

The Charleston Restaurant Report

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The Charleston Restaurant Report is an email newsletter focused on the restaurant business in the Charleston area. The newsletter is intended to inform and enlighten restaurant owners and stakeholders in the local restaurant economy.

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Green Scene – Green Ideas for Your Restaurant

All restaurants, no matter the size, can find ways to improve their bottom lines by adopting “green” initiatives. The national restaurant groups are implementing big changes, such as pushing LEED standards into their new prototypes and switching hundreds of restaurants to environmentally responsible food packaging. Meanwhile, local independents are taking smaller steps, like changing lightbulb styles and adopting recycling programs, to make an impact. The National Restaurant Association has started a pilot program called “Greener Restaurants” to help independents find ways to make positive changes. Find out more and explore the “Virtual Green Restaurant” at <http://www.conserve.restaurant.org/>.

Local Restaurant News – Restaurant Openings Outpace Closings

In the last 12 months, there have been at least 86 new restaurant openings in the Charleston area and at least 35 restaurant closings. I use the term “at least” knowing that I am probably not aware of every opening and closing in the market. The surprising fact is that in this weak economy, approximately 50 restaurants have been added to the local culinary landscape in the last year. That’s good news for food fans, but it may not be good for competing restaurant concepts. A large percentage of the new restaurants are home-grown, independent concepts. Many of these restaurant brands will struggle to make it past the two-year mark, the traditional pass/fail milestone for new restaurants. It will be interesting to see the new ways these restaurant companies market themselves and execute for success in a tough economic environment as customer food expectations continue to rise.

Restaurant Openings/Closings/Coming Soon in the Charleston area --

The following lists reflect activity in the market since April 1, 2010.

Openings --

A Dough Re Mi (Mount Pleasant – relocated)
Bojangles (Moncks Corner)
Bojangles (Johns Island)
Coleman Public House (Mount Pleasant – former Tidewater Grill)
Eat A Pita (Downtown Charleston)
Great Harvest Bread Co. (Mount Pleasant – former Coldstone Creamery)
Guy Harvey's Island Grill (Mount Pleasant – former EarthFare)
Hammett's Landing (Daniel Island – former Sienna)
Jack's Cosmic Dog (James Island)
Little Caesar's Pizza (Mount Pleasant)
Little Tokyo (Goose Creek)
Locals (Mount Pleasant)
Manny's Mediterranean Café (North Charleston – former Camille's)
New Moon Pizzeria & Pub (Johns Island – former Hickory Hawg)
Palmetto Ale House (James Island – former Nectar)
Pho Bac (Mount Pleasant – former Sushi Haru)
Pop's NY Pizza (Downtown Charleston – former Chinar)
Red's Ice House (Seabrook Island – Bohicket Marina)
Red Sky Grill (Seabrook Island – reopened)
Rivers Deli (Wando)
Sake House (North Charleston)
Spring Roll (Downtown Charleston)
Ted's Dockside (Isle of Palms Marina)
Twenty Six Devine (Downtown Charleston)
Umi (Mount Pleasant – former The Sub Shop)

Closings --

Amalphi's (Downtown Charleston – closed due to fire)
A Dough Re Mi Pizzeria (Mount Pleasant – relocated)
Burger King (West Ashley)
Mistral (Downtown Charleston)
Robert's (Downtown Charleston - retired)
Shine (Downtown Charleston)
Sugar Mamas (Mount Pleasant)
Sushi Haru (Mount Pleasant)
Vickery's (Downtown Charleston)

Coming Soon --

Barbara Jeans (Downtown – former Mistral)
Dog & Duck Pub (West Ashley – former Bobby Hartin's Sports Grill)
Duke's BBQ (James Island – former Captain D's)
Eurasia (Mount Pleasant)
Graze (Mount Pleasant – former Coco's Café)
Hubie D's Tenders & Wings (West Ashley)
King Street Grille (West Ashley – former Bull & Finch)
Johnny Rockets (North Charleston)
Molly Darcy's Irish Pub (Downtown – former Meritage)
Mellow Mushroom (West Ashley)

O'Brion's Pub (Mount Pleasant)
Palmetto Grill (Mount Pleasant – former Shane's Rib Shack)
Runaway Bay (North Charleston)
The Blind Referee (Summerville)
The Gin Joint (Downtown Charleston – former Robert's)
Tito's Italian (Mount Pleasant)

Available! Real Estate – 804 Meeting Street, Charleston, SC 29403

Office / Retail Showroom / Warehouse Building Available for Lease!

“Flex” building for lease on Meeting Street in downtown Charleston
Up to 21,000 sq ft available! Building may be subdivided into separate tenant suites of 2,000sf up to 21,000sf.
Warehouse Loading Dock with dock-height delivery door
Tall exposed ceilings; Fire Sprinkler in place; Off-street parking
General Business Zoning allows multiple uses including restaurants and events
Easy access to I-26 and Hwy 17 / Ravenel Bridge
Blended Lease Rate: \$7.30/sf NNN (\$5/sf warehouse / \$12/sf office & retail)
Flexible Lease Terms
Tenant Improvement Allowance is negotiable

The property is being marketed for lease by Thomas Kennedy at Lat Purser & Associates, Inc. Call today for information and showings: 843.884.1104.

Ideas from the National Restaurant Scene – Ramping Up Social Media

Social Media (ie Blogs, Facebook, Twitter) has become such a powerful tool for human expression and influence that it only makes sense for restaurant marketers to stay in tune with technology and stay in touch with their customers (and detractors). National restaurant groups are hiring social media directors and “Twinterns”, while local independents may not be as engaged as they should be. It may be impossible to see everything that’s written about your restaurant business online. However, in the age of viral marketing, using social media outlets is a must -- to consistently push your branding message, reward loyal customers, respond to customer feedback, attract new fans and help build a loyal following.

The Charleston Restaurant Report is a quarterly email newsletter produced by Thomas Kennedy and distributed to stakeholders in the Charleston-area restaurant economy. Please email comments and suggestions to thomas.kennedy@latpurser.com

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