

A Closer Look at Fall Openings

Written by Geoffrey Anderson Jr. and Dianne Rubin, BT Contributors
September 2018

Food news we know you can use



September is here, and we're halfway through what's arguably one of the most beloved South Florida food events: Miami Spice. The two-month-long promotion has been keeping diners busy with budget-friendly lunches, brunches, and dinners at more than 200 restaurants.

What's next, after the deals wrap up on September 30? Plenty. Miami food fans better save some room after Miami Spice, as new restaurants galore will grace our city. One of these new restaurants is **800° Woodfired Kitchen** (2956 NE 199th St., Suite C-3). Miami Heat stars Dwyane Wade and Udonis Haslem have partnered with the West Coast-based concept to bring pizza, rotisserie meats, and more to Aventura this fall; the eatery joins a heavy-hitting culinary lineup in the area that includes the likes of Pubblely Sushi, Tap 42, and CVI.CHE 105. A second location is in the works and slated to open at the MiamiCentral station next year.

Wade and Haslem aren't the only celebrities backing an upcoming restaurant. Singer Pharrell Williams has teamed up with hospitality maven David Grutman to open **Swan and Bar Bevy** (90 NE 39th St.) in the Design District. Details surrounding the dual restaurant-bar concept are still sparse, but given Grutman's local track record -- Brickell's Komodo and South Beach's Planta (a personal favorite) -- we have high hopes for this fall 2018 venture.

Further south, **North Italia** (900 S. Miami Ave., #111) is due to open before year's end in the former Oceanaire space. The Brickell space sat empty for a while, so we're glad to see someone finally take care of that eyesore. This location is the restaurant's first Florida outpost, and guests can expect an assortment of classic, hearty pastas like strozzapreti, spaghetti and meatballs, and tagliatelle Bolognese, along with other Italian specialties.

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On the sweeter side, pastry fans also have something to look forward to: **Pink Pie** (170 NW 26th St.). The pie shop, which has been working out of Hollywood's Yellow Green Farmers Market, is expanding its footprint with a Wynwood brick-and-mortar location. Unlike other pie shops, Pink Pie specializes in miniature pies roughly three inches wide. Our waistlines are grateful for the smaller size. With irresistible flavors like maple bacon, salted caramel, and guava cheese, diets everywhere are in danger.

OPENINGS

If your stomach is grumbling, we don't blame you. Unfortunately, these restaurants are still a ways off. Fortunately, recent openings are more than enough to keep us busy until then.

Arguably the biggest opening is **Sushi Erika** (1700 79th St. Cswy., 786-216-7216), a new establishment from the daughter of the owner of Japanese Market/Sushi Deli, which shuttered last year. Several sashimi and sushi options from its predecessor are back, and new menu items, such as octopus salad, have tagged along for the ride. Also making a return are the long wait times. Prepare to wait an hour or more during prime lunch hours at this North Bay Village locale.

In Sunny Isles Beach, **BALEENkitchen** (17315 Collins Ave., 786-923-9305) has reopened at the Sole on the Ocean Hotel. The upscale Coconut Grove restaurant closed years ago, and most considered it a permanent departure. However, a change of ownership has brought the brand back to life, albeit in a more casual form. On the menu are sliders, tuna tacos, and other accessible fare at prices that won't break the bank.

Those who prefer some entertainment with their meal can pay a visit to **Silverspot Cinema (300 SE 3rd St., #100, 305-536-5000) in downtown Miami**. The new six-floor movie theater features the usual upscale cinema trimmings like comfortable reserved seating, but sets itself apart with a varied American menu featuring roasted beet salad, smoked ribs, and lobster rolls. Don't worry: Popcorn and traditional theater

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bites haven't gone anywhere. There's also a full bar to help you wash everything down.

CLOSINGS

Last month, chef Phuket Thongsodchareondee (aka Cake) quietly closed **Cake Thai Zap Elee**, his Brickell popup at B Bistro + Bakery. The chef temporarily took over dinner and late-night services at the bistro, where he cooked up delicious items like grilled pork salad and pork ribs soup. His original restaurant -- Cake Thai in MiMo -- continues to operate, and we wouldn't be surprised to see him pop up elsewhere soon.

Geoffrey Anderson Jr. and Dianne Rubin are co-founders of Miami Food Pug, an award-winning South Florida food blog that fuses the couple's love of dogs and food.

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