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## chicago and the chocolate factory

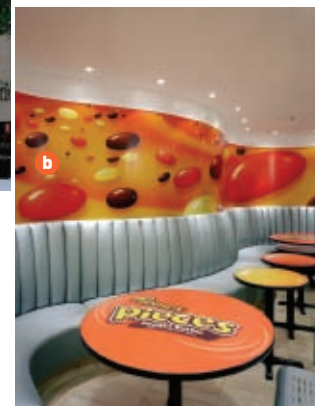
Hershey's, Chicago



BY MATTHEW HALL MANAGING EDITOR



**a** The store, housed in a former university bookstore, retains a vintage appearance, with a brick exterior punctuated by two-story arched windows. At the corner is an angled vertical marquee sign, topped with the shape of a Hershey's Kiss. **b** Inside, the Reese's Pieces café features curved wall graphics, tables and seating, all mimicking the candy's shape.



# Sweet Spot

Hershey's new Chicago site for the kid in a candy store

CHICAGO PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE HERSHEY Co.'s early history. While visiting the Windy City during The World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, Milton Hershey – by then an already-successful caramel manufacturer – came across the German chocolate-making equipment that he would use to revolutionize the sweet-tooth world.

Now, the company that Hershey founded has returned to the site of that seminal event to open a 3600-square-foot store on North Michigan Avenue. The store (or “interactive retail experience,” as the confectioner prefers to call it) combines elements of its Times Square store in New York and the Hershey's Chocolate World complex at its Pennsylvania headquarters, along with some only-in-Chicago features.

Don Papson, Hershey's vp, consumer interactive, says because the company's products can be bought just about anywhere, the new store is designed “to give people the chance to immerse themselves in Hershey's brands like never before. Hershey markets nearly half of the 50 most-recognized confectioner's brands in the U.S. [Hershey's, of course, and also Reese's Pieces, Kit Kat, Almond Joy, Mounds, Bubble Yum, York, Jolly Rancher and Twizzlers, among others], and the store offers us an opportunity to

acquaint visitors with the full breadth of our product line. The basic idea is to take the ‘kid-in-a-candy store’ experience to a whole new level.”

To create that experiential environment, Hershey

again teamed with JGA Inc., the Southfield, Mich., retail design firm that helped create the whimsical Times Square store in 2002. JGA chairman Ken Nisch describes the Chicago and New York stores as “brother and sister.”

“They're the same, but different, just like siblings are,” Nisch explains. “For instance, the neighborhoods housing the two stores are very different: The New York store is in Times Square, with giant billboards and MTV blaring, while the Chicago store is on the Magnificent Mile in a somewhat quieter setting, with such neighbors as Ralph Lauren and a Four Seasons Hotel. Yet both are places where people can grab what I'd describe as a ‘great city moment.’ At the Chicago store, that might involve enjoying a Hershey's treat at the store's outdoor seating, something that's not available at the New York site.”

The store's designers played up Hershey's historical ties to Chicago, both inside and out. “We wanted to celebrate where it all began for Hershey's chocolate business, as well as hearken back to those then-modern marvels that were displayed at the Columbian Exposition, like lightbulbs and carousels,” says Hershey's Papson.

Housed in a former Loyola University bookstore, the store's façade retains a vintage appearance, with an extensive use of brick and bronze framing. The entrance is highlighted by a vertical Hershey's marquee sign, which is reminiscent of the famous Chicago Theater sign and visible from both Michigan Avenue and Rush Street.

“We used vintage lightbulbs on the marquee and around the store's two-story windows, reminiscent of such lighting

Laszlo Regos Photography, Berkley, Mich.

Hershey's new Chicago store is a cornucopia of the confectioner's many brands. Eye-catching elements include a Hershey's Kiss plume that rises to the ceiling, and a perimeter emblazoned with graphic panels displaying vintage Hershey's advertisements.



The centerpiece of the store is the Hershey's Magnificent Chocolate Works Machine. Instructions for customers wishing to become "official" Hershey workers and use that interactive device are on the left. To the right is the cashwrap, which houses a 42-inch plasma screen that plays vintage ads and provides promotional information. (A second screen is in the store's bakery/café area.)

play on 42-inch plasma screens located at the cashwrap and in the bakery/café area.

Serving as the centerpiece for the space is a 20-foot-tall Hershey's Magnificent Chocolate Works Machine that was fabricated by Meyer Machine Co. (San Antonio). (Similar installations, with slightly different names, are located on Times Square and at the Hershey's Chocolate World complex.) The Chicago machine, which is topped with the Hershey's name spelled out in white lights, features a cylindrical shape that's reminiscent of the newfangled carousels that dotted the Exposition. Customers using the machine are designated as "official" Hershey's factory workers, complete

introduced at the Exposition," notes Nisch.

Inside, the store features oversized display "boats," a Hershey's Kiss plume that rises to the ceiling, metallic finish towers and white lacquer wall systems. Its perimeter is populated with large graphic panels displaying vintage Hershey's advertisements, while video versions of those messages

with photo IDs and hard-hats. They select and dispense personalized mixes of Hershey's products, which cascade through intertwining chutes and drop into old-fashioned tins for purchase.

Another element transplanted from the company's home site is the use of "Hersheyizers," singing and dancing employees who work in the bakery/café area. These workers serenade customers with such ditties as "It's Time for a Chocolate Show Now" as they custom-decorate cupcakes, cookies and brownies.

To help create an old-fashioned feel in the bakery/café area, designers used such materials as custom grillwork and glazed and glass mosaic tile. But an adjoining space devoted exclusively to the Reese's Pieces brand has a distinctly modern look, featuring curved wall graphics, custom tables and seating, all echoing the candy's shape.

"The visual and interactive elements at the store are designed to create a memorable experience with Hershey's brands," Nisch notes. "That way, when you see Hershey's products on the shelf at your local Walgreen's, the recollection of the experience you had at the Hershey's store will trigger a positive association – and, of course, a purchase." ☺

## PROJECT SUPPLIERS

**CLIENT**  
The Hershey Co., Hershey, Pa.

**DESIGN**  
JGA Inc., Southfield, Mich.

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**  
Crane Construction Co. LLC, Northbrook, Ill.

**ARCHITECT**  
Lawrence Berkley & Associates, Chicago

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**  
Fisher + Partners, Chicago

**OUTSIDE DESIGN CONSULTANT**  
Illuminating Concepts, Farmington Hills, Mich. (lighting)

**CERAMIC AND GLASS WALL TILE**  
American Olean, Dallas

**CHOCOLATE WORKS MACHINE**  
Meyer Machine Co., San Antonio

**FIXTURES**  
Chicago Scenic Studios, Chicago  
Comatec Inc., Weston, Ont.  
OPTO Intl. Inc., Wheeling, Ill.

**FLOOR TILE**  
Crossville, Crossville, Tenn.

**FURNITURE**  
ISA Intl. Inc., Toronto  
Tucci Umbrellas, Miami

**GRANITE ENTRY TILE**  
Stone Design, Glendale Heights, Ill.

**GRAPHICS/SIGNAGE**  
Baker Associates, Wayzata, Minn.  
Doyle Signs, Addison, Ill.  
Stoner Graphix, Hummelstown, Pa.

**LAMINATES**  
DuPont, Wilmington, Del.

**PAINT**  
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Benjamin Moore, Montvale, N.J.  
Pittsburgh Paints, Pittsburgh

**UPHOLSTERY**  
Charles Samuelson Inc., New York

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