



AO's Top 8 Post-Quarantine Considerations for Restaurant Owners

*A guide to design and operations
as restaurants re-awaken &
dining rooms reopen.*

As stay-at-home restrictions relax, sit-down restaurants will reopen their doors to serve the hungry masses in reconfigured dining rooms and outdoor spaces. **For this edition of AOpen, we pondered practical ways for restaurants to rebuild consumer confidence through palpable cleanliness and great, proactive design.** These tips are aimed at respecting social distancing guidelines and minimize contact points to keep staff and customers safe, happy, and hungry for more. We've talked with restauranteurs, surveyed our in-house design experts, and researched solutions to offer up AO's top operations and design considerations for restaurant owners as we ease into post-quarantine service.

To learn more about these ideas and how they can be tailored to your restaurant or retail space, contact Jeff Rabbitt at jeff@aoarchitects.com or Ruba Younan at rubay@aoarchitects.com or 714-639-9860.

1 Reconsider Restaurant Circulation
How customers maneuver through the restaurant, including entry and exit, should be evaluated to minimize unnecessary contact with others. Use of exterior space or common areas should be considered for queuing solutions. Consider where lines may form, how people can be corralled, and circulation patterns for staff to create a safe environment that flows.

2 Privacy via Partitions
When dining capacity is reduced, so are restaurant profits. To comply with social distancing while maintaining capacity, restaurants should consider investing in clear, moveable partitions to create semi-private dining areas for tables and booths. Designed appropriately the partitions can offer an additional benefit of privacy or intimacy.

3 Creative Blocking
If partitions are not practical, consider creative blocking in order to let guests know that a space is unavailable. Instead of using unsightly caution tape, develop a solution - perhaps a branded display or floral arrangement - that enhances the space and/or your restaurant brand.

4 Tableside Sanitation
Salt, pepper, sanitizer. Encourage cleanliness by offering guests a way to keep their hands clean without having to make a trip to the restroom, such as communal handwashing stations in the dining areas or table-side hand sanitizer. Consider touchless menus, paypoints, and single-use or plated condiments.

5 Tailored Menu Offerings
Consider offering alternative menus, plating, or presentation in order to minimize contact at the chef line. Lessen the number of people who are required to touch the food or plate before it is delivered to the customer.

6 Advantages of Advance Notice
Advance preparation will be key in every restaurant's quest to provide customers with the best possible dining experience. To this end, allowing guests to make reservations online and give their order in advance can help provide a seamless experience with minimal contact.

7 Crowd Control
Communicating with guests and managing expectations will play a key role in ensuring a pleasant dining experience for all. Utilize thoughtful, branded signage or designed wayfinding, prepare and equip hosts, and give your customers as much notice as possible of your amended operations aimed at keeping them safe, satisfied, and confident.

8 Expand Outdoors
Work with landlords and local governing authorities to open up adjacent public spaces, parking lots, common areas, and even streets to expand dining space. Partner with neighboring businesses to find ways to maintain capacity while meeting social distancing guidelines.