



El Pollo Loco Unveils New L.A. Mex Restaurant Design with Enhanced Off-Premise Convenience and Digital Footprint to Meet Evolving Customer Demand

Flexible and Modular Design Inspired by L.A. Mex Identity—SoCal Style and Mexican Heritage

COSTA MESA, Calif., Dec. 02, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [El Pollo Loco, Inc.](#) (“El Pollo Loco” or “Company”) (Nasdaq: LOCO), the nation’s leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant chain, today unveiled its new *restaurant of the future* designed to enhance off-premise convenience powered by a more robust and frictionless digital experience.

The re-imagined El Pollo Loco restaurants have been inspired by the changing habits of consumers to enjoy a more digital-forward and contactless off-premise experience that was inevitably sped up by the COVID-19 pandemic. The new concept will also feature a modern interpretation of the brand’s heritage and strengths, including iconography distinct to Los Angeles and the El Pollo Loco L.A. Mex brand.

There are two versions of this new restaurant design. One version is fully focused on driving business off-premise and has a take-out window, a dual drive-thru, dedicated curbside pick-up parking spaces, and patio seating but no indoor dining room. The second version includes a dual drive-thru, dedicated curbside pick-up parking spaces, and a smaller than typical dining room that opens up to an expansive patio through the use of flexible garage style doors. When open these garage doors seamlessly blend the indoor and outdoor experience and increase the comfort level of customers dining inside by enabling them to enjoy their meal in an airy, well ventilated environment.

The restaurant designs share an enhanced digitized experience – including cubbies for mobile to-go orders, a double drive-thru with digital menu boards, and GPS-enabled curbside pick-up, all integrated with the company’s dynamic and versatile mobile app.

To honor the brand’s heritage and highlight what makes El Pollo Loco so unique, subtle brand cues permeate throughout the entire restaurant, from the cleaver door handles (which is a nod to the fact that all chicken is cut to order) to the turning fork chandeliers (which repurposes a tool of trade used by the brand’s skilled Grill Masters). Similarly, murals, imagery and city maps evoking the brand’s 40-year Los Angeles hometown roots on the interior and exterior walls.

“Where you will see our commitment to design manifest itself in the most dramatic of ways is with our new restaurant of the future,” said Brian Carmichall, Chief Development Officer at El Pollo Loco. “To compete in a COVID world, we knew we needed to create a unique concept that is anchored in technology, accessibility, and modern design elements infusing our brand history to make it easier and more rewarding to be a customer.”

El Pollo Loco’s new L.A. Mex restaurants, the first of which are being built this quarter and in 2021, will come to life with innovative features for the most seamless customer experience possible:

- 1 **Double Drive-Thrus:** Select restaurants will feature two drive-thru lanes and digital menu boards to expedite the experience.
- 1 **Retail-As-Theater:** The back-of house where the chicken is grilled will be fully exposed through an enlarged window in the drive-thru lane, showcasing the artisanal and culinary skills of El Pollo Loco’s Grill Masters while customers wait for their food.
- 1 **Pick-Up Cubbies:** Customers will have the option to go fully contactless and pick up their mobile to-go orders from designated cubbies inside the restaurant.
- 1 **GPS-Enabled Curbside:** As part of the recently launched loyalty experience, Loco Rewards™ customers will have expanded access to GPS-enabled curbside pickup on the mobile app – allowing the opportunity to automatically alert the restaurant team that they have arrived from the dedicated pickup parking spots for the fastest possible service.
- 1 **Outdoor Seating:** A new extension to the traditional dining room, giving customers the option to enjoy dining outdoors under a covered patio.

“The future is now. We’re excited to roll out our evolved restaurant concept, which brings us to the culmination of the company’s three-year transformation agenda and sets us up for geographical expansion in the years ahead,” said Bernard Acoca, President & Chief Executive Officer at El Pollo Loco. “This will be the catalyst to eventually get us back to 5% annual new unit growth across the U.S.”

A version of the L.A. Mex restaurant formats will open in the Los Angeles market in the form of remodels this month. To preview the design,

Walk Up & Drive Thru Concept



El Pollo Loco’s New L.A. Mex Restaurant Design

Dine In & Drive Thru Concept



El Pollo Loco’s New L.A. Mex Restaurant Design

please visit El Pollo Loco's YouTube [here](#).

About El Pollo Loco

El Pollo Loco (Nasdaq:[LOCO](#)) is the nation's leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant with a mission to bring people together around food, family, and culture in the communities it serves. El Pollo Loco is renowned for its handcrafted L.A. Mex food, an innovative blend of traditional Mexican cuisine and better-for-you eating, that Los Angeles is known for. Since 1980, El Pollo Loco has successfully opened and maintained more than 465 company-owned and franchised restaurants in Arizona, California, Nevada, Texas, Utah, and Louisiana while remaining true to its Mexican-American heritage. El Pollo Loco continues to grow and evolve, nourishing connections to tradition, culture, and one another through fire-grilled goodness that makes us feel like familia. For more information, visit us at www.elpolloloco.com.

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