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Local restaurant group PB&J Restaurants will take over Crown Center space and bring its barbecue concept to downtown Kansas City

The 8,400-square-foot space currently occupied by Milano Italian Dining will be remodeled and transformed into two new concepts – Burnt End BBQ and Starbucks; anticipated to open late December

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (July 10, 2019) – Crown Center will soon have the unofficial aroma of Kansas City – barbecue – wafting through its air. Burnt End BBQ, owned and operated by PB&J Restaurants, based in Overland Park, Kansas, will open in the space currently occupied by Milano Italian Dining on the first floor of the Crown Center Shops.



“Crown Center is proud to partner with yet another long-standing Kansas City-based company to bring new dining options to our guests,” said Crown Center President Stacey Paine. “We know Burnt End BBQ will be popular with both our local customers and guests from across the globe. The addition of Starbucks brings a broadly recognized and trusted brand to Crown Center, as well.”

Milano Italian Dining will close by the end of July. PB&J Restaurants and Crown Center are working with local architecture firm, BRR Architecture, to plan for a full renovation of the space. Burnt End BBQ will occupy 6,200 square feet of the 8,400-square-foot space. A full-service Starbucks, also owned and operated by PB&J Restaurants, will occupy the remaining 2,200 square feet. A late December opening date is anticipated and will mark PB&J Restaurants’ return to downtown Kansas City.

“PB&J Restaurants is thrilled to bring Burnt End BBQ to Crown Center,” said PB&J Restaurants President Patrick Khoury. “Our venture into downtown is the perfect pairing of two true Kansas City traditions – barbecue and Crown Center. We are excited to amplify the high-quality options of locally owned establishments in, and look forward to growing with, the burgeoning downtown Kansas City area.”

Burnt End BBQ opened its flagship location in 2011 in Overland Park, Kansas. The Crown Center location will be the restaurant’s third location as there is also a Burnt End BBQ in Denver. Burnt End BBQ is known for its passionate Pitmaster, Stephen “Smokey” Schwartz, known simply as “Smokey” to guests. Smokey’s culinary background includes training at Joe’s Restaurant & BBQ under the legendary Tom Gault, and executive chef or pitmaster positions at Fiorella’s Jack Stack Barbecue and The Golden Ox. Smokey joined the PB&J team in 2005 and is the visionary behind the Burnt End BBQ concept. Over the course of his career, Smokey has won numerous awards, including first place at the American Royal World Series of Barbecue for his Sweet Chipotle Glaze in 2012 and his Sweet Honey Glaze in 2015. Smokey and Burnt End BBQ have been featured on Food Network’s “The Grill Dads” and “Burgers, Brews & Que” in January 2018 and June 2019, respectively.

About Crown Center

Located on the southern edge of downtown Kansas City, Crown Center offers fine hotels, entertainment, dining, shopping, offices and residential living in the city’s burgeoning cultural arts and professional services district. The 85-acre complex, which opened in 1971 and serves as the international headquarters of Hallmark Cards, attracts more than five million visitors each year with two world-renowned attractions, SEA LIFE Aquarium Kansas City and LEGOLAND® Discovery Center, and boasts one of the largest flexible meeting spaces in the Midwest at Sheraton Kansas City Hotel and The Westin Kansas City. Crown Center is home to two theaters, MTH Theater and nationally acclaimed The Coterie, and more than 40 shops and restaurants. The complex is also home to Halls Kansas City, the region’s premier fashion destination. Visit <http://www.crowncenter.com> for more details.

About Burnt End BBQ

Burnt End BBQ first opened in 2011 in Overland Park, Kansas. Executive Chef and Pitmaster Stephen “Smokey” Schwartz has countless years of experience and has competed in barbecue competitions all over the country. He is the only chef to have won three Grand Champion titles at the Food Arts Magazine / Share Our Strength National Championships in Chicago – taking home first place in 2006, 2012, and 2015. Smokey has also taken first place at the American Royal Barbecue Championships with his Sweet Chipotle Glaze in 2012 and his Sweet Honey Glaze in 2015. Recently Smokey and his team of pit chefs went to Beaver Creek for the three-day Blues, Brews & BBQ Festival and competed against 17 teams. 10,000 festival attendees named the team first place for People’s Choice. Smokey and the Burnt End BBQ were featured on Food Network’s “The Grill Dads” and more recently “Burgers Brew & Que.” For more information, visit www.burntendbbqkc.com.

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