

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

779

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bastien's Restaurant

other name/site number Bastien's Rotunda; Bastien's; 5DV.10743

2. Location

street & number 3503 E. Colfax Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Denver N/A vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Denver code 031 zip code 80206

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer 8/11/09 Date

Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper 9.30.09 Date of Action

Bastien's Restaurant
Name of Property

Denver, Colorado
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- public-local
- private
- public-State
- public-Federal

- district
- building(s)
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE AND TRADE/Restaurant

COMMERCE AND TRADE/Restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENTS
OTHER: Googie

foundation CONCRETE
walls CONCRETE
roof ASPHALT
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Narrative Statement of Significance

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1958-59

Significant Date

1958

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Cahlander, Bernard N., Jr. (architect)

McNamara, John O. (consulting engineer)

Advance Neon Sign Company (neon sign)

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository:

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver, Colorado

Bastien's Restaurant
Name of Property

Denver, Colorado
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1. 1/3 5/0/4/6/5/4 4/3/9/8/7/2/9
Zone Easting Northing (NAD 27)

2. / //// ////
Zone Easting Northing

3. / //// ////
Zone Easting Northing

4. / //// ////
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The UTM's were derived by OAHF from heads up digitization on Digital Raster Graphic (DRG) maps provided to the Colorado Historical Society Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHF) by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and were provided to the preparers of this nomination by OAHF.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Thomas H. Simmons and R. Laurie Simmons, historians (prepared for Colfax Business Improvement District and the owner)

organization Front Range Research Associates, Inc. date 22 May 2009 (revised)

street & number 3635 West 46th Avenue (www.frhistory.com) telephone 303-477-7597

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80211

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name/title William B. Bastien, Jr., and Mary Jeannine Bastien

street & number 3503 E. Colfax Avenue telephone ---

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80206

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 1Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Narrative Description

Bastien's Restaurant on Denver's East Colfax Avenue is a two-story, twelve-sided building with an asphalt-shingled folded plate roof (See Photograph 1 and Figures H1 and H2). A "skydome" (a translucent hemispherical skylight) is located at the roof's center. A metal framework holds a six-sided metal sign reading "Bastien's" spelled out in neon script above the skydome. The folded plate roof projects out widely over each of the twelve wall segments, which are flanked by concrete buttresses that align with the internal steel framework of the building. The tongue-and-groove pine cladding of the building's interior is carried through onto the undersides of the projecting roof. Walls are composed of 4"-thick painted concrete block. A tall, free-standing neon sign stands near the south side of the building adjacent to East Colfax Avenue.

Front

The main entrance to the restaurant is located on the southwest, facing the intersection of East Colfax Avenue and Madison Street (See Photograph 1). A broad concrete entrance sidewalk slopes downward to the doors and is flanked by tapering concrete sidewalls painted black. The entrance has double flush wood doors with narrow sidelights and a tall, three-part trapezoidal transom. Each door is marked "Bastien's" in raised metal script. On each side of the entrance the lower walls consist of thick, projecting, painted concrete with slanted tops, while the upper walls are painted concrete block covered with ornamental extruded metal screens onto which thin birch branches and intertwined lights are attached as decoration. Lanterns on hexagonal plaques flank the doors.

South

The south wall along East Colfax Avenue includes three bays defined by folded plate roof sections and black-painted concrete buttresses (See Photograph 2). The lower wall is composed of thick, projecting, painted concrete with a slanting top. The upper wall in the westmost bay has panels of extruded ornamental metal screen (like those beside the entrance) with a rectangular metal louver near the top. The next bay to the east has plate glass windows flanking a center filled-in section with an air conditioning unit; the transom above is composed of a trapezoidal center section flanked by triangular lights. The last bay at the southeast corner of the building contains a plate glass window, a one-over-one-light window with trapezoidal transom above, and a projecting flat roof entrance to the lounge. The southeast wall of the projection contains a single glazed metal frame door and a section composed of horizontal siding.

Near the lounge entrance projection, between the building and the sidewalk, is a towering, free-standing sign for the restaurant (See Photographs 3 and 4). The January 1959 sign has a concrete base that anchors a thick rectangular pier to the north clad in ribbed metal panels and two metal poles to the south. The sign is approximately 25' high. The center portion of the sign contains four levels of metal Pittsburgh-style geometric cabinet panels with neon reading (from top to bottom): "Bastien's" in script on a six-sided panel with rounded ends; "RESTAURANT" on a rectangular panel with an angled end facing the street; "Cocktails" in script on the same type of panel; and "STEAKS" in italics superimposed over a painting of a thick T-bone steak on a six-sided panel. The neon for the "Bastien's" panel is installed in channels while the rest of the panels feature exposed neon. The lowest panel was added to the sign in April 1961. The top and bottom levels of the sign hold internally illuminated reader or change panels onto which removable letters can be attached

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section No. 7 Page 2Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

describing restaurant features or special dining events; the top one was added in 1966 and the bottom one at an unknown date after that.

East

Adjoining the projecting entrance to the lounge at the southeast corner of the building is a projecting flat roof bay with a concrete block wall (See Photograph 4). Two sets of horizontal windows with slanting brick sills are present at the eave level near the north end of the wall. The wall is decorated with a series of thin birch branches and intertwined lights. A series of metal bollards joined by a metal band at the top extends along the base of this section of the building, providing protection from traffic entering the parking lot from East Colfax Avenue.

North

The north (or rear) part of the restaurant is comprised of four bays, defined by the folded plate roof and the concrete buttresses (See Photographs 5 and 6). These bays have painted concrete block walls and consist of (from east to west): 1) a blank wall with mechanical equipment in a fenced area to the east; 2) an off-center pedestrian door with a security grille in its upper part (the transom area above has a center metal louver with filled-in sections on each side); 3) painted block in the lower portion and a boarded up window area in the upper part (the transom area is glazed with a trapezoidal center section flanked by triangular sections); and 4) painted block in the lower portion and a one-over-one-light window bordered by picture windows in the upper part (with the same transom area as the previous bay). A concrete sidewalk extends along the rear of the building and defines a series of angled parking spaces adjacent to the building. A flat roof canopy extends across the rear, mirroring the angles of the building and partially sheltering the angled parking spaces.¹ The underside of the porch roof is clad with tongue-and-groove boards. The porch posts are mostly square metal; the porch framework is attached to the building by metal beams extending from the wall above each buttress.

West

The west portion of the building faces an outdoor patio and consists of three bays defined by the folded plate roof and concrete buttresses (See Photograph 7). The lower walls of the building in this area are thick, projecting, painted concrete with a slanting top, like the front and south. From north to south the three bays contain: 1) a multi-light pedestrian door with a narrow sidelight, a horizontal two-light window, and a picture window (the transom area contains a center air conditioning unit with triangular glazing to each side); 2) a one-over-one-light center window flanked by picture windows (the transom area is glazed and contains a center trapezoidal section flanked by triangular sections); and 3) a two-light horizontal center window bordered by picture windows (the transom area has an air conditioning unit in its center trapezoidal with triangular glazed sections to each side). An outdoor patio of tinted concrete extends from the building to the concrete sidewalk along Madison Street. A wrought iron fence encloses the patio and has a series of small decorative lanterns atop taller fence posts along the western perimeter.

¹ The porch and angled parking spaces were included since the owner initially contemplated offering drive-in curb service in the new building, as included in many Google style restaurants.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 3Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Interior

The interior of the building features multiple levels to accommodate various restaurant functions. It appears that considerable thought was devoted to providing the interior with a feeling of openness through the use of extruded metal screens rather than solid walls, wall openings providing views into other areas, high ceilings, picture windows with large glazed transoms, and a hemispherical skylight (or "skydome").

From the entrance at the southwest, the main dining area extends in an arc along the west side of the building (See Photograph 8). The high ceiling is clad with tongue-and-groove pine boards and the black-painted steel framework is exposed, creating a dramatic open space. The patterned 100 percent wool carpeting is original to the building. The main dining space is separated from the upper dining area and the lower dining area by extruded metal screens (of the same material used on the building's exterior) placed between vertical dividers. At the south end of the main dining room near the entrance are stairs to the upper dining room. The stairs have a metal framework with partially carpeted wood treads and open risers and are supported by metal rods extending from steel roof beams above.

The smaller upper dining space is circular and is illuminated by the translucent hemispherical skydome at its center (See Photograph 9). The skydome is supported by a dodecagonal steel collar where the twelve exposed beams of the building's steel skeleton meet. To the north are a small service area and an employee stairway. A grand piano is present in the northeast section of the room. Immediately north of the main entrance to the building is the lower dining area, three steps down from the level of the main dining room. This space is semi-circular and originally contained a coffee shop with a counter and stools. The area now contains booths and tables.

East of the main entrance are restrooms for customers. Beyond the restroom area is the lounge in the southeast section of the building, which has a separate entrance to the parking area. The lounge features the original curving bar composed of molded plastic laminate resembling mahogany (See Photograph 10). The serving area for the bartender is sunken (two steps below the floor level of the lounge) and the backbar area is covered with mirrors. The bar space is differentiated from the rest of the lounge and made more intimate by its lower curved ceiling (created by the projection of the upper dining room into the area). A rectangular opening with a wrought iron grille provides a view into the upper dining room. Booths and tables occupy the rest of the lounge.

The northeast section of the building houses the kitchen, which has a concrete ramp to the rear door (designed to accommodate carhops on roller skates). The brick projection to the east is used for storage, and a small, wedge-shaped space behind the bar serves as the restaurant's office. The basement is circular and, at just 30' in diameter, is about half the diameter of the upper portion of the restaurant. It contains employee restrooms, storage, and a walk-in refrigerator.

Landscape and Setting

Wide concrete sidewalks border the site along East Colfax Avenue to the south and Madison Street to the west. The area between the building and the south sidewalk is landscaped with tinted concrete paving and irregular planting areas with small boulders and vegetation. There is also a planting strip between this area and the sidewalk. At the east and west ends of this area "Bastien's" is inscribed in

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 4

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

script in the concrete. An L-shaped asphalt parking area abuts the building on the north and east. An open patio is on the west. A residential neighborhood lies to the north, and there is an alley to the east.

Alterations

Based on examination of original construction drawings, the footprint of the building has not changed since its 1958 construction. The free-standing neon sign was completed in 1959 and the "STEAKS" panel added in 1961. The original coffee shop area was converted to an additional dining area in about 1975. The carpeting in the lounge was replaced with ceramic tile in 2008. The fenced patio on the west was constructed in 2004, at which time a door was added to the north bay on that side to provide access. Over the years some center windows of bays have been modified to accommodate air conditioning units. Boards have been placed over a few windows on the rear of the building. The birch branches have been added in the last five years.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 5

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Statement of Significance

The Bastien's Restaurant building meets the registration requirements of the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor," as an example of the General-Use Commercial Building subtype. Free-standing commercial buildings were included within the subtype, and the MPDF specifically noted that "some restaurants along the avenue evolved from drive-ins and feature off-street parking and eye-catching signage." The building is located within the geographic area covered by the MPDF; was originally used for a commercial purpose (a restaurant); was erected within the 1880s through 1968 time period covered by the historic context (1958); and possesses historical associations related to the commercial development of the corridor (construction and operation as a restaurant). The period of significance for the restaurant is 1958-59, embracing the construction of the building and its free-standing neon sign.

Bastien's Restaurant is significant under **Criterion C** in the area of **Architecture** as a representative of an increasingly rare surviving expression of Modern architecture, the Googie style popular during the 1950s and 1960s. This building reflects a local interpretation by a Colorado architect of the Googie movement that originated in Southern California for coffeehouse design in response to the growing automobile culture, new materials and technologies, and space age visions of the future. Representative features of the style embodied in Bastien's design include the freestanding building surrounded by ample parking; dramatic folded plate roof with hemispherical skylight; juxtaposition of exterior materials, including painted concrete block, concrete, and metal; expanses of plate glass windows; extruded metal screens; linkage of the interior and exterior through the use of materials, forms, and geometric shapes; neon embellished integrated and stand-alone signs; and a drive-up canopy at the rear. The interior design of the restaurant continues the Googie theme with features such as a tongue-and-groove board ceiling, curved bar with sunken service area, suspended metal staircase leading to an upper dining room, and many 1950s finishes and fixtures. The building displays a high level of historic physical integrity and is still operated by the original owners, the Bastien family, as the same restaurant that opened in 1958.

As Colorado's longest commercial thoroughfare and the eastern gateway to Denver on U.S. 40, East Colfax Avenue became an entirely logical location for Googie style restaurant design. Alan Hess, author of two books on the Googie style, described the significance of the movement, which received scant attention from architectural journals of the day, but "helped to mold the appearance of cities nationwide. They were modern architecture, but they were also widely popular, a rare combination in the history of Modernism."² Architect Steven Izenour wrote that, except for a few headquarters skyscrapers, Googie style restaurants represented "all most of us knew as modern architecture in the forties and fifties."³ Hess found that as time passed, "the Googie style became as much a symbol of the fifties as Elvis Presley or a '57 Chevy." In addition to serving as an icon of an era, he observed that the cohesive style also played an important architectural role by solving "the functional problems of a car-oriented building imaginatively; they used scale and form to create an urban strip architecture; their complex interior geometries showed an understanding of modern spatial concepts."⁴ A reversion to less flamboyant traditional designs and materials for restaurants in the late

² Alan Hess, *Googie: Fifties Coffee Shop Architecture* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1985), 11.

³ Steven Izenour in Introduction to Hess, *Googie*, 7.

⁴ Hess, *Googie*, 10.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 6

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

1960s ended the Googie era, and many specimens of the style were demolished in succeeding years, making surviving buildings with substantial historic physical integrity very significant.

Bastien's is one of the longest-lived eating places in the Denver area. Not part of a chain, Bastien's has always been a family-run restaurant, with third and fourth generations now working in the business. The building, constructed during the height of the Googie movement in the late 1950s, is the only known commercial work of local architect Bernard N. Cahlander, Jr., in Colorado. The tall neon sign was fabricated and installed by Carl Carlson's Advance Neon Sign Company, a business operating in Denver since 1931.

Colorado listings in the National Register currently include few free-standing restaurants and few post-World War II resources. Only one Googie style resource has been listed in the National Register: the "Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas" free-standing neon sign in Clark County, Nevada (listed 1 May 2009; NRIS number 09000284).

Googie Style Restaurants⁵

Car-oriented restaurant architecture that developed in California, especially in Los Angeles after World War I, served as the forerunner of the Googie style. Although simple roadside drive-in stands offering a few items, often barbecued, were found throughout the nation, in California they evolved into more complex facilities designed to attract and serve larger numbers of car-driving customers. Popularity of the automobile and a temperate climate shaped the evolution of roadside restaurants, encouraging quick construction and use of materials such as stucco and wood instead of the brick and stone demanded in harsher environments. Frank Lloyd Wright's son, Lloyd Wright, became an innovator of car-oriented architecture in Los Angeles during the 1920s, designing buildings that employed industrial materials to create bold shapes, upswept roofs, central pylons, exposed columns, metal screened doors, and integral lighting. During the 1930s, the continuous planes, towers, and curved corners of the Streamline Moderne style influenced the construction of businesses catering to auto drivers. Neon, a relatively new material, became favored for making a building exciting during the era. As Alan Hess noted, the roadside establishments understood that "advertising is a legitimate function to be expressed in architectural form." In essence, the entire building became an advertising sign. Over time, a "roadside commercial vernacular style" easily understood by the car-driving public emerged.⁶

Architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock famously took note of the food service architecture emerging on the West Coast in 1940, stating nothing in the East compared:

Outside Neutra's work and that of his group, most of the interesting things are—so far as I could discover—effectively anonymous. I mean the drive-ins of which there are several good examples These represent a very model of what exposition or resort

⁵ Much of the information in this section is summarized from Alan Hess, *Googie and Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2004), and Philip Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches: The Architecture of American Chain Restaurants* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986).

⁶ Hess, *Googie*, 19-22 and 25-26.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection No. 8 Page 7Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

architecture ought to be, light, gay, open, well executed and designed to be as effective by night as by day.⁷

As construction resumed after World War II, Americans embraced modern design, as well as new products and technologies and an attitude of optimism about the future. Atomic power, plastics, air and space transportation, and television were among the influences on postwar restaurant architecture. A new type of freestanding building emerged, one that featured indoor customer seating at counters and tables, often in addition to drive-up service. The new restaurants lured diners with their casual atmospheres, attractive prices, fast and friendly service, and menus offering a range of familiar food. As Hess observed, “. . . more people came to use and experience modern architecture through coffee shops in the 1950s than ever visited a building by Gropius.”⁸

The architecture incorporated bright colors, dramatic forms, neon lights, contrasting materials, and “a heedless disregard of good taste as it was conventionally known and practiced.” With money to spend and cars to speed them there, most of the American public readily accepted the new design of restaurants as forward-looking and exciting. An ample parking lot encouraged patrons to leave their autos and enter the well-illuminated restaurants; in effect, the number of cars outside demonstrated the appeal of the establishment. Hess asserted that “coffee shop entrepreneurs felt the architectural style to be as important to a successful restaurant as a well-designed kitchen. Modernism proved more marketable than snob appeal.” Soon restaurant magazines referred to the style as “cash register architecture.”⁹

Douglas Haskell, writing in the February 1952 *House & Home*, first coined the term “Googie” for the new architecture, an appellation derived from architect John Lautner’s 1949 design for a coffee house of that name in Los Angeles.¹⁰ Lautner, a pioneer of modern coffee shop architecture who apprenticed with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin, employed elements that became basics of Googie style design, including “eye-catching roof lines, the integrated sign pylon, the breaking down of distinctions between indoors and out, and the many contrasting modern materials.” Haskell listed the “canons” of the form, including the fact that the architecture could look organic, but also had to be abstract; ignored gravity; encouraged pluralism in all aspects; and incorporated new technological materials.¹¹ Features such as an interesting roof with cantilevers, upslopes, angled overhangs, exposed trusses, a folded plate or concrete shell; bursts of color; glass, concrete, and aggregate walls; wide overhangs and canopies; and prominent signage all conveyed the theme. Shapes such as boomerangs, diagonals, starbursts, dingbats, and free forms; materials such as plastic, metal, and flagcrete; folded eaves and roof plates; structural bents and trusses; and tapering pylons were all used extensively.¹² At night, the visible interior of the restaurant through ample plate glass became its own advertisement, supplemented by tall neon signs. Interior design also carried out the style,

⁷ Hitchcock quoted in Hess, *Googie*, 28.

⁸ Hess, *Googie*, 37 and 46-47; Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 116.

⁹ Hess, *Googie*, 43 and 46-47; Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 115.

¹⁰ Googie was the nickname of the coffee shop owner’s wife. Many terms have been used for the style, including Coffee Shop Modern, Jet Age, Populuxe, and Doo-Wopp.

¹¹ Haskell was not a fan of the style and his article was written in a satirical tone. Langdon stated that the critic “succeeded in making ‘Googie’ a term of condescension in the architectural world. From 1952 on, whenever critics wanted to sum up an architectural style epitomized by arbitrary, offbeat shapes, all they had to say was ‘Googie.’”

¹² Flagcrete is an artificial stone resembling flagstone laid in thin layers with rough edges.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection No. 8 Page 8Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

emphasizing the material and function of each element, down to the smallest details. As Langdon described, the visual theme of the exterior continued inside, "amplifying the theme by coordinating the treatment of ceilings, walls, lighting, and other elements. That consistency between inside and outside added strength to the design."¹³

In the late 1960s changing preferences for restaurants employing more traditional themes and materials led designers away from the Googie style. The eye-catching features favored during the 1950s and 1960s gave way to a desire to conform and harmonize. Some critics began to find the flamboyant designs of past years clashing and chaotic at the same time that the country's outlook became more somber and its focus shifted to issues such as civil rights and Vietnam. As Hess wryly remarked, "At some point, commercial architects gave up building the future and began to build the past again." In 1973, Denver's White Spot owner stated, "We're trying to get away from the old flashy coffee shop look with its bright, flashy colors, large neon signs and bright interior lighting."¹⁴

In the years following, many of the Googie style restaurants across the country were demolished. Alan Hess's groundbreaking 1985 examination of the style, *Googie: Fifties Coffee Shop Architecture*, resulted in greater appreciation of the buildings. Googie's representation of an era of American history led to use of such buildings in television and motion pictures as a means of evoking the 1950s and 1960s, gaining it wider recognition. In addition, organizations such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation began advocating for preservation of important examples of Googie style architecture. As Steven Izenour asserted, it is important "to set architectural diversity within a larger cultural context where extraordinary buildings know their place, and ordinary buildings can be seen to be extraordinary."¹⁵

William B. Bastien, Sr., and the Moon Drive-In

William B. Bastien, Sr., the original proprietor of Bastien's Restaurant, was born in Denver, Colorado, in 1894. His parents, Charles and Rosa, immigrated to the United States from Germany in the 1880s. By the time he was fifteen years old Bastien's parents had divorced, and he worked as an apprentice in a trunk factory. He served in the U.S. Army during World War I and then married Ruth Bickett in Denver in 1918. Bastien gained employment as a shipping clerk with the S.H. Kress Department Store in Denver and subsequently managed company stores in Nogales, Arizona; Wichita, Kansas; and Denver. He retired from his retail career in 1936 and turned his efforts to the restaurant business.¹⁶

¹³ Hess, *Googie*, 61-62, 65, 79, 82; Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 113-115 and 120; Alan Hess, *The Architecture of John Lautner* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1999), 12; "Introduction to Googie" accessed at <http://spaceagecity.com/googie> on 13 February 2007; Hess, *Googie Redux*, 192-197.

¹⁴ Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 97; White Spot owner quoted in Hess, *Googie*, 120; Hess, *Googie*, 121.

¹⁵ Steven Izenour, "Introduction," in Hess, *Googie*, 8.

¹⁶ While some accounts indicate that William Bastien was born in Alsace, federal and Kansas State census data and his World War I draft registration card report that he was born in Colorado. *Denver Post*, 10 June 1969, 15 and *Rocky Mountain News*, 11 June 1969 (Bastien obituaries); U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, manuscript returns, Denver County, Colorado, 1910, Sedgwick County, Kansas, 1930; Kansas State Census, Sedgwick County, 1925; William Bastien, World War I Draft Registration Card, 7 June 1917, Ancestry.com, accessed 26 April 2009; Christi Leavitt, "William, Charles and Rosa Bastien, Denver, 1890s," posted 24 February 2006, GenForum, Genealogy.com, accessed 6 May 2009.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 9Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

In 1937, Bastien purchased the established Moon Drive-In at the northeast corner of East Colfax Avenue and Madison Street.¹⁷ The business was a metal barbecue stand with an open car shed and at least two brick and stucco additions. The 1920-68 period represented a golden era for commercial development along Denver's East Colfax Avenue. The street was a segment of transcontinental U.S. 40 and served as the eastern automotive gateway into Denver. Scores of retail and service businesses located along the thoroughfare.

Several members of the Bastien family helped in the restaurant. William, Jr. (who was born in Denver in 1922), recalls an instance during World War II when the only food the restaurant could obtain was chicken, and "his mother had to come in and fry chicken all day—the only item on the menu." His father sometimes would call the family home for extra help: "Tell Billy to get on his bike and come downtown. We need a dishwasher." Son Thomas Bastien helped in the business while he attended law school. In addition to the Moon Drive-In, the Bastiens also started the Mary Lou Drive-In at East Colfax and Hudson Street and the Welcome Inn in Globeville. Bastien purchased the land on which the Moon stood in 1948 and subsequently undertook several improvements to the facility, including a \$5,000 addition in 1951. The Moon featured carhops in cheerleader outfits on roller skates and served such fare as steak sandwiches, corn dogs, French fries, ice cream floats, and beer.¹⁸

By the late 1950s, the popularity and economic viability of drive-in restaurants like the Moon were waning. As Philip Langdon recounted in *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, drive-ins were impacted by negative images associated with disruptive teenagers and litter, as well as competitive pressure from coffee shops and fast food franchises. Drive-in business dropped during colder winter months, whereas coffee shop operations could count on more stable year-round customer patronage. Fast food outlets operated with fewer employees than drive-ins and enjoyed quicker customer turnover.¹⁹

Construction of Bastien's Restaurant

Aware of the trends noted above and desiring to own a different type of restaurant, William Bastien demolished his existing drive-in and erected a new, sit-down eatery designed in a style aimed at attracting cars full of tourists and residents of the city to his dining room. Restaurant journals of the day advised operators about the latest trends in restaurant design. In 1957, *American Restaurant* published articles on "Eyecatching Roofs Catch Customers" and "Always Beckoning Customers."²⁰

The Designers

William Bastien, Sr., selected Bernard Ninian Cahlander, Jr., of Boulder, to design his new restaurant (See Figure H3). Joseph P. Dunn served as assistant architect for the project, and John O.

¹⁷ Bastien purchased only the business and not the land at this time.

¹⁸ Marty Meitus, "Old is Nouvelle: Venerable Bastien's Catches the Nostalgia Wave," *Rocky Mountain News*, 29 July 1999, F1; Tom Noel, "Close Look at 'The Fax' Reveals Vibrant Reality," *Rocky Mountain News*, 12 June 2006, 2D; City and County of Denver Assessor, Real Estate Transfer Books, William B. Bastien, Book 6464, Page 147, 3 November 1948, Warranty Deed, Denver Public Library, Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver, Colorado; City and County of Denver, building permits, Denver Public Library, Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver, Colorado.

¹⁹ Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 74-77; Glenda Cronkhite, "Bastien's Celebrates 50 Years," *Denver Catholic Register*, 10 February 1988, 19.

²⁰ *American Restaurant*, May 1957 and June 1957, cited in Landgon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 117 and 209.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 10

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

McNamara was the consulting engineer.²¹ The original plans for the building, drafted in 1958, are displayed in the upper level of the restaurant.²²

Cahlander (1923-1978), a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He received a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from Catholic University of America (1950) and a Master's degree in the same subject from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1952). Cahlander's early work experience included designer and designer-draftsman positions at architectural and engineering firms in Baltimore and Hyattsville, Maryland; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Boston, Massachusetts; and Boulder, Colorado. His master's thesis proposed a plan for a multi-building cottage-style campus for the homeless Catholic children of Boston. Cahlander taught architecture as an assistant professor at the University of Colorado in Boulder during 1952-53 and at Notre Dame University during 1953-54. He returned to Colorado in the mid- to late-1950s and conducted a private practice in Boulder and Denver for about five years. In his Notre Dame faculty profile, Cahlander indicated most of his commissions were for houses.²³

In Boulder, Cahlander designed the Alan H. and Kathryn Shapley House (1957), a Usonian style residence described in a recent historic buildings survey as "one of the finest Modernist residences in Boulder from the 1950s." Cahlander also designed the Garden of the Savior Monument at Mountain View Memorial Park cemetery in Boulder. He told his daughter, Susan Cahlander, he played a role in the design of McFarlane Residence Hall (1959) at the University of Denver, although the architect of record for that project was Edwin A. Francis of Denver. According to Cahlander's daughter, "his health failed" and he did not work much after the early 1960s. The architect died in 1978.²⁴

Cahlander's design for Bastien's Restaurant was a striking twelve-sided building with a folded plate roof, a translucent "sky dome" at its center, thin concrete block walls with concrete buttresses, plate glass windows with trapezoidal and triangular transoms, and a towering, free-standing neon sign.²⁵ The towering twenty-five-foot-tall neon sign to the south, installed in January 1959, was fabricated by Advance Neon Sign Company of Denver, headed by Carl Carlson. What architecture writer Michael Webb observed for Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles is equally applicable to the long East Colfax

²¹ John O. McNamara graduated from the University of Colorado in 1957 and died in 2008.

²² The drawings still referred to the planned building as the Moon Restaurant. Bernard N. Cahlander, architect, Moon Restaurant, Denver, Colorado, 2 July 1958, Bastien's Restaurant, Denver, Colorado.

²³ Bernard N. Cahlander, "A Home for the Catholic Children of Boston" (Master's thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1952); Bernard N. Cahlander, Faculty and Administration Questionnaire, 25 September 1953, University of Notre Dame, Archives, South Bend, Indiana; Pete Zook, Boulder, Colorado, Telephone Interview by Thomas H. Simmons, 11 May 2009.

²⁴ Michael Paglia, Leonard Segel, and Diane Wray, Shapley House, Architectural Inventory form, 5BL.8271, June 2000, on file at Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Denver, Colorado; Mark Rodgers, Campus Architect, University of Denver, Telephone Interview with Thomas H. Simmons, 4 May 2009; Garden of the Savior, Mountain View Memorial Park, newspaper advertisement, Susan Cahlander, Cupertino, California.

²⁵ The restaurant's design bore some similarities to the Peter Pan Snack Shop, 645 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts, designed by William Riseman Associates in 1956. That building was octagonal, with a folded plate roof and trapezoidal expanses of plate glass. While Cahlander spent some years in the Boston area in the early 1950s, it is not known if he was aware of the Riseman building. See Langdon, *Orange Roofs, Golden Arches*, 122-23.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section No. 8 Page 11Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Avenue corridor: "Everyone was on the move, and in an expansive, low-rise city, a tall neon sign could attract motorists from miles away."²⁶

The restaurant interior featured multiple levels, with the main dining room and lounge at the level of the main entrance, an upper level dining area (immediately under the skydome) accessed by a suspended flight of stairs, and a lower level coffee shop with a counter and stools. According to one of his sons, Bastien quipped he disliked the round design because "you can't sweep the dirt into the corners."²⁷

Operation of the Restaurant

In some respects, Bastien hedged his bets in the design of the new restaurant, for he had Cahlander include elements that would permit continued drive-in service, including angled parking spaces partially sheltered by a canopy at the rear of the building and a concrete ramp from the kitchen to the rear door to accommodate carhops on roller skates. These features were never used for their intended purpose. The building's striking appearance, open interior, and skylight led the owner to refer to the restaurant as "Bastien's Rotunda." Stylized drawings of the building on menus gave it the appearance of a flying saucer (See Figure H4) and one newspaper article likened it to a circus tent.

Initially, Bastien's served breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A dinner menu from the early 1960s presented such familiar American fare as a broiled New York cut steak with onion rings for \$4.00, half a pan-fried spring chicken for \$2.00, and Virginia baked ham with raisin sauce for \$2.00 (See Figure H5). Over the decades such notable celebrities as writer Truman Capote, actor James MacArthur (of the popular "Hawaii Five-0" television series), and singer-rock guitarist Chris Daughtry (of "American Idol" fame) have patronized the restaurant. According to William Bastien, Jr., Capote reportedly "showed up for a drink—while in town drying out at a sanitarium."²⁸

In the spring of 1969, the elder Bastien remarked to his son that "I ought to turn this over to you." He transferred ownership of the property to William B. Bastien, Jr., on 29 April (See Figure H6). On 9 June, two weeks after returning from his annual trip to the Kentucky Derby, William Bastien died. His son continued to operate the business. In about 1975, he removed the coffee shop on the lower level to expand the dining area. Jeannine Bastien, William, Jr.'s, daughter, began managing the restaurant about fifteen years ago.

Popular dishes over the years have included Bastien's famous New York Sugar Steak (a steak cooked in butter and brown sugar producing a caramelized crust), Shrimp in Overcoats (beer-battered, deep-fried shrimp), and an array of house-made desserts, such as skillet pies (ice-cream topped pies served on a hot, cast-iron platter) and New Orleans-style bread pudding with rum sauce.

²⁶ Advance Neon Sign Company, Denver, Colorado, Bastien's Neon Sign, Installed January 1959, "STEAKS" panel installed April 1961, facsimile to Front Range Research Associates, Inc., 5 May 2009; Michael Webb, "Lights in the Night Along Wilshire," in *A Guide to Neon Lights Along the Wilshire Corridor*, Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department and the California Institute of the Arts, c. 1999, accessed at www.publicartinla.com, 6 May 2009.

²⁷ Marty Meitus, "Old is Nouvelle: Venerable Bastien's Catches the Nostalgia Wave," *Rocky Mountain News*, 29 July 1999, F1.

²⁸ Meitus, "Old is Nouvelle," F1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 12

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Jeannine Bastien attributes the restaurant's longevity to a simple philosophy: "Good food at reasonable prices—made from scratch."²⁹

More than two decades ago, local historian Phil Goodstein described Bastien's and the nearby Blarney Castle as "two of the oldest continuously operating bars/restaurants in town." In 1997, Thom Wise wrote of Bastien's in the *Rocky Mountain News*: "It is what it is: good ol' dependable comfort food." Historian Thomas J. Noel recently called Bastien's "a time capsule to cherish" that offers "the best, most affordable steaks in town."³⁰ *Rocky Mountain News* dining critic John Lehndorff summed up the restaurant's appeal:

Other eateries such as Steuben's go to great lengths to re-create the look of restaurants past. Bastien's isn't "retro." It's real. . . . Bastien's isn't one of those sad restaurants that has become a parody of itself and hangs on by reputation alone. It continues to satisfy customers in the here and now.³¹

²⁹ Meitus, "Old is Nouvelle," F1-F2; Tucker Shaw (dining critic), "Bastien's and the Capital Grille: Two Ideas Are Great Steak-Outs for Dads," *Denver Post*, 14 June 2006.

³⁰ The Blarney Castle has since closed. Phil Goodstein, *Denver's Capitol Hill* (Denver: Life Publications, 1988), 71; Thom Wise, *Rocky Mountain News*, 17 October 1997; Tom Noel, "Close Look at 'The Fax' Reveals Vibrant Reality," *Rocky Mountain News*, 17 June 2006, 2D.

³¹ John Lehndorff (dining critic), "A Delicious Steakout at Bastien's," *Rocky Mountain News*, 2 February 2007.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 13

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 14

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Schumacher, Charles E., architectural designer. "Patio Addition to Bastien's Restaurant." Site Plan and Floor Plan, Drawing A-1. 26 May 2004.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 10 Page 15

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Geographic Information

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated area at the northeast corner of East Colfax Avenue and Madison Street consists of Lots 18 through 23 (inclusive), Block 20, Colfax Avenue Park Subdivision, City and County of Denver, Colorado.

Boundary Justification

The nominated area contains the building and the parking area historically associated with its operation.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 16

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Photograph Log: Current

Common Photographic Label Information:

Resource Name: Bastien's Restaurant
Location: Denver, Colorado
Negative Location: Colfax Business Improvement District, Denver, Colorado
Photographer: Roger Whitacre
Date: February 2009

Information Different for Each View:

Photograph Number, Description of View, and Camera Direction

Photograph Number	Description of View	Camera Direction
1	Front entrance, with patio and west wall to left and neon sign and south wall to right.	NE
2	South wall and neon sign.	N
3	Neon sign detail.	E
4	East wall and neon sign.	WNW
5	East end of north wall (rear). Note angled parking spaces and canopy adjacent to building.	WNW
6	West end of north wall (rear). Note angled parking spaces and canopy adjacent to building.	SE
7	West wall with patio in foreground.	E
8	Main dining room with stairs to upper level dining area at right. Note windows with trapezoidal and triangular transoms, tongue-and-groove wood ceiling, and extruded metal screen.	NW
9	Upper level dining area. Note extruded metal screen to left and the skydome at the top, where the steel beams of the building's framework meet in a twelve-sided collar.	NNE
10	Lounge area with sunken bar at right. Main entrance is behind the double French doors down the corridor and the opening at the top provides a view into the upper level dining area.	W

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section No. PHOTOS Page 17Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS**Photograph/Figure Log: Historic**

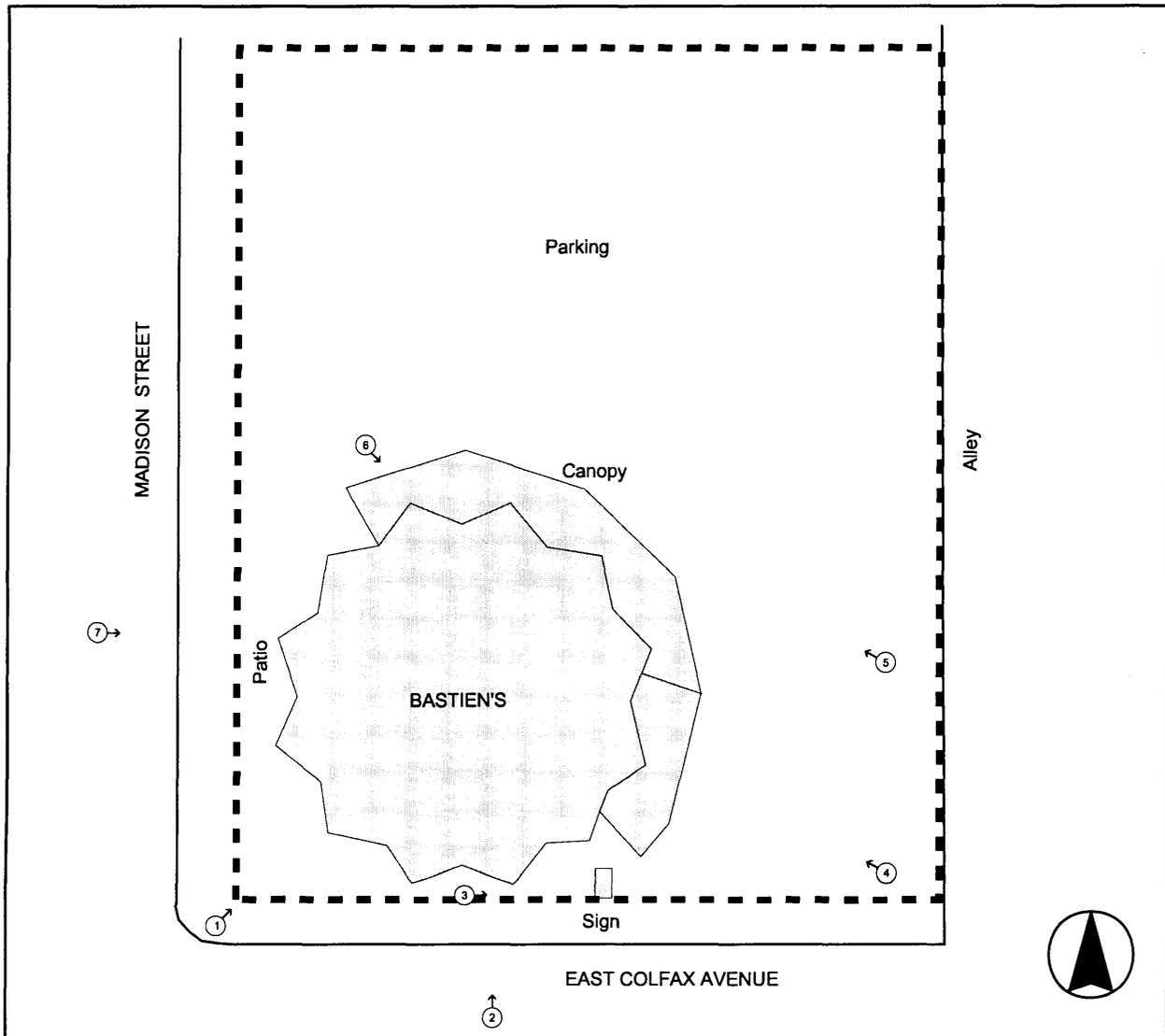
These photographs/figures may not be included in internet posted documents and other publishing venues due to possible copyright restrictions.

Photo/Fig. Number	Description of View	Camera Direction
H1	Bastien's Restaurant resembles a flower or a circus tent from the air. SOURCE: Google Earth, 2007.	N/A
H2	This plan view of Bastien's Restaurant, showing principal main floor interior uses, was prepared in conjunction with the construction of the patio to the west. The door onto the patio was actually placed in the north bay. SOURCE: Charles E. Schumacher, architectural designer, "Patio Addition to Bastien's Restaurant," Site Plan and Floor Plan, Drawing A-1, 26 May 2004 (annotated extract).	N/A
H3	Architect Bernard Ninian Cahlander, Jr., in the 1950s. SOURCE: Susan Cahlander, Cupertino, California.	N/A
H4	The futuristic form of the restaurant is emphasized on the cover of this Bastien's menu from the 1960s or 1970s. Bastien's Restaurant, Denver, Colorado.	NE
H5	This Bastien's dinner menu from the 1960s gives an idea of the scope of the restaurant's offerings and the prices then charged. Bastien's Restaurant, Denver, Colorado.	N/A
H6	William B. Bastien, Jr., his wife, their four children, and another family member stand in front of the restaurant in this circa 1960 view. Extruded metal panels, used to decorate sections of the exterior walls and as screening on the interior, are visible at the left. SOURCE: Bastien's Restaurant, undated menu.	N/A

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Section No. MAPS Page 18



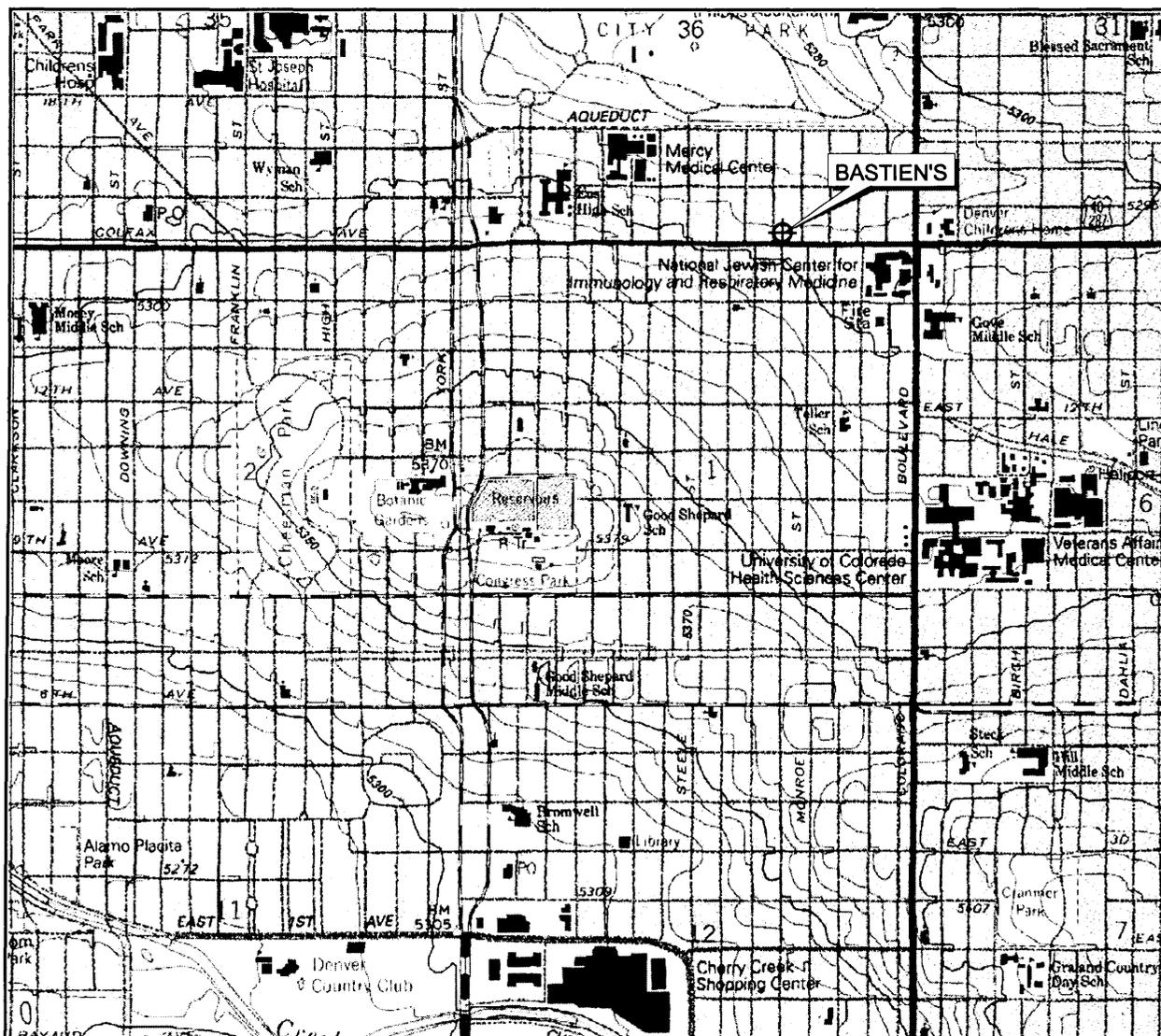
Sketch Map. The shaded building is the nominated restaurant, with the dashed line indicating the nomination boundary. Circled numbers with arrows are photograph locations and camera directions. One inch equals approximately 31 feet.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Section No. MAPS Page 19



USGS Location Map. Extract of Englewood, Colo., 7.5 minute map, 1997.

800 0 800 1600 Feet



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. Historic Figures Page 20

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

Historic Photographs/Figures



Figure H1. Bastien's Restaurant resembles a flower or circus tent from the air. SOURCE: Google Earth, 2007.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. Historic Figures Page 22

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS



Figure H3. Architect Bernard Ninian Cahlander, Jr., shown here in the 1950s, was the architect for Bastien's. SOURCE: Susan Cahlander, Cupertino, California.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. Historic Figures Page 23

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

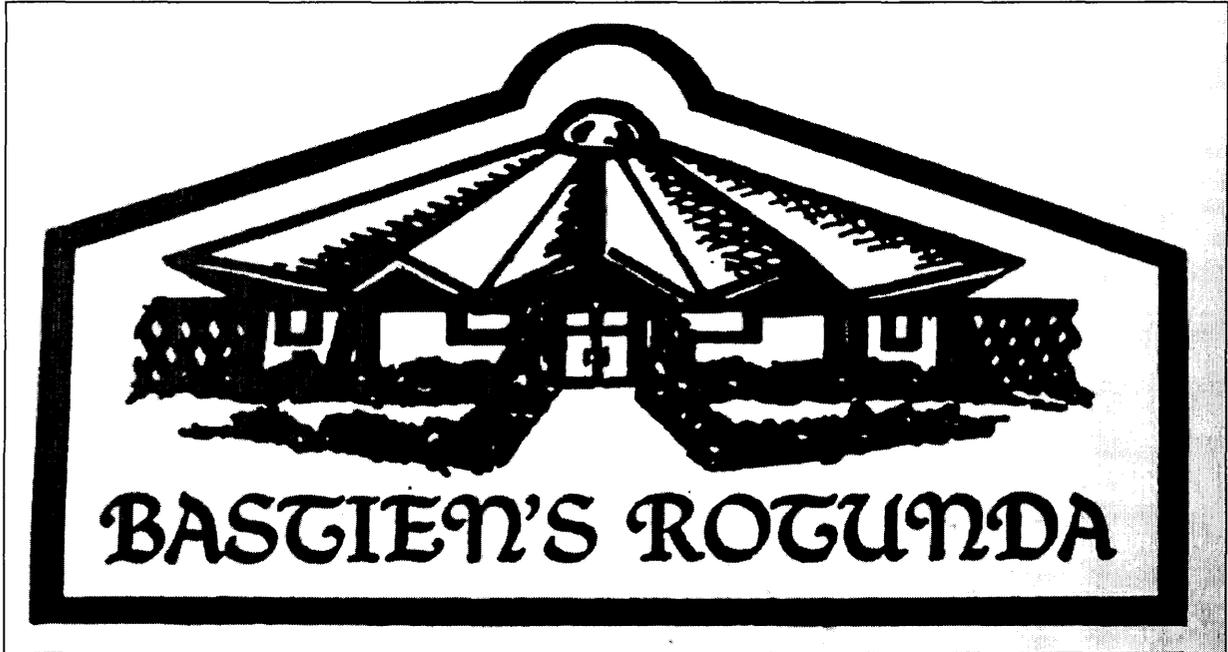


Figure H4. The futuristic form of the restaurant is emphasized on the cover of this Bastien's menu from the 1960s or 1970s. Bastien's Restaurant, Denver, Colorado.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. Historic Figures Page 24

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS

BASTIEN'S DINNERS			
Choice of:			
Chicken Vermicelli Soup	Tomato Juice	Fruit Cocktail	
Seafood Cocktail	Orange Juice		
Herring Cutlets in Wine Sauce	.35		
Shrimp Cocktail	.60		
Virginia Baked Ham, Raisin Sauce	. . . . .	2.00	
Oven Baked Swiss Steak	. . . . .	2.00	
Roast Colorado Young Tom Turkey, Celery Dressing, Giblet Gravy and Cranberry Sauce	. . . . .	2.00	
Roast Choice Top Sirloin of Beef	. . . . .	2.00	
Deep Fried Golden French Fried Shrimp, Bastien's Cocktail Sauce	. . . . .	2.00	
One-half Pan-Fried Spring Chicken	. . . . .	2.00	
Grilled Center Cut Pork Chops, Apple Sauce	. . . . .	2.50	
Broiled U. S. Choice Club Steak, Onion Rings	. . . . .	3.00	
Broiled U. S. Choice New York Cut Steak, Onion Rings	. . . . .	4.00	
Choice of:			
Hot Vegetable	Cream Slaw	Apple Sauce	Jello
French Fried Potatoes	Cream Whipped Potatoes		
Baked Potato	Hash Brown Potatoes		
Sour Cream Dressing	.15		
Tossed Green Salad, Choice of Dressing			
Italian Garlic Bread	.45		
Wine Sundae	Ice Cream	Assorted Pies	
Cheesecake	Sherbet	Chocolate Sundae	
Coffee	Tea	Milk	Buttermilk

Figure H5. This Bastien's dinner menu from the 1960s gives an idea of the scope of the restaurant's offerings and the prices then charged. Bastien's Restaurant, Denver, Colorado.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. Historic Figures Page 25

Bastien's Restaurant, Denver County, Colorado
Commercial Resources of the East Colfax Avenue Corridor MPS



Figure H6. William B. Bastien, Jr., his wife, their four children, and another family member stand in front of the restaurant in this circa 1960 view. Extruded metal panels, used to decorate sections of the exterior walls and as screening on the interior, are visible at the left. SOURCE: Bastien's Restaurant, undated menu.