

## Who?

Ergo Architecture is a small firm practicing thoughtful, specific, contemporary design for discerning and highly involved clients. Our background in architectural history and fine arts infuses our work with uncommon depth, richness, and integrity.

Our restaurant experience allows us to expertly navigate the design and permitting processes. We design rational, affordable solutions that serve the needs of our clients and their guests perfectly.

A great example of this is the Session Room, a 7,000 SF restaurant, pub, and music venue. We overcame technical and design challenges with an integrated solution that solved many problems with just one bold but elegant move. See below for this and other case studies.

But don't just take our word for it. We have been the recipient of various awards and honors including:

### Young Architect of the Year Award American Institute of Architects San Diego

For contributions to design, community and culture & for outstanding promise to the future of the profession.

### Public Service Award American Institute of Architects San Diego

For revitalizing the AIA/Museum of Contemporary Art lecture series.

### Commercial Interior of the Year Sunset Magazine

For the design of Golba Inc. office and studio.

### All 5-Star Reviews on:



184 exceptional projects since 1995. Just 6 ordinary ones.  
Cheap. Easy. Gorgeous.



**Creating experiences**



**Setting the mood**



**Cafe permitting**



**Technical expertise**

## RESTAURANT & CLUB DESIGN EXPERIENCE

Ergo Architecture has over twenty years of experience designing restaurants, bars and clubs. In some cases we were the primary designer providing comprehensive design and permitting services; in others we functioned as design consultants; in still others we played a technical role and were architects of record.

This variety of roles gives us a unique perspective on the challenges of designing a smoothly running kitchen; the importance of making server and point-of-sale stations plentiful but unobtrusive; the keys to staying on time and budget; and, above all, the importance of doing all this while creating the precise mood the owner envisions!

Each project is unique, so experience has taught us that the true expert listens. Through active listening and collaboration we come to understand and solve the specific challenges of each project.

We communicate well too. This means keeping the team informed with concise and timely updates, responding quickly to requests for information, and simply answering the phone with a bright, cheerful human being eager to help you.

Below are several case studies illustrating how we solve design and permitting challenges on specific projects. In addition to those projects we have played a role in 32 restaurant and bar projects including:

- Thunderbird ▪Knotty Barrel ▪Rubicon Deli ▪Streetcar Merchants
- Benchmark Brewing ▪Parallel 33 ▪Caffe Italia ▪Rose Wine Bar
- Red House Pizza ▪Hot Monkey Love Cafe ▪Gecko's Restaurant & Bar
- Sportsmen's Seafood ▪Effin's Pub ▪Cake ▪Village Kitchen
- Rich's ▪Garden Kitchen ▪The Flame ▪Harar Ethiopian
- Nagi's Cafe ▪Fatuma ▪Pho Hoa ▪Cars Jars ▪Casa Sonara
- Canada Steak Burger ▪Theo's ▪Minihana Market
- hART Lounge



**Asymmetrical signage  
inflected to entrance at side**



**A central bar divides space**

## SESSION ROOM

The Session Room is a 7,000 SF brew pub and restaurant in Ann Arbor, MI. The existing structure was a large machine shop (with great bones) that the Session Room owners thought would be perfect for the restaurant and bar they had long dreamed of opening.

Our services included conversion of the shop to habitable space, design and detailing of the primary restaurant and bar areas; lighting design; material specification; and accessibility design including parking, restrooms, and paths of travel.

We designed a large central U-shaped bar to subdivide the space into three distinct areas. These areas provide varying degrees of autonomy for special events but maintain the cohesiveness of the space and the character of the century-old industrial building.



**One cohesive space divides easily into three more intimate spaces  
including a lounge from which the photo was taken**

We worked with the Session Room chef to design the kitchen, and led a team of consultants, including a local architect of record, to permit and construct the facility.

The Session Room feels great whether packed with hundreds of football fans on game day or during an intimate poetry reading in the lounge on a rainy evening.

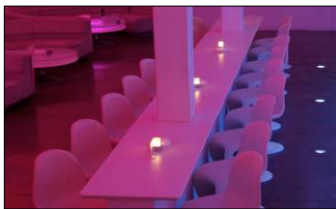




**Jets above animate the courtyard**



**Lighting a festive atmosphere**



**Clean modern design**



**Dramatic lighting sets the mood**

## AIRPORT LOUNGE

This spectacular project just below the flight path of San Diego's international airport was a collaboration between the Club's hands-on owner, a crew of exceptional designers from Mexico City, and Ergo Architecture.

Our role was to provide technical knowledge, permitting savvy, construction and permit drawings, and project management to keep the project running smoothly in spite of the rest of the team's lack of experience operating in the U.S.

Almost immediately the prescribed roles began to blur with Ergo proposing design solutions and other team members formulating novel responses to permitting issues. We each advocated our ideas with passion, but generally agreed on the best solutions and quickly moved forward.

This was a rich and complex project with a variety of indoor/outdoor transitions, level changes, and distinct moods. It opened in record time to long lines, and was one of our most enjoyable projects!



**The intimate bar contrasts with the boisterous courtyard**



**Old world sidewalk cafe**



**We embraced level changes for cozy spaces**



**The sidewalk cafe engages it's urban surroundings**

## CAFE CHLOE

The owners of Cafe Chloe had a very strong design concept but were unsure of how to split a kitchen between two small spaces, navigate level changes while conforming with ADA, and provide a restroom and staff lockers.

We handled all the problem solving and permitting while the owners attended to the rest of the design and detailing. It was gratifying to help these passionate people see their ideas come to life.



**The building's quirky plan provided opportunities for unique, concept-driven spaces**



**Sidewalk cafe concept**



**Natural materials reinforce the farm to table ethos**

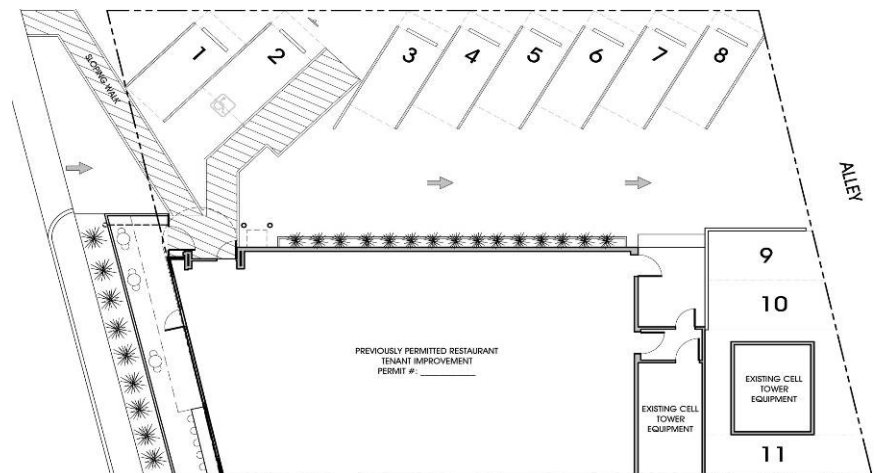


## WHEAT AND WATER

After providing conceptual drawings for the exterior and al fresco dining area, this wood-fired pizza restaurant turned to us with two obstacles they faced.

The first was to make their small parking lot achieve the required amount of spaces. The second involved ADA compliance that threatened to replace their beautiful front landscape with an expensive, unsightly ramp.

By carefully analyzing the site's cross-slope and suggesting two different angles for the parking spaces, our parking and accessibility solutions preserved the landscaping concept, expedited the opening date of the restaurant, and saved the owners thousands.



**The ADA "ramp" became a diagonal path striped up the driveway - a creative solution that saved the client thousands of dollars**

## CREATING VALUE



We think like developers throughout the design process and are often able to increase the ultimate value of the development through recognizing untapped development opportunities and maximizing planning incentives and bonuses.

Using space efficiently can reduce the overall square footage required to achieve design goals and thereby reduce total construction cost. Per-square-foot cost can be reduced through logical construction details and rational, well-integrated structural and mechanical systems. A carefully designed project also means faster construction and a reduction in maintenance and energy costs.

Using this combination of design techniques often allows us to create value far greater than our architectural fee. Examples of design value we added include:

**Formula P.R.:** El Segundo, CA | We increased leasable area through the addition of a large mezzanine; we collaborated with the neighbor to split the cost and space required for the second egress stair; we left the beautiful finishes on the floor, ceilings, and exterior walls as-is; and we designed affordable custom furniture in lieu of expensive systems furniture.

The result was a dramatic space that included over \$100,000 worth of additional floor area without increasing the purchase price or condo fees.

**Prohold Medical:** El Cajon, CA. | At the CEO's request we investigated a \$120,000 vault that a hazardous material consultant had recommended.

We designed material "control areas" instead at a cost of only \$8,000. These control areas allowed an increase in the quantity of materials stored; allowed materials to be stored where they were used; and reduced construction time by over a month saving our client money both in the short and long terms.