

A TRIPLE-DECKER FOODIE PARADISE: LEGACY HALL



► **AN EXCLUSIVE UPDATE** ON THE FIRST FOOD HALL OF ITS KIND IN DFW,
ANCHORING PLANO'S **LEGACY WEST**, THE LARGEST
MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN THE STATE.

BY BRIT MOTT



WHERE THE DALLAS NORTH TOLLWAY MEETS LEGACY DRIVE is the immaculate and bustling Legacy Town Center, dense with restaurants, residences and businesses, the eat-work-play-live concept that Gen-Xers and millennials flock to. We all know and love The Shops at Legacy on the east side; its counterpart, currently under construction, is the \$3 billion, 255-acre Legacy West development, said to be the largest real-estate development in the state and one of the largest new employment centers in the world. The centerpiece of this development is a 38-acre mixed-use space called Legacy West Urban Village, owned by a partnership with Karahan Cos., Columbus Realty Partners and KDC.

Ingredients

TWO DOZEN
ARTISANAL
FOOD STALLS

A FAST-CASUAL
RESTAURANT AND
TERRACE

A FULL-SCALE
CRAFT BREWERY
AND TAPROOM

A 700-SEAT
BEER GARDEN
WITH A STAGE
AND JUMBO
TV SCREEN

Zoom in, and you'll discover Legacy Hall, a three-story, 55,000-square-foot food hall that is on track to become the first of its kind in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Opening in August 2017, the food hall will host about two dozen artisanal food stalls on the first floor, a fast-casual restaurant and terrace on the second floor, and a full-scale craft brewery and taproom (overlooking a beer garden) on the third floor. A 15,000-square-foot beer garden will draw patrons to concerts, movie nights and game-viewing parties, thanks to a live music stage and a 25-foot-by-14-foot jumbo TV screen. There will be ample seating on all three floors of Legacy Hall, including the beer garden, for a total seating capacity of 1,500.

Legacy Hall is the brainchild of Jack Gibbons and Randy DeWitt of Front Burner Restaurants (Whiskey Cake and Mexican Sugar). They told *Plano Profile*:

“Legacy Hall will reflect the best of food trends that are unique to DFW, answering the question, ‘Where can I find the best ___ in town?’ The food stalls will mirror the local food scene, offering unique dishes prepared by well-known and up-and-coming local chefs and restaurateurs. Each stall will offer high-quality, chef-driven specialties with a wide range of ethnic diversity and a cooked-to-order mentality. With over 25 different outlets total, there is something for everyone! It’s the perfect place to go for breakfast, lunch, dinner or a Sunday Funday with a group who can’t agree on what they want to eat.”

► THE STRATEGY

Gibbons and DeWitt have a successful track record of creating unique restaurant concepts, so in order to recruit the best, they’ll simply tap into their resources. “We are plugged into the culinary community, which is highly enthusiastic about our plans, and we’re so pleased that they’re eager to be a part of it.”

Their strategy is twofold: Encourage established restaurateurs to try new things and recruit new chefs to create uniquely inspired menus. “What’s so exciting about Legacy Hall is that it offers well-known DFW chefs and restaurateurs a place to expand their brand identities or try to create a new one using Legacy Hall as their experimental kitchen. [Plus, it is] an opportunity for talented young food entrepreneurs to create something new and exciting of their own, all with less overhead.”





► THE VISION

Legacy Hall is expected to bring an estimated 200-plus jobs to Plano. Front Burner will oversee the overall operations of Legacy Hall and the beer garden, but each stall will be individually operated by the vendors. To-go will be readily available, and delivery services are being considered. Front Burner will also operate the full-service bars within Legacy Hall. Furthermore, Front Burner's Executive Chef John Franke will oversee the fast-casual restaurant, LBS (pronounced "Pounds"), on the second floor.

"Our vision for Legacy Hall is to create a community of diversified culinary teams—restaurateurs and passionate food entrepreneurs—who create a food theater using their own unique ingredients, presentations, cooking methods, equipment... We're cultivating a community of 'big idea' chefs who have the experience and passion to bring the best of DFW's food trends and innovations to guests," said Gibbons and DeWitt.


"The best food halls and markets have more going on than just food; there's entertainment, and that's exactly what we're going for. Every stall will create a sense of food theater, where you can see, hear, and smell your food being freshly prepared; the brewery and taproom will allow guests to enjoy their favorite beer in the midst of a working brewery; and the live music stage will showcase some of the best shows in DFW."

A state-of-the-art audio video system will allow guests inside, regardless of where they are in the venue, to view

live concerts in the beer garden. In other words, there won't be a bad seat in the house; you can have your cake and eat it, too. "Legacy Hall is a place to discover and explore the intersection of artisanal food, craft beer, and live music."

► THE INSPIRATION

Fehmi Karahan, president and chief executive officer of the Plano-based Karahan Cos., approached Front Burner to come up with the concept. "He reserved the space for us...called it the 'Fun Place,' and asked us to think about what we can do with it. We were traveling in Europe and were inspired by the food halls we visited. We realized this was a big idea that we could bring home to DFW and make it even better. When we presented the idea of opening a European-style food hall to Fehmi, he loved it."

Gibbons and DeWitt can feel confident Legacy Hall is going to be a success, not only because they're bringing in high-profile chefs but also because of Plano's changing demographic. A diverse market is an opportunity to introduce a variety of culinary choices and international cuisine. "The Plano area has sort of been known as the land of chain restaurants and we personally want to change that perception. We've seen a shift in the culinary needs of the Plano community over the years and find the community very open to concepts that push the boundaries of food. That's why we want to continue to bring the best of food trends and innovations to the area." 

On the menu

Here's a sampling of the 22+ chefs and eateries that are expected to have a presence at Legacy Hall next fall.

- Matthew McCallister of FT33
- Andrew Chen of Monkey King Noodle Company
- Robert and Kaci Lyford of Patina Green
- An Indian wrap concept by chef Gilbert Garza, owner of Suze, and Mark Brezinski, co-founder of Pei Wei and Bengal Coast
- Shawarma from Yaser Khalaf, owner of Baboush and Medina
- Gourmet from Misery Loves Company, owner of Proof + Pantry and Madrina
- A Yakitori stall from Uno Immaniwong of Chino Chinatown

