

# Hall Yes!

BY REBECA PICCARDO

FOOD HALLS ARE POPPING UP ALL OVER THE WORLD, OFFERING AN ELEVATED FAST-CASUAL CONCEPT THAT BRINGS VARIETY TO THE FORE.

You pace the grounds of a renovated warehouse with floor-to-ceiling windows and exposed brick walls, taking in the mix of aromas emanating from various food stalls. The more you look, the harder it gets to decide whether you want a bowl of lamb curry from one vendor or an assortment of sashimi from another, while also eyeing that plate of chicken and waffles someone at a nearby table is eating. One thing is certain: There's something for everyone, and that's a victory for eaters all around.

Most food halls feature communal dining spaces with a carefully curated selection of vendors — a mix of well-known talents and local startups — all cooking under one roof. Beyond the appeal of a unique dining experience in a distinctive setting, several of these venues also showcase live bands and DJs, and host cooking workshops, wine tastings, and so much more. Many are located in mixed-used developments that have become de facto entertainment hubs. No two are the same, so each of these — all within interval resort areas — is definitely worth a visit.

## ANAHEIM PACKING HOUSE: PROHIBITION-ERA FEEL

**Lay of the Land:** In Anaheim, California, this two-story food hall opened in 2014 in a restored 20th-century warehouse that once served as a Sunkist citrus-packing plant. (The logo is still on the sign at the entrance.) Only 2 miles from Disneyland Park, the landmark structure now houses more than 20 vendors covering a range of cuisines — from American comfort food to wood-fired Neapolitan pizza to authentic Syrian fare. The complex is also home to a handful of restaurants — including the popular Umami Burger — and two breweries in the adjacent buildings.

**The Game Plan:** Leave your diet behind: Dip goat cheese-filled naan into a steaming bowl of curry at Adya, munch on crispy fish and chips at The Chippy Fish & Grill, and sink your teeth into a Cap'n Crunch waffle sundae at The Iron Press. And with seven different types of poutine

on the menu, you just can't miss indulging at The Kroft. Then head over to Popbar to choose between a gelato, sorbet, or yogurt ice pop to dip, drizzle, and sprinkle with your favorite toppings.

**Wow Factor:** Step back in time at The Blind Rabbit speakeasy — that is, if you're able to find the secret door. Or grab a drink at the BXCR (also known as The Underground Wine Society), located inside a refurbished 1920s railroad boxcar.

**Off-Menu:** Anaheim Packing House regularly showcases live bands, from country to rock to rhythm and blues. It also hosts jazz nights on the first and third Thursday of every month inside the Cooks Chapel event venue.

**Also Try:** Windmill Food Hall in Carlsbad, as well as Little Italy Food Hall and Liberty Public Market in San Diego



ANAHEIM PACKING HOUSE

Mike Alcorn





THE HALL ON FRANKLIN

**THE HALL ON FRANKLIN: AT YOUR SERVICE**

**Lay of the Land:** Tampa, Florida's first food hall opened in late 2017 inside a yellow-brick building from the 1920s, in one of the city's oldest neighborhoods. Offerings include cute latte art, Liège (sweet Belgian-style) waffles, fancy grilled-cheese combinations, and colorful poke bowls.

**The Game Plan:** Start the evening with a cocktail from local mixologist Ro Patel's bar, Collection. Order the signature stinky bunz (filled bao, or dumpling sliders) from North Star Eatery, and share a half-dozen raw oysters from Heights Fish Camp, served with lemon wedges and mignonette sauce in a plastic pipette. Finish off with a dessert from Bake'n Babes, whose quirky confections include Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal-milk ice cream and Irish car bomb cupcakes.

**Wow Factor:** Unlike most other food halls, The Hall on Franklin offers sit-down table service in addition to counter service, and you can order from any — or all — of the seven "taste architects" from your chair.

**Off-Menu:** The Hall on Franklin hosts DJs and other special events, such as silent parties — where you dance to music on wireless headphones.

**Also Try:** Heights Public Market, just a half-mile from The Hall on Franklin

**BLOCK 16 URBAN FOOD HALL: EAST COAST MEETS WEST COAST**

**Lay of the Land:** The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas in Nevada, known for its impressive collection of dining venues, introduced six restaurants — some of which were new to the region — when it opened Block 16 Urban Food Hall in late 2018. The list of vendors includes a New York-based mezcal and tequila bar, a Portland-based eatery by a James Beard Award-winning chef, and two popular restaurants from New Orleans, Louisiana, and Nashville, Tennessee.

**The Game Plan:** Begin with a visit to Ghost Donkey for a sip of tequila, and snack on an order of truffle nachos. Once you've worked up an appetite, stop at chef Andy Ricker's famous Pok Pok Wing and try Ike's Vietnamese fish-sauce wings, which were featured in an episode of Guy Fieri's *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives*. Be sure to leave room for one of the daily flavors at District: Donuts. Sliders. Brew.

**Off-Menu:** You're just steps away from all the casinos along The Strip, so that's a no-brainer!

**Also Try:** Fulton Street Food Hall at Harrah's Las Vegas Hotel and Casino



BLOCK 16 URBAN FOOD HALL



## ST. ROCH MARKET: THE GRANDFATHER OF FOOD HALLS

**Lay of the Land:** New Orleans' St. Roch Market has existed in some way, shape, or form since the 1870s. Originally a state-owned, open-air market, this historic venue later became a privately owned seafood merchant until it was nearly destroyed during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. A decade after being shuttered, St. Roch Market reopened as an upscale food hall with the intent of bringing in vendors who are testing out new ideas before venturing out with stand-alone restaurants.

**The Game Plan:** Satisfy your Southern seafood cravings with golden-brown crab cakes, oysters on the half-shell, gumbo, and shrimp and grits. If you're after variety, Vietnamese pho (rice-noodle soup), Haitian street food, and veggie-centric options, such as avocado toast, kale salad, and an array of quinoa

bowls, are a must-try. Stop by The Mayhaw for an inventive craft cocktail, and don't miss their weekday happy hour for \$6 drink specials.

**Other Locations:** In 2018, St. Roch Market opened its second location in Miami, Florida, and is looking to open a third outpost in Nashville.

**Also Try:** Auction House Market (from the same operator as St. Roch Market) and Phythian Market, both in New Orleans

## 1-800-LUCKY: FLAVORS OF ASIA

**Lay of the Land:** Set in Miami's trendy Wynwood neighborhood, this food hall features seven vendors — handpicked from Japan, New York, California, and South Florida — that cover a wide range of Asian cuisines, including dim sum, sushi, ramen, and banh mi (Vietnamese-style baguette sandwich).

**The Game Plan:** A bowl of pork ramen from Hayato Miami or an ahi tuna poke bowl from Poke OG is a must, but don't leave without trying the soup dumplings from Yip and the Peking duck buns from Lotus + Cleaver. Wash your meal down with a frozen Kirin Ichiban beer. (This is one of only two places in Florida that serve it.) On your way out, stop by Taiyaki NYC, located on the outside terrace, for a swirl of matcha ice cream topped with a strawberry drizzle and served in an adorable fish-shaped cone — it's totally Instagramable!

**Off-Menu:** There's a vinyl record shop and a convenience store by the entrance, plus a karaoke room for private parties. The venue regularly hosts local DJs and transforms the outdoor dining terrace into a dance floor.

**Also Try:** La Centrale at Brickell City Centre in downtown Miami and St. Roch Market's outpost in the Miami Design District

## EATALY: EAT LIKE AN ITALIAN

**Lay of the Land:** This Italian-themed food emporium started out in 2007 in an old vermouth factory in Turin, Italy. Now, Eataly is a global brand, with more than 40 locations around the world, including Florence and Bari in Italy, and Chicago, Illinois, and Boston, Massachusetts, in the U.S.



ST. ROCH MARKET

**The Game Plan:** The offerings vary per location, but in general, Eataly's specialized restaurants and quick-service counters are dedicated to pasta, pizza, seafood, meat, cheese, and seasonal vegetables. No matter what you dine on, you're guaranteed fresh Italian eats accompanied by fine Italian wines.

**Off-Menu:** This is more than a food hall — it's a hybrid model that's part grocery store and part artisanal marketplace. It also hosts cooking courses and wine tastings.

**Other Locations:** Check out Paris' newly opened Eataly at the Galeries Lafayette, which holds the exclusive franchise rights in France. The three-story food hall includes seven restaurants, a courtyard fruit and vegetable market, cafes, and a wine cellar. And on the high seas, get a taste of Eataly aboard select ships on MSC Cruises. See page 84 for more details.

## GOURMAND FOOD HALL: WORLDLY TASTES

**Lay of the Land:** Gourmand Food Hall, which bills itself as "Argentina's first food hall," opened in late 2016 inside the Patio Bullrich shopping mall in Buenos Aires. It features several French elements, including a bistro, a meat and cheese mart, and a boulangerie (French-style bakery) and patisserie (pastry shop). It also has an Italian restaurant, a rotisserie counter, a sushi and oyster bar, a sommelier-led wine bar, and a burger joint and beer hall.

**The Game Plan:** Here you're covered from breakfast to dinner. Order a *pain au chocolat* (chocolate roll) with coffee in the morning to kick-start your day of shopping; indulge in an Angus-burger-and-lager pairing before catching a matinee upstairs at the movie theater; and finish your night with a grilled octopus appetizer followed by a duck magret entree.

**Off-Menu:** Shop for sweet souvenirs at Le Marché (the market), where you'll find an array of international and national artisanal products. Gourmand Food Hall regularly offers culinary classes, special multi-course dinners, and wine tastings, and hosts the annual Gourmand Taste Festival. ■