

16 new restaurants coming to 2 mega lifestyle centers in Palm Beach County

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A sleepy slice of the suburbs in western Palm Beach County will be morphed into a hopping entertainment hub with the arrival of two lifestyle centers touting 16 new restaurants, a movie theater, bowling alley, grocery store and comedy club.

The first, the under-construction Lotis Wellington, is expected to finish the first of two phases as soon as this December on State Road 7, next to Wellington Regional Medical Center. The buzzy live-work-play enclave will offer nine chain restaurants, including new outposts of Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana, Cooper's Hawk Winery and Restaurant and Naked Taco. Built atop a former shell-rock mine, the project will also bring retail shops, 191 multifamily units and a cypress preserve framing an 18-acre lake.

Next door, to the north, phase two of Lotis will offer 136 apartments, 102 single-family homes and three more spaces for restaurants or retail, said Roxanne Register, senior vice president for the leasing agent, Katz & Associates. One tenant that's already signed on for phase two is PopStroke, the Jupiter-based miniature golf course and restaurant chain designed by golfing icon Tiger Woods.

Lotis Wellington, whose first of two phases is now under construction, will bring outposts of Cooper's Hawk Winery, Naked Taco and Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana to State Road 7 in Wellington. The first phase is currently expected to finish construction by December. (Lotis Group and JKM Developers / Courtesy)

The second project, Tuttle Royale, is billed as a "CityPlace of the west" by Tuttle Land Investments and its namesake CEO, Brian Tuttle, and expects to open its complex of seven restaurants by late 2025 on the southwest corner of Southern Boulevard and State Road 7 in Royal Palm Beach. Those chain restaurants include The Cheesecake Factory, Ruth's Chris Steak House and Agave Bandido.

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That's in addition to a Bowlero bowling alley with 32 lanes, a 716-seat iPic dine-in movie theater, The Fresh Market and a new 19,919-square-foot home for the Palm Beach Improv, which closed its longtime perch in West Palm Beach's The Square this month.

Over the next two years, Lotis Wellington and Tuttle Royale will rise on a combined 323 acres of unkept land north of The Mall at Wellington Green, along State Road 7 between Forest Hill and Southern boulevards. Developers have grown bullish on Wellington since the pandemic, lured by the village's rising population, which has prompted more restaurant chains to migrate from downtown West Palm Beach into the suburbs.

"There has been a great influx of residential units in Wellington with very little variety in existing restaurants," Register said in a news release. "It has been our pleasure to ... create a sense of community. We have user-friendly walkways throughout the project and a great deal of parking."

Chef Ralph Pagano, the restaurant impresario behind the clubby Mexican restaurant chain Naked Taco, told the South Florida Sun Sentinel this week that he signed a 20-year lease for his new 5,000-square-foot kitchen at Lotis Wellington, where he plans to open by the fourth quarter of 2024. He said the development is great for "professionals who want the convenience of living in Palm Beach while not dealing with (downtown) West Palm.

"I'm in a place where I can really shine," Pagano said of Lotis Wellington. "The developer gets that these new live-work-play lifestyle plazas are the new city centers, places with parking and residents right next door. They need restaurants that are best in class, and that's Naked Taco."

Tuttle Royale is expected to bring seven new restaurants, an iPic dine-in movie theater and the relocated Palm Beach Improv to its new lifestyle center in Royal Palm Beach sometime in 2025. (Tuttle Land Investments / Courtesy)

Entertainment options shrank at West Palm Beach's The Square in May when Palm Beach Improv shut its doors after 22 years, following similar closures this month of an AMC theater and Copper Blues Rock Pub & Kitchen. Joel Bachkoff, owner of Palm Beach Improv and Copper Blues, confirmed this week that the plan is for both venues to migrate to Tuttle Royale, although no leases are yet signed.

Meanwhile, high-end office towers, financial firms and New York restaurants such as Milos, Felice and Harry's are shuffling into The Square, prompting the New York Post to recently christen the area as "Wall Street South."

Jo-El Quinlan, Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurants senior vice president of development, said the recent pattern of restaurants migrating west "has both encouraged us and reinforced our decision to land in Wellington.

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“It maintains that we made the right choice,” Quinlan added. And with Tuttle Royale next door, “two major projects (are) providing the community with more destinations for dining, shopping and more.”

Here’s a lineup of all 16 restaurants coming to Lotis Wellington and Tuttle Royale.

Lotis Wellington

Cooper’s Hawk Winery & Restaurants: This fast-growing chain is part Napa Valley-style, wine-tasting room and part upscale-casual restaurant featuring American comfort food. At 10,730 square feet, Cooper’s Hawk is one of Lotis Wellington’s biggest tenants.

Lazy Dog: This Southern California gastropub chain dishes American comfort classics such as barbecue bison meatloaf, pot-roast beef dips, peanut butter-and-jelly burgers, and St. Louis-style ribs. And it’s dog-friendly, as the name implies.

Turning Point: Pancakes and Belgian waffles, omelets and bruschetta benedict, salads and sandwiches distinguish this breakfast-brunch-lunch chain from the Northeast.

Naked Taco: This Mexican restaurant that began its life in South Beach serves stiff pomegranate margaritas plus tacos loaded with grilled octopus, Philly cheesesteak and Key West shrimp.

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana: This beloved shrine for New Haven, Conn.-style pie connoisseurs — especially those who cherish its coal-fired white clam “apizza” — is having a South Florida growth spurt, with two other locations in Delray Beach and Plantation.

Mooyah Burgers, Fries & Shakes: This Texas-based franchise of fast-casual patty joints offers hand-cut fries, hot dogs and milkshakes along with turkey and vegan burgers.

Foxtail Coffee Co.: This Orlando-born coffeehouse chain is plotting explosive growth over the next year with 15 new locations and a menu of single-origin blends, cold brews, iced teas, chai and matcha lattes.

Raw Juce: Founded in Boca Raton, this chain serves up cold-pressed juices, smoothies, salads and other plant-based dishes.

Mazza Mediterranean Cuisine: This sister restaurant to Mazza’s flagship in Pembroke Pines features a variety of Lebanese and Greek entrees, such as kabobs, shawarma, hummus and pita.

Tuttle Royale

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The Cheesecake Factory: The California-based national restaurant chain is bringing its impressively thick menu, towering columns, seating booths and more than 30 flavors of rich cheesecake.

Ruth's Chris Steak House: Now a venerable empire of steakhouses, the New Orleans-born chain offers high-end tomahawk ribeyes, lamb chops and lobster tails along with craft cocktails.

North Italia: This Cheesecake Factory-owned Italian eatery dishes wood-fired pies, pastas and entrees such as grilled branzino.

Agave Bandido: Started in Pembroke Pines, this Mexican kitchen and tequila bar adorned in murals and purple fluorescent skulls serves up contemporary cuisine, vibrant cocktails and hefty burritos.

Oak & Stone: Tavern-style pizza, stone-oven wings, cheeseburgers, Philly cheesesteak eggrolls and a self-serve wall of craft beer taps are all found at this mini-chain.

Arigna Irish Pub and Coal Fire Kitchen: The Irish sports pub, which has three locations in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, is expanding to South Florida with Quahog clam chowder, fish and chips, meatball heroes and shepherd's pie.

Mana and Mojito: A Greek restaurant will combine forces with South Florida-born Mojito bar and serve meze and traditional Greek entrees along with passionfruit and coconut mojitos. No menu is yet available.