



COME A STRANGER, STAY A FRIEND

By Shamrock Foods

Harrison Ford walks into a bar. He eyes the 25-foot cooking surface and says to the man flipping meat, "Got a big enough grill?"

"I got a bigger one at home," the man replies, continuing to baste the steaks.

There's plenty of joking at Adobe Deli, Steakhouse and Saloon in Deming, NM, and it didn't stop when owner Van Jacobsen catered on-set for the Indiana Jones film, "Kingdom of the Crystal Skull." When the cast and crew rolled into town last summer, they knew the Adobe Deli had what it takes to sustain their long, active days. Jacobsen remembers their first conversation: "They called me up and said, 'Listen, we need 300 sandwiches in 20 minutes.' I said, 'I don't know about 20 minutes, but I'll give it a shot.'"

The Hollywood gang quickly learned that Adobe Deli is a gem in the desert rough. As you travel down the old state highway, past cattle ranches and dairy farms, you'll instinctively start craving a place where conversation and hearty food combine for real entertainment. That dusty dirt road leads the way...and makes it that much harder to leave.

At the Adobe Deli, you're welcome to linger at the old-time saloon, steakhouse, cigar lounge or oxygen bar—how about cherry oxygen and cheesecake? Keep looking—and asking—and you'll unravel some history behind the décor. For example, Jacobsen bought the well-worn carpet in the saloon at an auction in El Paso. "I can't see tearing it up when presidents have walked

on it," he says. An antique meat box from the 1920s holds the cold cuts. There's personality in everything.

Locals, travelers and occasionally celebrities gather comfortably around a menu that advertises "Roadkill Rabbit—Fresh Daily Off 549," and warns, "Your meal might not be what you expected, but it's what Van damn well felt you needed." The menu itself is such an attraction that many customers swipe one for a souvenir.

The tough-love approach works so well because the heart behind it is generous, like the endless crock of onion soup. People make weekends out of traveling to the Adobe Deli. Those stationed in town—whether residents, crew members or businessmen on a trip—find themselves coming back night after night.

A combination of steadfastness, capability and adaptability has made Adobe Deli possible, and those attributes were apparent the moment Jacobsen bought the building. He was a builder out East, and a 20-year veteran of the foodservice business, when his aunt in Deming let him know the old schoolhouse was up for sale. He showed up for the auction, and so began his next project: Adobe Deli. "Basically I came down here, wasn't going to do anything, but then I just started building. To this day, I'm still creating something different," says Jacobsen.

He immediately saw the benefit of adding a banquet hall that seats up to 450, where Adobe can host big events to suit any taste. Smaller, intimate rooms are especially popular for sales

meetings during lunch. An expansive cellar with over 4000 bottles of wine and 160 types of tequila gives patrons thousands of reasons to return.

Always a family operation, Jacobsen's wife, Vicki, runs the deli during the day. Their two daughters bartend and waitress—the eldest will soon help Dad cook. And everyone knows that working in the kitchen means doing it the way Jacobsen likes it: the menu is largely a generous extension of his own tastes, as if he were serving you in his home (which, by the way, is right next door).

Looking at the menu, it's safe to say Jacobsen likes beef. There's also a variety of sandwiches, classic appetizers such as crab cakes and breaded clams, and a great surf selection including lobster, Alaskan salmon and King crab. Adobe uses Shamrock's Sterling Silver Beef for all the juicy, sizzling cuts that customers return for, from the T-Bone to the Osso Buco.

Jacobsen's well aware that "the steak and seafood profit margin is pretty tight." His solution? "Less waste is key to everything. Every part of the meat you buy—you got to use it somehow." He cuts his own beef and makes use of every bit—right now he's developing a shish kebab. His high standards are never compromised: "When I put a special on the menu, it really is special. I'm not going to lessen the quality to make a profit."

Another strategy Jacobsen's found for staying profitable is to keep the selection of sides streamlined, specialized and well promoted: house salad or onion soup. And that soup is legendary. Jacobsen based the recipe on one shared with him by the executive chef of The Grand Canyon Lodge— Jacobsen adds a splash of local wine, such as the St. Claire Cabernet, for extra appeal.

Shamrock's premium desserts offer a no-prep advantage while allowing the restaurant to serve top quality Adobe rotates selections such as Tuscan Tiramisu, Chocolate Suicide, and a variety of cheesecakes. Jacobsen's relationship with Shamrock Foods is vital to the business. He has worked with rep Kathy Wenzl and regional manager Don Wenzl for about 20 years, and they've established a great trust. "Shamrock has good people. Kathy and Don are like family to me," he says.

The days of walking into a new saloon and walking out an old acquaintance are alive and well at the Adobe Deli. Customers are ready to spread the word, too—comedian Larry the Cable Guy is one of the newest proponents. Loyal patrons make sure that the next traveler or production company that rolls into town will know exactly where to head. And after a long day in the desert, that pot of soup sure looks like gold.

Adobe Deli Steakhouse & Saloon

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www.adobedeli.com

Monday – Saturday

Lunch: 11:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

Dinner: 6–10 p.m.

Bar open until 2 a.m.

Sunday Brunch: 12–4 p.m.

