

The Brass Tap serving brews in Boynton Beach

By Alexandra Clough



The Brass Tap

The Brass Tap has opened a location in Boynton Beach and plans a grand opening party Saturday, July 19. Expect two bands, plus specialty brews from the Funky Buddha Brewery.

Look for Funky Buddha concoctions such as Chocolate Covered Cherry Porter, Special Release Fruit Ale, No Crust PB&J Fruit Ale, Blueberry Cobbler, and Florida Hefeweizen, an OP Porter, among others.

The Brass Tap is an upscale craft beer and wine bar with more than 300 varieties of imports, local craft beers and a large selection of premium wines and cigars.

The Boynton Beach bar opened at the former Shane's Rib Shack at 950 N. Congress Avenue, near Gateway Boulevard.

The owner of the Boynton Beach location are franchisees Michael Gilbert and his wife, Stephanie. Gilbert said this location will be an experimental store store because it will consist of more taps and fewer bottles of beer. Tap beer stays fresher than bottled beer, and Gilbert said his location will have 100 tap handles, instead of the usual 60 to 70 at other locations.

More tap handles also are a way to distinguish the brand from the bottle-heavy World of Beer. (WOB has locations in West Palm Beach and Wellington.)

The Brass Tap was founded in 2007 in Tampa and is undergoing rapid growth. It has 14 open units and seven upcoming openings, and plans to quadruple in size.

Gilbert purchased the local franchise locations from Thomas Schueller, who had a Brass Tap at CityPlace, briefly. The place shut down after CityPlace in West Palm Beach sued it for not paying the rent.

Gilbert wouldn't talk about the CityPlace spot, but he noted that his locations will have a customer-friendly edge: Free parking.

Customers who go to CityPlace, even for a brewski, have to pay to park at the center's garages. Gilbert said he plans to open other Palm Beach County locations, including Palm Beach Gardens, Delray Beach, Boca Raton, Miami, Fort Lauderdale and one out of state.

Gilbert formerly owned the Market Square restaurant in South Paris, Maine.

"We were a busy restaurant that served beer," he said.

After nearly 20 years of hard work at the restaurant, Gilbert sold the eatery to his brother, Scott, and looked around for something else.

"I wanted to do something more fun," Gilbert said.

So he bought the The Brass Tap franchises, to experience the opposite of his former life. Or, as he put it, "A busy craft beer place that serves food."