

What's New in Atlantic City with Meet AC's Karina Anthony & Jessica Kasunich

Transcript

J: Hello and welcome to Meet AC newest podcast series, Atlantic City Voices. I'm Jessica Kasunich, communications manager, with Meet AC.

K: And I'm Karina Anthony, marketing director with Meet AC. And we are your official podcast hosts for Atlantic City Voices.

J: Throughout our monthly series of Atlantic City Voices, we will be interviewing various voices of Atlantic City who are important leaders in our community and destination.

K: The topics we discuss will vary, but will mainly focus on important conversations around regenerative tourism and redevelopment and investment throughout Atlantic City

J: For the month of April we will be our special guests discussing what's new and on the horizon throughout Atlantic City as we approach a busy spring and summer season.

K: We're thrilled for the continued investment and development not only in the casino properties, but city wide

J: Hi, Karina!

K: Hi, Jess!

J: So let's dove in and talk about some of the new and hot happenings happening throughout Atlantic City. Brothers Nick and Mike Intrieri owners and developers of North Beach Mini Golf will be debuting their North Beach mini golf at its grand opening on Saturday, May 7th.

K: I think that is so exciting for the city that we're starting to become a little more family friendly. You know, I have a little one and it's just nice to be able to do things like this close to home with your family.

J: Absolutely. And this will be Atlantic City's second miniature golf course with the second one being located across Jim Whelan Boardwalk Hall on the boardwalk and North Beach in the Absecon Inlet. This will give views of the beach, the Absecon lighthouse and they will also have a bike rental business, which will be nice for guests and locals to ride up and down the five mile boardwalk.

K: Absolutely. And right nearby their Showboat Hotels, the raceway Lucky Snake is also slated to open this May. This will be Atlantic City's first indoor go kart racing experience.

J: Yeah. This is so exciting, you know, this is something really diverse and Showboat is really hitting it on the head with family friendly attractions. As they also just recently broke ground on their Island Waterpark, which will be an indoor water park.

K: Yeah. So you can really see that Atlantic City is diversifying offerings that they're giving to the leisure customer, even the business traveler. Maybe now they will decide to bring their family with them for the next meeting or convention. Stay an extra day. There's so much that there will be to do for families now in Atlantic City.

J: Absolutely. And not to mention some of our casino properties are really reinvesting into their products. Bally's Hotel and Casino continues to reinvest with unique and exciting amenities for guests and visitors.

K: Yeah, I think the experiential dining and amenities will be so cool to have The Yard will have a cool beer garden feel. It's just steps from the boardwalk glass structure with retractable sides and roof. I mean, it's just something we have never seen here before in Atlantic City.

J: Yeah, the indoor and outdoor stage for live entertainment will be a hit, especially on the boardwalk, which will draw people in the. Gastropub style menu, along with not to mention their other dining options. Dining on the Six, Gerry Longo's meatballs and martinis you have Water Dog and you also have Guys Fieri. So, you know, Bally's have just been really, really investing in their product and people will really be amazed when they come back and visit in Atlantic City.

K: I think what's really cool about Atlantic City is that it is it is a big city, but we have a small town feel and now we're just adding all of these new elements to our small town by the beach.

J: You're so right. And, you know, it's something that we really hone in on the beach and the boardwalk. And speaking of dining. Tropicana Atlantic City has announced not one, not two, but eight new dining offerings that will appeal to every budget and appetite.

K: Yeah, they have new bar and lounges. Il Verde is beachfront designs. They're also opening a beer hall. They'll have dueling pianos, a Japanese tavern. And I mean, that's really diversifying the the amenities that we're offering here.

J: Yeah. We are so excited for the variety of offerings Tropicana will feature a special specially Il Verde's new location, which will be oceanfront. It doesn't get any better than that. Caesars Atlantic City will also open two well-known dining venues first, we have Hell's Kitchen debuting this summer, which will be the first ever on the East Coast, followed by Nobu Restaurant.

K: You know, I have never been to a Nobu before, but they just seemed so chic and cool. And I was recently in Phenix for a conference, and I went to the nearby town of Scottsdale and they

had a Nobu. I was able to get in without a reservation. And let me tell you, the vibe is just what I thought. It was very cool. Very chic lounge, like great music, great drinks, great food. I think it's such a wonderful new addition. To Caesars. And they're also adding Nobu Suites, is that right?

J: Yes. A new tower attached to Caesars, which will represent the Nobu brand, which is very exciting. And I have personally have never been to a Nobu restaurant. So it's very exciting in here in Atlantic City.

K: So let's talk entertainment now. Our summer lineup of Headline Entertainment is incredible. And there is something for everyone's liking. I mean, there's beach concerts large shows in arenas and also intimate venues throughout the city.

J: Yeah. I mean, it's just incredible with the Orange Loop Rock Festival, the Tidal Wave music festival on the beach, which draws thousands of people for over three days. And then we have comedians such as Dave Chappelle, Limp Bizkit, who's going back on tour, didn't think we'd see them back on tour. Sting, who I personally saw recently in Las Vegas, and he was incredible. I didn't realize all of the songs that I, I knew of his Alicia Keys and who doesn't love Andre Bocelli,

K: That that is just some stellar entertainment after the, you know, being home for so long and, you know, watching, watching people play music on Zoom, you know, and just kind of not being able to have that type of energy and interaction. I think that's a big deal for people. And we're already seeing some of these shows already sold out.

J: You're so right. You know, I think people really took those live events, whether it was a concert, comedian act, meetings and conventions. They really took those events for granted in the past before COVID hit. And it's so nice to be back at the vibe and the energy, as you say. And I think people are just so excited to be back and a sense of normalcy as we like to say.

K: I agree. And, you know, and I do think that the casino properties as well as the event organizers are taking a responsible approach to, you know, reopening these types of events and inviting people back. And now, you know, there is certain types of crowd control and people can feel that they are still having fun, but in a safe and responsible way.

J: Absolutely. Slowly but surely, we're getting there and there's hope for the future.

K: I agree. I like that. I like the word hope. The Atlantic City Sports Commission continues to grow and evolve within the next month basketball tournament and running events will descend into Atlantic City.

J: Yeah, we have several basketball tournaments at the Atlantic City Convention Center, along with many, many running events, you know, the LPGA Golf. And then one of our favorites will be returning in July. JJ Fish Week, Jimmie Johnson's Quest for the Ring Fishing Championship Week so come on out and see the big fish reeled in at the Golden Nugget.

K: Yeah. As the weather warms up, you're seeing lots of people get outside, lots of events outside. You know, we're thankful that here at the beach we have lots of wide open spaces for all kinds of events, and the sports groups are certainly taking advantage of them.

K: Yes, we are so fortunate of our wide open spaces and our natural elements here. We have also welcomed back meetings and conventions to the Atlantic City Convention Center. We're looking forward to the business network of offshore wind next week at the Atlantic City Convention Center, the New Jersey Apartment Association Conference in May, followed by the Police Security Expo in June. These are three big events that we're looking forward to hosting. We will be welcoming back NJAA and Police Security Expo. The Business Network Offshore Wind will be the first time in Atlantic City. So we're very excited as wind energy is a very popular topic right now.

K: That is exactly right. It is certainly important to regenerative tourism, which we are talking about so much. We have a wind farm here in Atlantic City and it is so appropriate that Business Network of Offshore Wind is meeting here in Atlantic City very soon.

J: Additional citywide development includes Stockton University who recently broke ground on phase two of their Atlantic City campus, which will feature a residential dormitory expansion. And this project is set for completion in 2023. Stockton really saw a demand for their campus to grow in Atlantic City. And it's very exciting to have the students here in Atlantic City, especially so close to the travel and tourism industry.

K: And we are excited to partner with Stockton for some education programs for planners that will be coming up soon. Atlanta Care broke ground on a \$30.3 million medical arts pavilion. The CRDA donated the land at the corner of Ohio and Atlantic Avenues, valued at \$3 million to Atlanta Care. It has pledged an additional 15 million in grant funding towards the project and this facility will enable land and care to expand the care provides. And also we're looking forward to it being a teaching hospital here in Atlantic City.

J: I can't believe how fast this building has gone up. Almost done with it and it's very exciting to see.

K: It is. It's exciting to see how a lot of things are taking shape in Atlantic City. And it's really, you know, changing how the landscape looks here.

J: Yeah, people are coming in and, you know, back in the day used to be like, oh, plans were announced. Nothing happened, but not anymore. Plans are announced. Shovels are going in the ground and things are happening.

K: They sure are we're moving and grooving here AC. As we wrap up, one of our favorite questions we like to ask our podcast guests is their top three favorite restaurants to dine at and in Atlantic City. And now we get to tell you our favorites. So, Jessica, what are your top three favorite restaurants here in AC?

J: Okay. So this is such a hard one for me. And I always get this ask this question from family and friends because they know how connected I am to Atlantic City. But I will give you my top three. They're a little different. Some are in casino properties, some are not. So my top three, one being Kuro at Hard Rock it's a Japanese Asian style cuisine. Then you have Cafe 2825, which I think that may be on your list to Karina you know you can't go wrong with their Italian food you. Oh gosh it's just my mouth is watering talking about it you know protip grab their tableside experiences if you can the homemade burrata, the cheese wheel, the blueberry cheesecake. You know, when you hear of blueberry cheesecake you're like, oh really? But this is something that I've never had before. And then Karina and I just actually saw that they're debuting a I believe it's a chocolate mousse, espresso cheesecake, Karina.

K: Oh, yeah.

J: It looks to die for. But anyway, onto my third and final is Rhythm and Spirits located on the Orange Loop. If you haven't been there for brunch, please, please go. There are menu with chef Kevin Cronin is just absolutely amazing. And he'll wow you with different menu items that will be available.

K: Well, you definitely have one of my favorites on there. You have to go to Cafe 2825 when you're here in the city. It's just it's an Atlantic City landmark, first of all. And second of all, it's family owned and you just feel special when you're in there. It's a very small restaurant, but you just feel like you've almost been transported back in time. And it's really some of the best Italian food I've ever tasted. And you're right about that, that blueberry cheesecake, it is just to die for. Next, I know you like this spot too, is Docks.

J: Yes. Docks is a favorite of mine as well.

K: It's, you know, owned by the Dougherty family, and they have a few restaurants within the city, and the seafood is just stellar. The cocktails are perfect. If you want a really fantastic dirty martini, go there. They have a super fun happy hour, but you have to get there. Is it 4:00 or 5:00?

J: It starts or o'clock, and I would recommend getting there around 3:30 you may just be waiting in a line outside, but it is so worth it that.

K: That's exactly right. Yeah. Get there. Get a seat at the bar, get some oysters. They'll have the piano playing.

J: Love the panio.

K: It's such a nice experience. And then this restaurant has been around for a long time. It's Izakaya in Borgata, and it is just so fun. It's got a fun vibe. It's got great, a great sushi menu, great cocktails, you know, it's a nice spot for if you want to have a little celebration, it's got a, it's

got a bit of a party vibe. But not too over-the-top. Just, you know, if you want to let loose, go out and have some fun.

J: I love that. Izakaya is another favorite as well. A little similar to Kuro. But it's an oldie but it is a goodie.

K: It sure is. And you know, I know that Borgata, you know, they're they're having some reinvestment and redevelopment in their property as well. And they've brought in a few new restaurants that I hope Izakaya stays.

J: Yes, me too. For sure. Like you said, it's such a nice vibe and.

K: Yeah, it's fun. It's all. But you know what? It actually kind of reminds me of Nobu.

J: Oh, okay.

K: It does. Yeah. So they might have some competition now.

J: Yeah. We'll have to check it out. We hope you enjoyed our conversation, and we hope to see you in Atlantic City very soon to experience everything our seaside destination has to offer.

K: Thank you for listening, and stay tuned for next month's podcast to find out who the next Atlantic City voice will be.