



Hudson Yards Welcomes Private Club After Touting Access

Development takes exclusive turn with launch of members-only space

By Charles Passy | Caitlin Ochs for Wall Street Journal

In its short history, Hudson Yards has touted itself as a restaurant destination available to all, with options ranging from fast-casual to fine dining.

Now the \$25 billion mixed-use megadevelopment on Manhattan's far West Side has taken an exclusive turn and opened a private club.

WS New York, a membership-only space, quietly made its debut in recent weeks. Located in a Hudson Yards building that also houses residences and an Equinox hotel, the club has been created in partnership with Marvin Shanken, publisher and editor of Wine Spectator magazine. The "WS" in the club's name is a nod to the publication.

The club is physically connected to The Tavern by WS, a restaurant that is nonexclusive and opened recently as well. The two spaces, which cover 18,000 square feet, were designed by David Rockwell,

the restaurant architect and Tony Award-winning theater-set designer.

Having a private club at Hudson Yards adds another major dining and socializing option to the development's mix, which includes everything from a Shake Shack location to a Spanish-theme food hall to a David Chang restaurant. But it may also send the message that Hudson Yards isn't as egalitarian as promised, warns Arlene Spiegel, a New York-based hospitality consultant.

The development "can't have it both ways," she said.

Still, WS New York officials noted that the public can partake in the experience without joining the club, in a sense, by visiting The Tavern by WS. The club and restaurant share a common main kitchen, overseen by the chef Eli Kaimeh, an industry veteran. ●