

A First Look Inside Charlie & Joe's at Love Street

The long-awaited opening of the brand-new Love Street complex is around the corner. Learn about what you can expect from what is sure to become one of the area's most popular destinations.

By **Judy Martel** - December 18, 2020



A sampling of the menu at Lucky Shuck Oyster Bar & Taphouse, one of the restaurants at Charlie & Joe's at Love Street. Photo by Libby Volgyes

When asked to imagine a symbol that best represents Jupiter, most people envision the iconic lighthouse. Since 1860, it has withstood the test of time as the heart of this idyllic seaside town, a beacon for sailors and anglers traversing the shallow inlet, the backdrop for countless photos, and a favored muse for local artists. And now, the town's oldest structure presides over its newest development: [Charlie & Joe's at Love Street](#).



Charlie Modica and Joe Namath. Photo by Jen Scott Photography

The two-acre waterfront restaurant and market complex adjacent to the Pelican Club is set to open to the public in early January, an unveiling nearly 10 years in the making. The project is the brainchild of developer Charles Modica and NFL Hall of Famer Joe Namath, good friends who both have deep ties to Jupiter that go back decades. In 2011, they purchased the land on A1A, directly across the inlet from the lighthouse, and initial planning stages for Charlie & Joe's at Love Street started to take shape in 2013 when the duo brought in developer Jeffrey Collins from Collins Development Company. Final site plan approval was received in September 2017, and construction began in early 2019.



Both Modica and Namath trace their interest in developing the project to their shared love of the area's history and their desire to build a legacy that everyone can enjoy. "Joe and I are enthralled with this area, and the lighthouse is a part of Jupiter that is self-explanatory," says Modica, who also owns the Pelican Club. "[The lighthouse] has been there since the Civil War and will be there for a long time to come."

The \$30 million project comprises four eateries, docks, and paved walkways that invite strolling and relaxing by the water and pays homage to the town's low-key origins as a fishing and boating community.



Lucky Shuck's Handhelds. Photo by Libby Volgyes

The Grub

“No matter your age or income, we wanted to create something for everyone,” says Stephen Asprinio, creative visionary behind the project. To that end, dining options at Love Street range from grab-and-go to a rooftop bar with expansive views of the inlet to two very different restaurants with indoor-outdoor dining.



*Exterior of Lucky Shuck and The Tacklebox.
Courtesy of Bigtime Design Studios*

The east building is home to Lucky Shuck Oyster Bar & Taphouse (the more casual of the two restaurants) and The Tacklebox (a fish market/takeout spot). At Lucky Shuck, the menu centers on Gulf Coast cuisine, with a raw oyster bar and fresh fish and shellfish, as well as Southern-inspired specialties such as Cajun-charred skirt steak and crawfish jumbo. In addition to wine and cocktails, Lucky’s puts a heavy focus on craft beer, with nearly 20 brews on draft—including 16 from local breweries and a proprietary blonde ale, Love and Passion, created for Lucky Shuck by Barrel of Monks brewing company. More than 20 other beers are also available in bottles and cans, many from up and down the Southeast.

The interiors of all four restaurants were done by Miami-based Bigtime Design Studios. At Lucky Shuck, the ambience is somewhat suggestive of an early twentieth-century fish factory, with beer kegs suspended in the open loft above the bar. A hand-painted mural of an old Barden Boating Center sign (created by Chalk & Brush Design Co. in Miami) acknowledges the history of the site and also complements the casual, open-space decor.



*An assortment of fresh menu items available for takeout at The Tacklebox, which also sells fresh local fish delivered daily.
Photo by Libby Volgyes*

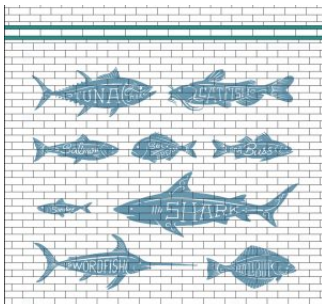
At The Tacklebox, daily specials include a variety of fresh seafood options like tuna poke bowls, sandwiches, and spicy lobster and shrimp rolls. Fresh catches are delivered by local anglers straight off the on-site dock. Patrons can enjoy their take-out lunch at one of the outside seating areas or bring their fresh fish purchases home to cook.

The adjacent building to the west—which is separated from Lucky Shuck/The Tacklebox by a heart-shaped outdoor courtyard—is anchored on the ground level by Beacon, a slightly more upscale (though still affordable) restaurant. The menu offers coastal cuisine with Mediterranean flair, including sea scallops, the daily fish catch with choice of sauce, and, for those who crave turf, steaks and prime rib. Everything is made center stage in an open kitchen, surrounded by a three-sided bar that seats 18, allowing patrons to feel part of the food preparation.



Asprinio describes the menu at Beacon as "both rooted in Jupiter and inspired by the coastal Mediterranean. Photo by Libby Volgyes

The crowning glory of the complex, in many ways, is the rooftop bar—Topside at the Beacon. With stunning views of the lighthouse and inlet, Topside is one of the best alfresco spots to hit Jupiter in years. One area of the rooftop is set aside for people to enjoy the waterfront vista and take photos, while seating for 73 and an outdoor bar fills the rest of the space. A casual menu showcases small plates reminiscent of the Basque region of Spain and meant for sharing, Asprinio says. Guests are also welcome simply to chill with one of the delicious Polynesian-influenced cocktails or order something from the extensive wine and beer list. A resident DJ adds to the laid-back atmosphere.



Interior wall at The Tacklebox Seafood and Supplies. Courtesy of Bigtime Design Studios

"The idea is not to be pretentious but to be best in class," says Asprinio of the overall vibe of Love Street. "We were looking for multi-market appeal. Imagine a high school surfer stopping by The Tacklebox for a po'boy or a poke bowl and sitting outside near the docks, colleagues having a casual business meeting over oysters and a beer at Lucky Shuck, and couples enjoying a date-night dinner at Beacon or meeting friends upstairs at Topside. This is a destination and a place where people can come every day."

Topside opens at 3 p.m. on weekdays and 11:30 a.m. on weekends; Beacon serves dinner nightly from 5 p.m.; Lucky Shuck opens at 11:30 a.m. daily; and The Tacklebox opens at 11 a.m. weekdays/9

a.m. weekends.

The Vibe

Throughout the complex, Jupiter's past is on display via decor that includes historical photos selected by Namath's daughter Jessica, as well as the Barden Boating Center mural. One of the new streets fronting the site has also been named Barden Crossing in honor of the former boatyard.



Beacon's Portside Cocktail with gin, cucumber, elderflower, lime, and liquid nitrogen-muddled mint. Photo by Libby Volgyes

Visitors can traverse the walkways between and around the two buildings to the center of the complex, relax or enjoy their Tacklebox takeout on built-in benches surrounding the heart-shaped grass courtyard, and watch commercial fishermen bring in the catch of the day. The heart, of course, is central to the development—both a nod to the heart of Jupiter and the name of the street bordering the complex to the east. “Everyone knows Love Street,” says Mark Lessing, executive vice president of Lessing’s Hospitality Group, which manages the restaurants. “It represents the heart of town but also what this area means to the people who live here, so we wanted to design this place to blend into the local area and still retain its charm.”

Appealing to locals has been “the guiding principle” of the development, Lessing says, and that translates into creating value-driven menus that entice a wide range of tastes while also maintaining the highest level of quality. “People can come in shorts and a T-shirt and grab a burger and a beer if they want.” Even the more upscale Beacon, he says, strives for an “all-are-welcome” atmosphere. “It’s unpretentious in an elevated way.”



In addition to cocktails and a stellar view, Topside at the Beacon serves a variety of small plates meant for sharing. Photo by Libby Volgyes

Families are also an important draw in what Modica and Namath hope will be the enduring appeal of Love Street. "Joe and I both have grandchildren, and we want this to be a place for them to enjoy for years to come," says Modica. They plan to host farmers markets, local art shows, and festivals designed for kids under the tiki huts in the parking lot and eventually to offer short boat rides to the Lighthouse Museum (which they both support financially). Modica also improved a small stretch of sand by the water so that kids have a place to play. "We want people to be able to go right down to the water," he notes.

While the project faced some initial opposition by residents who voiced concerns about more development in the inlet village, Modica and Namath say their focus was always on improving the area and building a legacy that families, including their own, would enjoy. Says Modica: "We thought about this a lot and talked about it a lot. We walked the property many times before we built on it, and it was really disheveled. You wouldn't have wanted to take your children there.... Our idea was just to bring it back. I think we achieved that, and we're truly very proud of what we're doing."



Decadent desserts at Beacon include the Chocolate Bombe with chocolate variations, raspberry, and pistachio crunch. Photo by Libby Volgyes

Namath agrees. "I see this development as a major part of my life," he says. "I'll be there with my kids and my grandkids.... I've watched this area grow through the years, and I've been in and out of the inlet marveling at the beauty. We wanted to enhance the community and give people a greater experience."

Future development plans for the Love Street project are in the works, but right now Modica and Namath just want everyone to enjoy what's there for a while. "This has been a process and many years in the making," says Namath. "Charlie and I kind of believe we should take it slow. Let's wait

and see and make sure everything is right before we move forward. We've got a great team, and we're not in a hurry."

Lucky Shuck Oyster Bar & Taphouse and The Tacklebox, 1116 Love Street, Jupiter; Beacon and Topside, 1107 Lighthouse Promenade, Jupiter

Facebook Comments

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