

VERTS Mediterranean Grill Adds Four New NYC Locations

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In 2011, VERTS Mediterranean Grill co-founders Michael Heyne and Dominik Stein were fresh out of business school when they came up with the idea for a new type of fast-casual restaurant brand.

The two 20-somethings have used their youth to their advantage, building upon budding food trends to create a successful enterprise. They quickly expanded from two locations to 28 spread across Boston, Philadelphia, Austin and New York. Their concept for VERTS epitomizes the newest in food trends; a quick look at their website reveals the restaurant brand's dedication to both health foods and Mediterranean flavors, concentrating on the overlap. VERTS Mediterranean Grill offers customizable pitas and salad bowls, and a nutrition calculator meant to reaffirm that this meal, unlike those from similar restaurant chains, will be healthy, delicious and instagrammable.

Luckily, since the time TFS wrote about VERTS last year, New Yorkers will soon find it even more convenient to sample the bountiful Mediterranean delicacies found at VERTS with the opening of four new NYC locations in addition to the pre-existing Grill in the heart of Manhattan's Flatiron District. The locations will be at the base of L&L Holding Company's 222

Broadway, DTH Capital's 70 Pine, Fisher Brothers' 1345 Avenue of Americas and RPW Group's 275 Madison Avenue. "When combined with our existing Flatiron location, these new locations will bring our flavorful menu to culinary enthusiasts throughout New York," states co-founder and co-CEO Dominik Stein.

Stein and Heyne are striving for a specific culinary experience that will entice New Yorkers with flavor, health, and convenience; customers can expect the new locations to have an updated look and modern aesthetic for a comfortable dine-in experience. However, the restaurant will also offer online ordering for quick pick-ups, making it a perfect choice on a work lunch break. Stein comments that while the authentic Mediterranean taste will be the focal point of the new expansions, there are other benefits to dining there as well: "For us, our priority is definitely taste, and health is a very good side effect because we use healthy ingredients and lots of vegetables in our foods. The focus is definitely on the quality of our food and the taste."



*VERTS Mediterranean Grill co-founder
Dominik Stein*

With these newest NYC locations, Stein and Heyne have had other concerns beyond ensuring high food quality and taste. Much thought went into picking the right real estate in the right neighborhoods to launch their new restaurants: "We have a pretty clear picture of what kind of neighborhood we want to be in; it should be high income, high density and high education, which naturally leads to high office density in the business district, where our core customer is."

With these criteria, the co-CEOs have always been attracted to the area of New York City for expanding their Mediterranean food empire: "We decided to come to New York because we wanted to show that we are capable of running an operation in the most competitive market in the country, which at the same time is the most financially rewarding market in terms of sales and profitability," claims Stein.

Yet the two entrepreneurs' love for New York City extends beyond its lucrative yet competitive market. Most importantly, they feel that the ideal consumer of VERTS is a New Yorker: very educated, possessing an understanding of and appreciation for foreign cuisine, understanding high-quality and fast-casual food with an

income to afford it. New York became the obvious choice for the company's mission and market, meaning that VERTS will soon have an even greater influence in one of the most influential culinary cities in the world.

VERTS Mediterranean Grill remains a unique and delicious culinary experience with its combination of high-quality food in a fast-casual setting; it is unlike any other restaurant brand found in the metro New York area. With four new locations, a social media-based marketing platform, delicious yet health-conscious food and a modern aesthetic, VERTS has positioned itself to succeed immensely in the New York market. Soon, additional locations may even follow.