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**& pinch American Grill:**

Photo Credit: Sean Hamrock

## **Empire City Casino Celebrates Completion of \$50 Million Expansion with World Class Collaborators**

***Hundreds Turn Out for Ribbon Cutting & Reception with World Renowned Chef Alain Ducasse;  
Elected Officials, Business Leaders, Design, and Culinary Talent Join Rooney Family to Celebrate  
with 100 New York Beers on Tap & Top Notch Menu Tastings***

(New York) The tri-state has been brewing with excitement over the completion of a \$50 Million expansion at Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway. The expansion includes two new restaurants, along with a craft cocktail lounge featuring retro bowling lanes, 30,000 square feet of new gaming space and an expansive new casino entrance.

*“The talent that brought this project to fruition is world-renowned,”* said **Timothy Rooney**, President and CEO of Empire City Casino. *“We are proud of our success to date and will work to ensure that Empire City continues its development as a premier entertainment destination.”*

Designed by **STUDIO V** of New York City, the new architecture of Empire City is a drastic departure from ordinary casino design. A dramatic curved facade features over 45 feet of frameless low iron glass in a 300-foot arc that creates a backdrop to the entry canopy and a window onto the interior of the casino. This jaw-dropping display is the largest structure of its kind in North America. **LPCiminelli** of Buffalo served as the general contracting firm on the entire \$50 Million project.

**Jay Valgora**, the principal and founder of STUDIO V Architecture, describes the design: *“At Empire City Casino, we set out to re-invent the modern casino. Our design features a four-story high arc of frameless glass to project the energy of the casino onto the building exterior, while bringing the drama of the landscape and architecture into the gaming hall. The façade forms a backdrop for a dramatic porte cochere utilizing exotic structural systems and innovative materials.”*

High above the 35,000 square-foot gaming floor rests laser-cut steel “clouds” covered with di-chroic glass discs. These “clouds” offer a radically new interpretation of the traditional chandelier to illuminate the modern gaming floor. Lining the walls of the glistening room is the powerful image of the New York City skyline outlined as a sophisticated nail wall. The Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, the Statue of Liberty, and The Empire State Building are prominent features among the abstract urban landscape.

The two new restaurants encompass a large portion of the additional 66,000 square foot expansion. The innovative casual grill, **pinch American Grill** is a collaboration between Developer Mark Advent, the creator of Las Vegas’ highly successful New York New York Hotel and Casino, and Ducasse Studio, the culinary consulting arm of Alain Ducasse Enterprise. **Dan Rooney’s Sports Pub** is a fun take on the classic sports pub. Both restaurant concepts are more fascinating when you get into the details of the design, concept, food, the talent in the kitchen, and the team behind these culinary and entertainment creations.

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*"It has been exciting to be a part of the dynamic future of Empire City Casino as it evolves into a fun-filled entertainment, gaming, leisure and dining destination," said **Mark Advent of Advent Entertainment**. "The new restaurants are innovative and exciting and complement the property and its commitment to positively enhance and expand the guest experience."*

**pinch American Grill** features an open kitchen, raw bar and pastry counter in a vintage diner-style environment, but the beer program undoubtedly serves as a main attraction. Overseen by Certified Cicerone James Tai, **pinch** American Grill boasts a significant beer program with 100 New York beers on tap, 25 large format beers including limited releases (available seasonally and in small batches) as well as beers exclusively brewed for the restaurant. Other unique beer offerings include "pour your own" beer taps fixed to a handful of tables and a "growler shop" near the entrance which allows guests to take home a daily selection of eight featured beers on tap.

A selective, dynamic 80-bottle wine list, curated by the beverage director of **Ducasse Studio**, is comprised mostly of American wines from New York and California (75%), as well as France.

Not to be outdone by the bar, the **pinch** menu, created by **Chef Fabienne Eymard** (Taillevent in Paris, Caprice in Switzerland, Benoit in New York), offers a mix of updated American and international classics. It is broken down into seven main categories: Snacks & Starters, Soups & Salads, Seafood Bar, House Specialties, Sandwiches, Burgers and From The Grill.

Appetizers include the signature pinch Macaroni & Cheese with Ham; Mini Beef Short Rib Tacos and Sweet & Spicy Glazed Chicken Wings. Soups like Gratineed Onion Soup with a lager shooter are offered as well as a variety of salads. Seafood is featured with a raw bar display as well as a selection of unique ceviches such as Scallop with hot yellow pepper paste and fresh heart of palm salad.

A selection of 8 ounce Certified Black Angus Beef burgers such as the signature **pinch** Burger with crispy pork belly, red onion, arugula and a beer cheese sauce (with an optional sunny side up egg) appear on the menu along with over six kinds of sandwiches including a Shrimp Panini with arugula salad, caesar dressing and a Beer-Marinaded Grilled Skirt Steak on a French baguette with Dijon mustard and watercress.

Other entrees ("House Specialties") include Atlantic Cod Brandade atop a potato puree with lemon, capers, croutons and brown butter and Lamb T-bone Chops with Mediterranean relish and an eggplant tart. An assortment of Certified Black Angus Beef is prepared on the grill with a variety of sauces. Accompanying side dishes like Crushed Potatoes, Creamy Spinach, and Wild Mushrooms can be ordered a la carte.

Formerly of Alain Ducasse's miX in Las Vegas at THEhotel at Mandalay Bay, Executive Pastry **Chef Tamber Weiersheuser's** dessert menu features contemporary interpretations of American classics. The menu will evolve throughout the seasons but will continuously include signatures like S'mores, Raspberry Sundae, Apple Tart Tatin served with crème fraiche, and Warm Chocolate Cake topped with pistachio ice cream.

Inspired by the original Dan Rooney's Cafe & Bar built and operated in the early 1900s in Pittsburgh by the family of Tim Rooney, the current owner and operator of Empire City Casino, the new **Dan Rooney's Sports Bar** is warm, inviting and casual, featuring dual flame rotisseries, private "snugs" for intimate seating, two fireplaces, and plenty of live musical entertainment.

**Alley 810** features two vintage style bowling lanes, inspired by turn of the century bowling alleys, on the second floor of the pub. Taking the typical Irish pub to the next level, **Alley 810** offers high-quality traditional pub food and features a carver station for open-flame rotisserie.

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These two new creations have been designed by New York City's acclaimed design firm **Roman and Williams Buildings and Interiors**, which has received high praise for their celebrated work at The Dutch, the Ace Hotel (The Breslin), The Standard (Top of The Standard), and the Viceroy Hotel.

Empire City Casino has also tapped the talents of **Clark Wolf**, the renowned New York City- and Sonoma-based restaurant consultant, to rehab and refresh its current food and beverage offerings on property. Wolf has left his mark on legendary restaurants such as The Russian Tea Room, The Library at the Regency Hotel, the Sign of the Dove, and Las Vegas hotspots such as Mandalay Bay, Paris Las Vegas and Caesar's Palace.

Under Wolf's direction, Empire City Casino's open station food court has undergone a complete overhaul and has been reintroduced as **The Big Kitchen at Empire Plaza**. With over 340 plaza seats, **The Big Kitchen** will feature an all new coffee bar and five distinct cooking stations, including **New Original Ray's**, **The Fry Shack**, **Empire Grill**, **Canton Kitchen and Noodle Shop**, and **Corner Deli**. The **Main Stage** lounge and bar at the center of the property entertains guests with an all-new cocktail program that will feature signature mixes, as well as an Empire twist on some of New York's classic cocktails. The popular **Nonno's Trattoria** and the lively trackside **Empire Terrace Restaurant** will both enjoy menu enhancements and regular promotional events. Other upgrades and additions are planned for the property in the near future, including the revamp of the conveniently located trackside Grab 'N Go which will not only be renamed but also upgraded into a full service grill with a little Latin flare.

*"Having worked with some of the biggest names in gaming throughout Las Vegas and Australia, I can tell you that these are world-class gaming floors and they deserve the kind of world-class food and drink offerings people have come to expect from casino properties like these,"* said **Clark Wolf**. *"And that's exactly what they're going to get here at Empire City."*

#### **About Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway**

Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway features: 5,300 slot machines, electronic roulette, craps, sic bo and baccarat tables, Italian dining in Nonno's Trattoria, and trackside dining in the Empire Terrace Restaurant, which overlooks the track for live harness racing, as well as the International Food Court and its wide-ranging menu. The multi-faceted Good Time Room is available for parties, benefits, weddings, and major events for up to 400. Empire City Casino is located at 810 Yonkers Avenue (at Central Avenue) in Yonkers, New York, Westchester County, (I-87 to Exit 2). Empire City Casino is open seven days a week, every day from 9:00am to 4:00am.

#### **About Ducasse Studio**

Ducasse Studio (DS) is the culinary consulting arm of Alain Ducasse Enterprise (ADE). Based in Paris, DS provides services to a wide range of corporations, retail entities and cultural, government and educational institutions around the world. These services include full-scale concept creation, menu and recipe development, branding, graphic identity, and staff training. Consulting projects include the Bateaux Parisiens in Paris to the full range of tasty, healthy and nutritious meals applied for space food.

#### **About Advent Entertainment**

Advent Entertainment is a private, closely-held domestic and international development company based in Florida and Nevada that is primarily responsible for the conception, design, development, operation and ownership of premier restaurant, bar and hospitality concepts, as well as mixed-use casino, entertainment and integrated leisure resorts having hospitality, lifestyle residential and retail components. Advent Entertainment's original ideas are outstandingly innovative but always realistic and focused on long-term financial success. AE's underlying philosophy of creating restaurant, bar, hospitality, and gaming-centric concepts, which are destinations in their own right, has yielded both impressive financial growth and tourism for the communities in which they are located. AE's principals have developed some of the most significant gaming resorts in the world. AE Chairman and CEO, Mark Advent conceptualized the highly acclaimed \$465 million New York New York Hotel & Casino located on the world-famous Las Vegas Strip.

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#### **About Studio V Architecture**

Studio V Architecture has grown to be one of the most innovative new architecture firms in New York City with a highly diverse range of work. The firm's design philosophy insists that every project is a different expression of a unique place and encompasses a range of unconventional approaches to structure, materials, form and lighting. The Studio's designs focus on the expression of contemporary culture in the urban environment. This spectrum of work has recently garnered the firm a great deal of media attention including the featured "Studio Visit" in Architect's Newspaper. The firm is also the Master Plan and Design Architect for the Macy's Herald Square renovation, which was named the Top 2012 Retail Project by Architectural Record.

#### **About Clark Wolf Company**

Clark Wolf Company was formed in 1986 to provide consulting service both to food, restaurant and hospitality businesses and to organizations which require the services of such businesses. Clark Wolf Company helps build profitable, top-quality operations from the ground up and develops existing businesses into fresh, competitive operations. Working with design and management at all levels, Clark Work Company leads a collaborative process that results in architect and design selection, chief/restaurateur selection, concept development, menu development, restaurant design and tabletop programs. Clark Wolf Company is involved with both trend setting and classic established operations. Clients include restaurants, hotels, resorts, casinos, entertainment venues, public institutions, accounting firms, specialty food stores, real estate developers, property holders & managers, supermarkets, food & beverage producers, marketing boards and public relations firms.

Photos available at [www.empirecitycasino.com/2013expansion](http://www.empirecitycasino.com/2013expansion)

Photo Credit: Sean Hamrock

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