

RESTAURANT NEWS

New Kasumi brings modern Japanese cuisine to Boca Raton

Wilton Manors' Bubbles & Pearls and Thai Me Up close

By Phillip Valys and Rod Stafford Hagwood
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NOW OPEN

Kasumi
999 E. Camino Real, Boca Raton; 561-226-3033; KasumiBoca.com
This modern Japanese restaurant from James Beard Award-winning chef Takashi Yagihashi (Best Chef: Midwest 2003) and chef-restaurateur Jonathan Fox debuted Oct. 19 inside the luxe Waterstone Resort & Marina, perched on the Boca Raton Inlet. "We aim to create a unique dining experience that celebrates the rich traditions of Japanese cuisine," said Eric Hammer, general manager of the 150-seat waterfront restaurant. Kasumi's menu leans heavily into sushi and sashimi, nigiri and maki rolls prepared from Japanese-sourced seafood, alongside larger plates including a 4-ounce Wagyu beef striploin, Moro Miso-Crusted Pompano and Chicken Toban Yaki. There are also craft cocktails, Japanese whiskies, sake and wine.

Safai
470 N. Federal Highway, Boynton Beach; 561-247-5215; safairrestaurant.com
Chef Bobby Safaie and the Boynton Beach Community Redevelopment Agency hosted a grand opening for Safai on Friday, Nov. 8. A Florida Atlantic University graduate, Safaie has worked at Josie's Ristorante in Boynton Beach, Ke'e Grill in Boca Raton, Cut 432 in Delray Beach and several country clubs. He was head chef at Delray Beach's shuttered Sush Jazz Cafe. And his food truck, called The PopUp, opened in 2019 only to close a year later because of the pandemic. But now he's back to his fine dining roots. "So my concept with Safai is international fusion and traditional cuisine, but tweaked to a fine dining/higher-end dish," he explains. "A lot of places are doing Asian fusion. I want to go beyond that and do classic French fusions, Mediterranean fusions and so forth."

Crema Gourmet Espresso Bar
222 Commercial Blvd., Lauderdale-by-the-Sea; cremagourmet.com
Just a few steps from the beach in L-B-T-S, Crema in September opened a 2,000-square-foot space with what's described as an "industrial cafe-bistro vibe." Boasting locations throughout South Florida, Crema serves breakfast fare, pressed juices, pastas, sandwiches, salads, wine and beer. Its most popular dishes include the Open Face Breakfast Sandwich, Chicken Club Sandwich and Salmon Bowl.

16 Handles
4050 U.S. Highway 1, Jupiter; 561-781-3214; 16handles.com
This NYC-based frozen yogurt and desserts destination has made its first entry into the SoFlo market with this location near Jupiter Beach. Local couple Josh and Jordan Chernes noticed a hole in the frozen treats market when they moved to Jupiter from Connecticut four years ago. "We're so excited to bring 16 Handles to Jupiter," Jordan Chernes says. "I've been a huge fan for years, ever since I first visited the Fairfield, Connecticut, location. It quickly became my go-to spot for frozen yogurt." 16 Handles opened on Friday, Nov. 15, with a menu highlighting 16 soft-serve flavors and more than 50 toppings and sauces. There are also frozen novelties such as



A seafood offering at the new Kasumi, a modern Japanese restaurant that debuted in October inside the Waterstone Resort & Marina in Boca Raton. **KASUMI**



Safai restaurant's Hamachi Belly Crudo. **SAFAI**

cakes, take-home pints and gourmet edible cookie dough. Options include vegan, nonfat and no-sugar-added frozen yogurt and ice cream. They also spotlight innovative, limited-edition flavors including French Fry, Squid Ink, Butter Beer and Keto Chocolate Brownie.

ROK Prime Korean BBQ
1727 S. Federal Highway, Boynton Beach; 561-739-8927; rokprimebbq.com
Under the auspices of chef Michael Kwon, this second location of ROK Prime — which had its grand opening on Nov. 7 — continues the tradition of immersive dining with tabletop grilling, curated meats and a variety of banchan sides. Appetizers include Kimchee Pancake, Chicken Karage Bites and Fried Gim-Mari, and entree choices include Yangyum Galbi, Sauced Pork Belly and Sweet Soy Marinated Chicken. The original location is in Lauderhill.

The Clubhouse at North Palm Beach Country Club
951 U.S. Highway 1, North Palm Beach; 561-691-3430; lessings.com/corporate/restaurants
No worries, you don't have to be a member in order to enjoy the dining at this country club, which is publicly owned by The Village of North Palm Beach. The Clubhouse, the property's pavilion restaurant, opened Nov. 4 in partnership with Lessing's Hospitality Group. The fare is designed to spotlight "the freshest local catches and creative culinary delights," according to the website. Said North Palm Beach Mayor Susan Bickel: "The Village of North Palm Beach is excited to embark

on this new chapter for North Palm Beach Country Club by blending innovation with tradition. Our alliance with Lessing's Hospitality Group will help transform the North Palm Beach Country Club into a premier community destination for our residents and club members."

Byrd's Hot Chicken
1313 W. Boynton Beach Blvd., Boynton Beach; 561-413-2056; GetByrds.com
This California-hatched, hot-chicken chain is now roosting in the Sunshine State, with its first shake debuting in late October in the Cross Creek Centre shopping center. Here, chicken comes in five levels of heat (from plain to "SupaHot") and in many forms: brioche sandwiches, tenders, wings, nuggets and Byrd Bombs, with diced chicken tender, cheese, coleslaw, pickles and sauce on a bed of fries and toast. There are requisite sides like mac 'n' cheese and crispy green beans and, for dessert, Cake-Shakes that blend cake and scooped ice cream.

Casalina
16950 Jog Road, Delray Beach; 561-381-0037; casalinarestaurant.com
This swanky white-tablecloth sit-down fusing Italian classics and Mediterranean accents debuted Oct. 25 on Jog Road, across the street from Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens. At 6,000 square feet, the restaurant from Miami Hospitality outfit Giaspa Group (Salumeria 104, Spris Artisan Pizza) replaces the old Angelo Elia Pizza Bar Tapas with a menu built by chef-owner Angelo Masarin and chef Mattia Teagano that leans



The Clubhouse at the North Palm Beach Country Club opened in early November. **LESSING'S HOSPITALITY GROUP**

into housemade pastas and truffle-crowned risottos. "After years of developing the Miami market, we wanted to find the perfect spot in Palm Beach County that would welcome our Italian roots in a way that felt natural," Masarin said. The menu begins with Spanish octopus carpaccio, followed by entrees like New Zealand lamb scottadito, Scaloppine Marsala and Chicken Milanese and seven styles of pizza. The restaurant offers piano-bar entertainment weekly, eight craft cocktails and a lengthy wine list.

Just Salad
1841 S. Federal Highway, No. 400; Delray Beach; 866-673-3757; justsalad.com
Located at the Delray Place shopping center, this is the seventh Palm Beach County location for Just Salad. The New York-based, fast-casual restaurant chain had an August soft-opening in Delray Beach and then a grand opening the first week of September. The menu includes chef-designed salads, wraps, warm bowls, avocado toast, soups and smoothies. Foodie faves include Crispy Chicken Poblano, Thai Chicken Crunch and Tokyo Supergreens. Just Salad also has a reusable bowl program: If you purchase a bowl, you get a free salad topping with each reuse.

Kirin Restaurant
4285 N. State Road 7, Lauderdale Lakes; 954-486-8885
When one dim sum palace closes, another opens. Such is the cycle of restaurant renewal in South Florida. The space that once housed the late, great Silver Pond restaurant has been overhauled and reopened by the family behind Baoshi food hall in the Yembro Pines and the Pip stall at Glitz Marina Village at Bahia Mar Fort Lauderdale. Kirin's owners, the Ip family, are Chinese-Venezuelan restaurateurs who previously ran Gold Marquess

Cantonese restaurant in Pembroke Pines until retiring in 2022. "My dad, Phillip, decided to come out of retirement and do a dim sum restaurant again," co-owner Filbert Ip said. "We're using the same menu as we did at Gold Marquess: table-side dim sum carts, Peking duck, authentic Cantonese cuisine." Along with afternoon dim sum service, other menu items include sui mai, chicken and beef wok-fried noodles, stir-fried scallops and vegetables, steamed lobster and black pepper lamb chops.

Manta
2410 N. Federal Highway, Lighthouse Point; 954-400-9859; manta-restaurants.com
This is the second SoFlo location for Manta, with the other in Wynwood (opened in 2021). It can seat 190 guests inside and 45 outside and serves Peruvian fare, which the restaurant explains "results from the fusion of indigenous Peruvian, European and Asian cuisines." The menu features choices such as Tacos de Cebiche, the classic Mahi Mahi Cebiche and a Pisco Sour cocktail. Andres Lozada Zuzunaga and business partner Renzo Mercado Cansino also own two other Mantas as well as another concept called Tinta in Arequipa, a Peruvian city known as a culinary mecca. There was a soft opening for the Lighthouse Point eatery this summer, and a grand opening is planned for December. "I was impressed by the Lighthouse Point neighborhood and see the location as a perfect bridge between more sophisticated culinary hot spots in Fort Lauderdale and Boca Raton," Lozada Zuzunaga says. "Plus, we have great visibility on the busy Federal Highway."

Osmow's Shawarma
Sawgrass Mills mall's Food Court West, 12801 W. Sunrise Blvd., Sunrise; 954-999-5919; us.osmows.com
This is the second SoFlo

location for this fast-casual Middle Eastern eatery, the first opening in Miami in 2022. Sam Osmow started the brand in Ontario, Canada, back in 2001, blending some of his Egyptian roots with modern flavor profiles and tastes. With this latest mall spot opening on Sept. 12, there are now 180 locations throughout North America. The menu includes meat or vegetarian/vegan protein options served in wraps on beds of rox (rice) or sticks (fries).

Stephanie's Crêpes
922 N. Flagler Drive, Fort Lauderdale; 954-533-8301; stephaniescrepes.com
This fast-casual boutique brand offers a wide variety of savory and sweet crepes, but so far the most popular menu items in Fort Lauderdale appear to be the Brisket Mac & Cheese, Pork Belly and Kimchi crepes. Stephanie Cheung opened this, her third location, in July in Flagler Village's enclave called The Hive. "I am attracted by the sense of active community, the Artwalls, and the dog-friendly neighborhoods," says Cheung, who came to the restaurant biz from the diamond industry. "Flagler Village has a feel of the next Wynwood in the making." Other Stephanie's Crêpes locations can be found in Miami Beach and Coral Gables. Next up? "I would like to add more savory crepe menu items to my existing repertoire, as well as ice cream and fun beverages," she adds.

Vale Food Co.
1911 S. Federal Highway, Delray Beach; 561-563-8352; valefoodco.com
This health-conscious restaurant chain is a Florida-born concept. Founder and CEO Sunny Ilyas grew up in Coral Springs and started Vale while at Florida State University in 2014. There are now 10 locations across the state, including eateries in Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale, Miami and Pinecrest. "Reaching our 10th location in Florida is a remarkable milestone for Vale, and opening in Delray Beach represents a significant achievement in our journey," Ilyas says. "As we celebrate a decade of growth, we're excited to bring our unique blend of health-conscious dining to Delray Beach." Vale offerings include acai bowls, poke bowls and avocado toast at the cold superfood station as well as build-your-own protein bowls and signature salads at the hot-food station. There are also grab-and-go snacks and bakery items.

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