WALKING THE GREEN WALK

JGA creates an eco-friendly retail environment for Nature’s Northwest

Nature’s Northwest’s flagship store in Portland, Ore., incorporates natural finishes on recycled and recyclable fixtures to create on-earth-friendly, yet sophisticated retail environment.

Health and wellness may seem to be buzzwords of the 90s, but Nature’s Northwest’s flagship store in Portland, Ore., is putting its money where its mouth is. To create an eclectic, visually stimulating environment expressing Nature’s Northwest’s live-well philosophy, Southfield, Mich.-based JGA incorporated recycled and recyclable materials in an open-air market atmosphere that allows shoppers to find their individual paths to wellness.

The 42,000-square-foot facility houses on two floors just about everything one needs to live well: a food store, a pharmacy, a hair salon, a spa, an exercise and health education center, a floral shop, a gift store, home accessories and a deli.

Nisch notes it was sometimes difficult to find unfinished materials. “The industry is not completely set up to satisfy the needs of eco-friendly projects,” he says.

To highlight the products, the lighting system employs a mix of halogen, HID lighting and natural lighting. Low ambient lighting focuses on certain products, while skylights allow plenty of natural light to shine through.

And, rather than including “decor for decor’s sake,” multimedia, demonstration areas and environmental graphics are used to talk about tree planting, water reclamation and other earth-friendly issues. Bulletin boards in the entrance allow visitors to suggest ways to improve the store.

Although the natural-food chain is currently completing three similar, smaller versions of the flagship store in the Portland area, plans for a roll-out are on hold, as Nature’s Northwest was recently sold to Denver-based Wild Oats. But so far, shoppers are embracing the store concept, and Nisch says sales have exceeded the company’s expectations.

Is this store setting the tone for future retail? Nisch says, “I think it’s a trend-setting project. People have three criteria for choosing brands: they want a new element, the ethical element and the emotional exchange. They want to feel that the company is on their side, that they’re getting back what they give.” And for those searching for a balance between the good life and the healthy life, Nature’s Northwest delivers.

BESIDES: Jon Greenberg & Associates (JGA Inc., Southfield, Mich., Kim Nichols, chairman; John Sabatini, director of retail strategy); Kathy Williamson, creative director; Brian Nortier, project manager; Mike Bonaventura, senior designer; Susan Norgard, designer; Kelly Gilbert, senior drafter; Renee Nowley, color and material manager.


VISUAL AND DECOR: Nature’s Northwest

CLIENT: Nature’s Northwest, Portland, Ore., Concept: Stan Lee, president, Marcia Mayes, design project manager; Lori Volkle, environmental and visual brand manager; Eric Lorentzen, project brand manager; Cheryl Rettig, wellness manager; Tim D’Connor, food service and grocery merchandiser.


ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION: Henry Judd, Portland, Ore. (construction management); Interlace Engineering, Milwaukee, Wis. (engineering); K10 Construction, Portland, Ore. (general contractor); Group Mekerney (structural engineering).


FITTINGS: Bulman Store Fixtures, Portland (custom store fixtures); Raburn Food Service Equipment, Portland (food service equipment); Kayran Warren, Atlas (contracted-out retail), Design Manufacturing, Vancouver (millwork); Wilkens, Templer, Juren, Maine (Decorative Interior Mammals, Adams, Malone, Centurion Corp., Cincinnati (plastic laminate); Phytech, San Francisco; Smith and Fang Co., San Francisco (wood tops); Nadie, Linea Furniture, Ferris, Beal (point-of-purchase).

FLOORING: Airdale, Grapetown, Pa. (stained concrete); Pride Building Services, La Grande, Ore. (store installation); Natural Cork Ltd., Atlanta (cork); D Lux Hardware Store, Portland (ceramic and cork installation); Pemito Products Inc., Hawthorne, Fla. (anchor flooring); PetroSport Products Inc., Hawthorne, Fla. (anchor flooring); PetroSport Products Inc., Hawthorne, Fla. (anchor flooring); PetroSport Products Inc., Hawthorne, Fla. (anchor flooring).

LANDSCAPING: Garwood, Portland, Ore.

WILL TREATMENTS: Woburn: Royce, RJW (wall covering); Den Blaine Painting Co., Beaverton, Ore. (wallcovering and paint installation); Northwest Window Works, Lynnwood, Wash. (windows).

Natural flooring coupled with an open-air market layout allows shoppers to pursue their individual paths to wellness.