

UC San Diego

# UC San Diego News Center

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*Ocean View grand re-opening in January to celebrate, among other things, the addition of an internationally themed joint halal and kosher kitchen, Spice. In addition to great food, the venue features spectacular ocean views.*

## A Seat at the Table

**New inclusive campus eatery featuring joint halal and kosher international cuisine quickly becomes one of most popular campus dining destinations**

“Classifications and distinctions based on race or color have no moral or legal validity in our society; they are contrary to our constitution and laws.” Such is the message on the doors to Thurgood Marshall College’s newly renovated Ocean View dining hall. Spoken by the college’s namesake, the first African-American Supreme Court Justice, the words highlight the principles of diversity and equality central to the new campus eatery.

After undergoing an extensive remodel, the dining hall hosted a grand re-opening last month to celebrate, among other things, the addition of an internationally themed joint halal and kosher kitchen, Spice. The renovated eatery is the result of collaboration between UC San Diego's Muslim Student Association; the Union of Jewish Students; Housing, Dining and Hospitality; and Thurgood Marshall College. It is one of the first dining halls to feature both halal and kosher food in the UC System and is the first out of 10 campuses to remain open 24/7.

Ocean View has already earned a reputation among students as one of the best dining halls on campus. Featuring three new kitchens (Spice Kitchen, Third Kitchen, and the open-24/7-Counter Culture) that serve everything from hot international cuisine to stone-hearth pizzas, salads and gelato, the dining hall has quickly become a highly coveted dining and study spot.

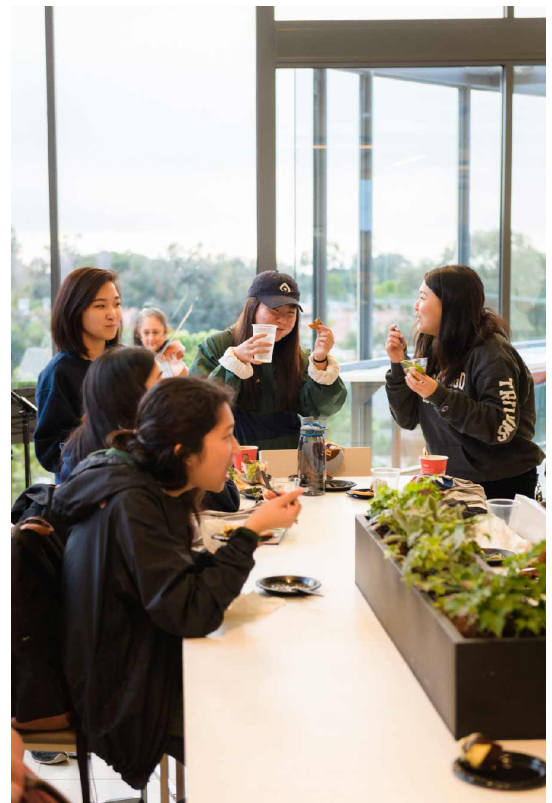
Since its re-opening, sales at the venue are up 66 percent compared to the previous year.

"We're thrilled Ocean View has received such a warm welcome from UC San Diego and the surrounding community," said Mark Cunningham, assistant vice chancellor for Housing, Dining and Hospitality.

He added that the initiative began in 2014 when a coalition of students from the Union of Jewish Students and Muslim Student Association approached Housing, Dining and Hospitality to make their vision of increased kosher and halal options a reality.

"After extensive planning and construction, Ocean View's re-opening marks a triumph not only for students of Jewish and Muslim faith, but for all students on campus, as it serves the university's larger mission to create a diverse and inclusive environment for the campus community," said Cunningham.

Freshman Nora Yagolnitser eats at Spice Kitchen daily and feels that its menu educates students in multiple ways. "Bringing a kosher/halal kitchen and international dining hall to campus is awesome, because while I'm discovering that I love Thai food, someone else is eating the same entrée and discovering that kosher food actually tastes good! We're all becoming more open, aware and understanding of other cultures."



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Ocean View has also transformed into a new cultural hub: every Friday night, the venue serves as the home of UC San Diego Hillel's Shabbat on campus. Each week, the student organization, directed by Rabbi David Singer, hosts a free kosher dinner overlooking the Pacific Ocean in honor of the beginning of the Sabbath.

"The joint halal and kosher kitchen sends a message to all students: that all students matter," said Singer. "We are a smorgasbord of diverse students that come together through the culture of academia, and the new Ocean View is an extraordinary example of what is possible when we collaborate."

Singer believes that the dinner represents "the best of what UC San Diego is all about," uniting students in the Jewish community and sparking new conversations for students regardless of their faith. "I think the argument that we are all part of UC San Diego is implicit in the new building," he added.

Indeed, the building is quite a tribute to diversity and social justice. Featuring floor-to-ceiling murals of Thurgood Marshall, the space itself functions as a reminder of the campus's values and the college's unique goals to cultivate cultural and social competency among its students.

"Ocean View coincides perfectly with Marshall's efforts to educate its students about cultural diversity," Yagolnitser said.

Third-year transfer student Carina Garcia agrees; the international relations and sociology major enjoys the wide variety of cuisine offered at the three stations, and also believes that Ocean View's commitment to providing diverse cuisines is a key to its popularity among students. Featuring a rotating menu that alternates between Asian, Indonesian, Middle Eastern, North African, Mediterranean and Cajun cuisine, Spice Kitchen allows students to experience a variety of flavors and cultures far beyond the typical burger and fries traditionally found on college campuses.



Muir College senior Gabrielle San Pedro echoed similar sentiments, "The food at Ocean View is more like a home-cooked meal," she said and added that she appreciates the high quality and freshness of the meals prepared in the new kitchens.

The food preparation process at Ocean View is carefully planned and monitored to ensure that meals adhere to kosher and halal-friendly standards. All ingredients in Spice must be certified kosher and approved by a rabbi, and dairy products are excluded from the kitchen

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altogether. The pizza station, Third Kitchen, uses halal proteins, those that do not contain pork. By adhering to these and other standards, the staff hopes to maintain the principles of halal and

kosher diets to preserve the integrity of the restaurant's offerings.

According to Yagolnitser, Spice Kitchen in particular has contributed to her personal sense of community at UC San Diego by establishing an informal hub for Jewish students on campus and allowing her to share her culture with non-Jewish friends.

"I love having a place where I can bring friends, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, to enjoy a meal together especially where we can use our dining dollars!" she said. Since the dining hall's reopening, she has introduced nearly two dozen friends to the space, encouraging them to try the kosher food. She believes that the university's efforts to spark new and inclusive dialogues on campus have been successful.

"I'm really appreciative that other students are becoming aware of what kosher means and understanding how it's important to many Jewish students' lifestyles," she explained. "I know Ocean View is contributing tremendously to a greater appreciation of diversity on campus."

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