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Four Seasons Returns in New Spot But With Competition From Old Haunts

Fabled NYC restaurant reopens Wednesday at a new location three blocks away

By Charles Passy – August 13, 2018



As it prepares to open its doors Wednesday after a two-year hiatus, the Four Seasons, one of New York's most famed dining institutions, will face a number of challenges.

Perhaps the biggest is the simple fact it is no longer in its landmark location in the Seagram Building on East 52nd Street. Instead, it will be at a new home roughly three blocks away, with an entrance on East 49th Street.

Meanwhile, Major Food Group, the hospitality company that took over the 52nd Street space, has turned the location into one of the most talked-about and critically acclaimed dining hubs in the city, split between two restaurants, the Grill and the Pool.

In short, the Four Seasons, a favorite of the city's old guard and the restaurant that came to define the idea of the power lunch decades ago, will be going

head-to-head with the dining spot that not only took over its former home, but has also been seen as its successor in a more figurative sense. It is a restaurant battle unlike anything the city has ever seen, industry professionals said.

"I think everyone in the NY dining world is going to be watching this very closely," said Arlene Spiegel, a veteran restaurant consultant based in the city.

Ultimately, the biggest challenge for the new Four Seasons may still be how Major Food Group has turned the old Four Seasons space into such a hot spot. Celebrities have been spotted at the Grill and the Pool on various occasions.

And the steakhouse-style Grill, which opened in the spring of 2017, was named on several critics' lists for the best new restaurants in the city and country later that year. ●