson, Concretes, Cements, Mortars, Plasters & Stucco - How to Use and How to Prepare them (Frederick J. Drake & Co., Chicago: 1906), 69.
image credits

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