

Mistral, the Princeton destination restaurant, to open in King of Prussia

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King of Prussia Mall, aiming high to gain respectability as a dining destination, will be the home of a second location of [Mistral](#), the daring, upscale-casual, small-plates restaurant in Princeton.

Mistral, targeting a January 2017 opening, will take ground-floor space beneath Grand Lux Cafe, at the entrance between Neiman Marcus and Lord & Taylor. It's also near [Savor](#), the mall's pavilion of casual restaurants that opens Aug. 18 in the area that formerly divided what was known as the Plaza and Court.

For the last four years, its founding chef, Scott Anderson, has been nominated for the James Beard Foundation's award for best chef in the Mid-Atlantic region. Anderson and business partner Stephen Distler also own [elements](#), a fine-dining restaurant upstairs from Mistral, on Witherspoon Street.

The two Mistrals will share a general sense of place and menu format, but not the dishes themselves. "The menu ingredients will be tailored more toward the chef," Anderson said this week. The idea, he said, is "simply to create a menu with the best ingredients, reflecting the dynamics of the area." King of Prussia, an hour from Princeton, happens to be on the doorstep of an impressive collection of farms.

Anderson spends most of his time at elements, leaving chef de cuisine Ben Nerenhausen to run the kitchen at Mistral. Anderson and Distler said they would soon announce the King of Prussia chef de cuisine, who is employed elsewhere. Asked if the chef were employed in Pennsylvania or New Jersey, Distler replied: "Yes."

Anderson said he was looking for "young, hungry chefs and sous [chefs] who have their own cuisine in mind." Nerenhausen lived as a child in Pakistan and Egypt, while Anderson's own culinary style is imbued with touches of Japan, where he grew up.

Why King of Prussia? "It wasn't immediately obvious to us," said Distler, wooed by an agent of mall owner Simon Property Group, which was looking for James Beard- or Michelin-quality chef-operators.

"Not surprisingly, we had questions about going into a mall environment, but we were very well educated by the Simon people," Distler said. What particularly sold them was the corner location, which has a strong outdoor exposure. The location will seat 111 people, including an 18-seat bar and outdoor seating.

Mistral, named after the stiff Mediterranean wind that clears the air and freshens weather, opened in 2013 as a BYOB. Last summer, elements moved atop Mistral and both picked up a liquor license.