

College Town opens, invites patrons

Highly anticipated entertainment district unveils game day attractions

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Last Friday, College Town celebrated its grand opening just in time for game day. Tallahassee's newest entertainment district boasts a bevy of bar, restaurant and shopping options. / Photo courtesy of College Town

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With College Town's official grand opening last Friday, many in the Tallahassee area are eager to familiarize themselves with Tallahassee's newest entertainment district.

Situated adjacent to Florida State University's campus, College Town seeks to upgrade the college community's nightlife and game day routine with its easily accessible location and diverse range of operators. The entertainment center boasts a metropolitan ambiance not often seen along the Florida-Georgia line.

"College Town has a city-like environment, a kind of upscale approach and I'm all for it," FSU student Michelle Ceballos said. "It might change the dynamic of game day, too."

With a few venues that have yet to open, College Town is still in its beginning phases. The locale will soon house an Urban Outfitters, the rooftop poolside bar Recess, the 38,000 square-foot venue America's Backyard, the frozen yogurt eatery Pomberry, the Japanese lounge Ginza Red, which is opening Sept. 26, and other properties.

Novelty and proximity seem to be College Town's leading advantages. The vicinity will keep people closer to campus versus having to spread out, constricting the to-dos of the city down to one safer, closer option. And, with Doak Campbell Stadium in view, College Town and its various bars appeals to visiting and local football fans.

Already proven a game day mecca, Madison Social, a Manhattan-style bar and restaurant, provides a lofty, industrial feel where you can indulge in swanky food and drinks.

"The vibe and atmosphere that we created in here you can't find anywhere else in Tallahassee," said Jason Walker, general manager of Madison Social. "It's very open, very versatile. Madison Social and College Town as a whole is a modern, great place for both young professionals and college students to have a good time."

Front and center with an enormous inflatable iced coffee drink, Brooklyn Water Bagel & Pizza Co. offers a relaxed, casual environment with reasonably priced products.

"We bring a unique product at a price point that students can afford on a daily basis," said Drew McLeod, Brooklyn Water Bagel's director of Field Operations & Regional Development. "We have a different style of bagel and a different style of pizza—we're something that students in Tallahassee haven't tried before."

Realizing the Latin food, cocktails and big screen TVs would attract members of the college community, Samba Cantina, a high energy Brazilian-and-Mexican-fused restaurant and bar is somewhere "you can expect to have a great time," said Erik Zika, vice president of the management company that owns various College Town installments.

On the whole, College Town's tenants seem excited for the up-and-coming locale's successes and positive contribution to the FSU and Tallahassee community.

"College Town was invested in by the Seminole Boosters— it's something that they really wanted to instill and be able to give back to the community since FSU gives so much to them," Walker said.