

These restaurants are opening in downtown Boston's Winthrop Center

Grant Welker



Chef John Fraser of New York-based JF Hospitality is coming to Boston for the first time with an array of food offerings at downtown Boston's Winthrop Center.

Downtown Boston's Winthrop Center tower opened to residents last spring and to office tenants over the summer. Now it has restaurants to help feed them.

A group of food vendors will open Jan. 17 at The Connector in Winthrop Center, which stands as downtown's tallest tower, located between Post Office Square and South Station.

The new names include Mexican restaurant Ariana, the Mediterranean spot Iris Mezze, the burger place Big Grin, the bakery and sandwich shop Day Shift, and Gatto Pazzo, which sells pizza, sandwiches, salads and antipasti. There's room for a few more vendors to come.

Together, the collection is called The Lineup, and it's led by a chef, John Fraser, of the New York hospitality group JF Restaurants. Fraser has obtained one of the industry's best honors, with a Michelin star rating for his New York vegan restaurant Nix, which closed for good early in the pandemic.

Winthrop Center's developer, Millennium Partners, conducted a broad search more than three years ago for a company to run culinary operations at the tower, which includes a 35th-floor restaurant for residents and a third-floor restaurant for residents and office tenants.

"It was one of the easier transactions to make," said Richard Baumert, a partner at Millennium. "It was more about, how do we get started and create something unique and special?"



Winthrop Center tower in Boston's Financial District has more than 300 residential units on its upper half and 800,000 square feet of offices on the lower half.

Fraser said he was attracted to Winthrop Center because of the size of the project, the aligned values of the two teams, the relatively close distance to New York headquarters and even the architecture of the tower itself.

"The way people integrate into the building, it greatly affects what we serve inside of it, and it's an architecturally significant building," Fraser said.

The Lineup, reachable on Federal Street to the east and Devonshire Street to the west, opens only about a block from the **High Street Place food hall**, which opened in 2022 and has 20 food and beverage vendors.

Winthrop Center provides some of its own in-house audience, with **more than 300 residential units** on its upper half and 800,000 square feet of offices on the lower half.

The financial firms **Cambridge Associates** and Income Research + Management have already moved in. Others are expected to move in this year, including **McKinsey & Co.**, **Deloitte** and Gallagher & Co.

Baumert said the building will end up having roughly 4,000 people in it, between residents and office workers, once full.

“It’ll ramp up pretty quickly,” he said.

The Lineup’s five vendors were picked to complement one another and draw residents, office tenants and others through offerings like doughnuts and sharable nachos.

Millennium Partners and JF Hospitality both know the reality that office workers aren’t typically at their desk five days a week as they would have been before the pandemic when the tower was designed and construction began.

JF Hospitality is in Midtown Manhattan, which Fraser said has a similar hybrid office pattern as Boston. Some days have far less office workers, he said – but other days tend to be even busier, when office workers are working together and have reason to grab lunch or dinner. There are also residents, visitors and others who are in the neighborhood throughout the week.

“I think we have a broader audience than people who are in three days a week,” he said.



Big Grin will be The Lineup’s burger joint, with burgers, sandwiches and veggie burgers, along with crinkle-cut fries.



Gatto Pazzo is The Lineup's pizza place at Winthrop Center.



Iris Mezze will have pitas and other Mediterranean offerings.



Day Shift will have coffee and doughnut offerings that'll include a \$1 coffee program for those using the coffee shop's mug or a mug of their own.



Day Shift will also have sandwiches, salad and soups.



Winthrop Center's atrium, called The Connector, shown here last fall, bridges Federal and Devonshire streets.