

Zinburger

Wine & Burger Bar

FINALLY BRINGING TOGETHER BURGERS
AND **WINE?!**

By Teddy Durgin

For years, people have either classified themselves as a "beer and burger" kind of person or a "wine and steak" guy or gal. But a newly opened concept at Arundel Mills Mall in Hanover, Md., is challenging those long-held generalizations. The Zinburger Wine & Burger Bar served its first customers on Oct. 17. Recently named to Full Service Restaurant Magazine's "Top 50 Emerging Restaurant Chains" because of its brand expansion and menu innovation, this marks the chain's first location in Maryland and 15th overall.

As the name suggests, the Zinburger Wine & Burger Bar offers cooked-to-order, gourmet burgers combined with perfectly paired wine selections. As with locations in Atlanta, Boca Raton, Durham, and elsewhere, the new eatery offers a full bar with

a wine menu that includes 25 varieties; two dozen beers, including 16 on tap and several local and regional craft ales; and a cocktail menu. On Wednesdays, customers can enjoy half-price bottles of wine. And there are Happy Hour specials, weekdays from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., featuring discount beer and cocktails and \$5 Plain and Simple Burgers. That's in addition to the usual soft drinks and milkshakes.

The 187-seat, 5,500-square-foot restaurant, which boasts a patio with a fire pit, comes as Arundel Mills is remodeling its food court. Gene Condon, general manager of Arundel Mills, commented, "Arundel Mills is committed to constantly reinvigorating the look, feel, and offerings at our property, and Zinburger is a great update to complement our new dining pavilion which we will debut this month [November]. Not only are we home to their first location in

Maryland, but it's also a tremendous dining addition to add to our center's dining and entertainment roster."

He continued, "Our visitors have been eager to experience Zinburger ever since we announced the opening. So far, it has been the ideal spot for both shoppers and visitors looking for a meal and an experience. Our patrons always appreciate the new concepts we introduce, and Zinburger is no exception. The concept has developed an almost fanatical customer following."

In terms of food, Zinburger prides itself on grinding the Angus and American-style Kobe beef for its burgers in-house twice a day. These burgers generally cost in the \$10 to \$12 range. Customers can build their own burger or choose from such signature offerings as the Zinburger (featuring Manchego Cheese and Zinfandel Braised Onions) and the Kobe Burger (with Vermont Cheddar

and Wild Mushrooms). The menu also offers a turkey burger, veggie burger, chicken sandwiches, entrée salads, and more.

Condon remarked, "I have eaten there several times already, but it's too early for a favorite! I've enjoyed the prime rib burger blend, the ahi tuna burger, and the farm-fresh salad with ahi tuna. The wasabi coleslaw and truffle fries are also outstanding."

The chain is civic-minded, too. For instance, during its grand opening week at Arundel Mills, Zinburger sold VIP Gold Cards for \$100 each with proceeds going to the Fort Meade Alliance Foundation. The nonprofit organization manages charitable initiatives designed to support the Fort Meade installation, military personnel and their families, and the broader Fort Meade community. The VIP card is providing customers with top of the wait-list status along with half-price bottles of wine through Jan. 31.

Zinburger is part of The Briad Group, a New Jersey-based hospitality company that operates more than 100 Wendy's fast-food eateries nationwide, 57 TGI Friday's locations, and is presently developing hotels in three states ~ Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. Zinburger Wine & Burger Bar is



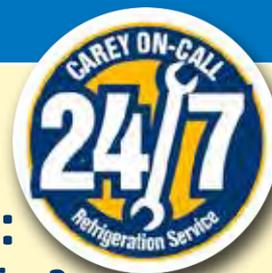
the latest jewel in the company's crown. Currently, though, there are no immediate plans for additional locations in the Baltimore-Washington market. ■

NOTE: Citing company policy, the general manager of the Arundel Mills location deferred comment for this article to Briad Group President Rick Barbrick, who was unable to respond to a request for a phone interview or an e-mail questionnaire by the editorial deadline for this article.

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