



## Friends of Ed Pawlowski

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### **PRESS ADVISORY**

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## **Allentown: A Dining Hot Spot**

Allentown Mayor Ed Pawlowski has been busy announcing new restaurants in the city lately, with new eateries planned all over town.

A Brazilian steakhouse called *Made in Brazil* will open in the Holiday Inn Center City in Allentown, Mayor Pawlowski said in a news conference last week.

Restaurant owners João Roquetti, Antonio DeMattos and Eduardo Welter said the target date for opening the restaurant is October 31.

“These three gentlemen reside in Bethlehem, Easton and Nazareth and I couldn’t be more elated that they have chosen Allentown as the place for their business venture,” said Pawlowski. “I can’t wait to try their food.”

“We’re here to stay,” said Welter. “We want to be the best restaurant in the Lehigh Valley. We will serve flavorful, abundant meals while providing friendly and tremendous service.”

The menu will include steaks, chicken, seafood and other Brazilian dishes, with waiters carving meat from skewers for diners. There will be a wide selection of international wines, typical Brazilian drinks and other alcoholic beverages.

“Our guests will not leave hungry,” Roquetti said.

Hotel manager Cathy Minnich said the restaurant will be a partnership between the hotel and the new owners. *Made in Brazil* will operate room service, lunch, dinner and the bar and the hotel will continue to operate meeting and banquet services.

*Made in Brazil* will receive a \$37,000 Restaurant Row Incentive Grant and a Citywide Business Opportunity Loan of \$40,000. The Restaurant Row Incentive Program is administered by the city to encourage development of full service restaurants serving lunch and dinner downtown.

The new restaurant will be just across Ninth Street from a planned upscale Mediterranean eatery announced recently by Mayor Pawlowski and Easton restaurateur George Meireles.

That still-unnamed restaurant will be on the first floor of the Alvin H. Butz Corporate Center and is scheduled to open next spring.

Mayor Pawlowski announced the Mediterranean restaurant at a recent press conference attended by Meireles and Alvin H. Butz, whose company owns the building. Meireles also owns the River Grille, Ocean and Valencia restaurants in Easton.

The two recently announced restaurants join several others in the vicinity of Ninth and Hamilton streets, which is quickly becoming a dining destination.

The popular *Allentown Brew Works*, the *Bay Leaf* and *Robata of Tokyo* are all within half a block. A block away is the *House of Chen* restaurant.

The planned restaurants will join other new faces on the dining scene as well.

The 4 Aces Grill at 13th and Hamilton had its Grand Opening on Friday, September 25. Its menu features exotic meats, such as ostrich and bison. Chef Jennifer Salhoff makes everything fresh on the premises, including the Moroccan Burger, with ostrich meat and

apricot. The restaurant is BYO and offers outdoor seating and brunch on the weekends.

The *Bada Bing* sandwich shop, which opened over the summer just north on Ninth Street, features large gangster-themed sandwiches such as the Racketeer and the Capone, homemade chips and other goodies. *Bada Bing* also operates a busy sandwich kiosk at the Allentown Farmer's Market.

Another smaller restaurant, *Nana's Café and Grille*, recently opened in the 700 block of Hamilton and a *Dunkin' Donuts* is planning to move into the PPL Plaza.

On Sixth Street, a half-block north of Hamilton, work continues on the *Cosmopolitan*, a large full-service restaurant and banquet facility being built by developer Myron Haydt just across from Allentown Symphony Hall in the city's arts district.

"I think it's important that we have these restaurants in our downtown and that they thrive," Mayor Pawlowski said. "I think a robust restaurant trade reflects well on the overall health of the downtown."

The Mayor also noted that a pending Main Street designation would accelerate the growth of the Hamilton Street business district. The Main Street District would focus on Hamilton, between Fifth and 12th streets. The program would provide funding to improve, retain and market businesses as well attract new businesses to the area.

The same program has helped transform Seventh Street from a littered, crime-ridden strip of vacant storefronts to a vibrant retail hub with dozens of shops, restaurants and other businesses.

"We've all seen how the Main Street program has helped revitalize the Seventh Street area," the Mayor said. "I think this program would be extremely beneficial on Hamilton."

"Max Hess used to say that a city's heart was its downtown," Mayor Pawlowski said. "Max said that there was gold downtown waiting to be dug up and the way to dig was to put every dollar and every idea

we can put into downtown promotion. Nothing, he said, pays off like the heart of a city.”

“I think what he said more than 40 years ago still rings true in Allentown today.”

There’s also restaurant and development news in the city’s 19<sup>th</sup> Street Theatre District.

Frank Shipman recently announced plans for a new *TC Salon and Spa* at the site of the former Shanty Restaurant on 19<sup>th</sup> Street, a \$2.5 million project.

The 9,000-square-foot site will include a full service salon, day spa and restaurant. Its design will allow iconic chandeliers from Hess's department store to be seen from the outside. Shipman said he is still in discussions with restaurateurs interested in joining the project. He said he hopes the restaurant will be open seven days a week and offer outdoor dining.

“We want to invigorate this area with plenty of foot traffic,” said Shipman, adding that the salon expects to attract up to 250 clients a day. He expects the salon to open in February or March.

“Frank Shipman is to be commended for his vision and commitment to this project and for keeping with the streetscapes and architecture that are a hallmark of the city’s 19th Street Theatre District,” said Mayor Ed Pawlowski. “These are fabulous plans for what is a key property in this neighborhood.”

“I want to thank Mayor Pawlowski for encouraging me to redevelop this site,” said Shipman. “I can’t thank the city staff members enough for all their assistance.”

Another project in keeping with the theatre district is the *Pines Dinner Theater*, which is moving from Slatington to the former Gate 9 Grill adjacent to the *Fairgrounds Hotel* at 17th and Liberty streets.

That 120-seat restaurant will open after renovations, including work being done to install a stage and improve sightlines. The *Pines*

estimates it will open in the next several weeks.

Also in the district, the *West Side Diner* at 19<sup>th</sup> and Tilghman streets recently opened at the site of the former Saylor's restaurant.

"The development of the 19<sup>th</sup> Street Theatre district is important to the city," Mayor Pawlowski said. "And we want to make sure that it's appropriate development for the character of the neighborhood. Projects like the day spa, the dinner theater and the return of a diner at 19<sup>th</sup> and Tilghman are exactly the types of projects we are looking for."