

# Star Chef Thomas Keller Helps Design Hudson Yards Menu

By

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Chef and restaurateur [Thomas Keller](#) is teaming up with the developers of Hudson Yards to select as many as a dozen restaurants for the massive retail complex planned for the West Side.

One of the places will be Mr. Keller's own concept, a classic American eatery that will be part of the strategy guiding the selection of restaurants: dining at many price points. The dining component of the seven-story center being built by Related Cos. and Oxford Properties Group will be critical to its success, real-estate experts said.

Establishing a broad offering of dining options with prices appealing to a wide audience will go a long way toward enticing shoppers past about 140 stores expected to fill the complex, experts said.

One retailer that has already signed on is Neiman Marcus. The luxury brand announced in September that it will make its New York City debut at the complex, expected to open in 2018.

"We want energy, electricity and we want great volumes of turnover," said Kenneth Himmel, a restaurateur and president of Related Urban, a division of Related Cos. "We want brasseries, cafes, less formal and more casual."

Mr. Keller said his restaurant at Hudson Yards will be much different than his exclusive Per Se at the Time Warner Center, also a Related Cos. project.

"As much as Per Se is an extraordinary restaurant, it's not a restaurant you come back to two to three times a week," said Mr. Keller. "It's a restaurant you come back to two to three times a year."

Mr. Keller and Mr. Himmel, who are partners in Per Se, are in the process of identifying well-known chefs and restaurant operators who will create 10 to 12 concepts, including

two or three fine-dining establishments. The men are considering a variety of cuisines, including Spanish Mediterranean, Chinese and Italian, Mr. Himmel said. Mr. Keller declined to provide much more about his restaurant concept, beyond saying that it will have “nostalgia” and references to American culinary history.

Of 750,000 square feet available for lease, about 120,000 square feet will be dedicated to restaurants, Mr. Himmel said.

“I think they are smart that they are giving people chef-driven concepts, especially in that market,” said Dirk Aulabaugh, managing director at Green Street Advisors, a real-estate research firm. “People seem to be more in tune to food. It’s more entertainment than it has been in the past.”

The Hudson Yards retail project is just one piece of a massive 28-acre site between West 30th and West 34th streets and 10th and 11th avenues being developed by Related and Oxford. The development will encompass more than 17 million square feet of commercial and residential space, including 5,000 residential units, a hotel and a cultural center.

The Shops & Restaurants at Hudson Yards will be competing with restaurant row on West 46th Street near Eighth Avenue, the restaurants now scattered around the High Line park, and the Time Warner Center, said Adelaide Polsinelli, a principal at real-estate services firm Eastern Consolidated.

“You have to include every demographic, the families who want something for children, the adults who want to have a dining experience and stop on the way home,” Ms. Polsinelli said. “One group can spend a lot of money if you can engage them there for several hours.”

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