

ADVENTURES IN  
TRAVEL AND CULTURE

# The South

LONG WEEKEND

## West Palm Beach's New Wave

A sophisticated food scene is  
taking off in this South Florida city

BY LISA CERICOLA



**Sweet Spot**  
Angie's Epicurean ice-cream truck is a delicious option at The Square.



that includes Smoked Cheddar & Jalapeño Sausage, a barbecue jackfruit sandwich, and pulled pork with a vinegar-based sauce.

## GROWING GARDENS

Palm Beach Gardens, a booming area in northern Palm Beach County, has long been synonymous with golf (it's home to The PGA of America), but now it's a draw for food lovers too. You don't even need to know how to hold a club to dine at Honeybelle, which opened at the PGA

National Resort in 2021. With cane furniture; pastel florals reminiscent of *The Golden Girls*; and a spacious, plant-filled patio, it has already made its mark on Instagram.

The menu is appealing, too, with vibrant cocktails and crowd-pleasing dishes from chef Lindsay Autry, like the Mediterranean Bowl (black-eyed pea hummus, lemon chicken, tomato-and-cucumber salad, stuffed grape leaves, and fresh pita) that nods to her Greek and Southern heritage. Also on the menu is the sweet tea-brined,

impeccably breaded fried chicken that put her on the map at The Regional, her elegant flagship restaurant, which opened in The Square in 2016 and closed last year.

Autry, who has been working in kitchens throughout South Florida for more than a decade, says there is a real sense of community here. Unlike Palm Beach, where the high season is from October through April, West Palm Beach and Palm Beach Gardens have mostly year-round residents, and they appreciate high-level cooking

too. "There's a genuine interest in more creative, unique dining. That used to be only on the island and was very expensive," she says. "All of us are creating places where we would want to go—and not just for a special occasion."

Ask a food-industry veteran in Palm Beach County where they like to eat, and you'll probably hear about Coolinary. Since this cafe opened 12 years ago, Tim Lipman's eclectic food has earned a devoted following, especially among other chefs. Where else can you find options like crispy eggplant flavored with chile and ginger, grilled swordfish with carrot romesco, and a brisket-and-chuck burger—all on the same menu? David Sabin, the force behind the annual Palm Beach Food & Wine Festival, says Lipman's fried chicken with a



### Made for Instagram

(From left) Honeybelle's decor is a fun twist on Sunshine State style. This artful arrangement of grilled oysters with chorizo butter, lemon, and panko wows at Stage Kitchen & Bar.



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**Don't Forget Dessert**  
(From left) Sloan's Ice Cream sells unique flavors. Chef Lindsay Autry's Honeybelle Pie shines.

jalapeño-Cheddar waffle is his favorite dish in town. "It's so good I ordered it twice in one day," he admits, "and my wife [Lindsay Autry] is famous for her fried chicken." In 2021, Lipman and his wife and general manager, Jenny, expanded Coolinary by moving it into a larger space that's shared with their bar, The Parched Pig. Thankfully, their chicken and waffles still remain.



Hover your phone's camera over the smart code to get more recommendations for fun things to do in West Palm Beach.

Also in Palm Beach Gardens is chef Pushkar Marathe's Stage Kitchen & Bar, which Balmaseda says "transformed the local dining world" after opening in 2020. Situated in an unassuming shopping center, the James Beard Award-semifinalist Stage (pronounced "STAH-zh") merges Marathe's Indian heritage with Florida, the Caribbean, and beyond. "My partner, Andy Dugard, and I saw there was nothing like it in Palm Beach County, and it didn't take long for us to find the ideal location," says Marathe. The original concept for the place was globally inspired small plates, but the pandemic changed that plan. "Survival meant takeout, so we adapted our menu to include curries.

They became so popular that we recognized this was an opportunity," he says, referring to his second restaurant, Ela Curry & Cocktails, which he started in 2022. "When Stage reopened, the community we had nurtured during the lockdown became a loyal and supportive following that has grown year after year."

Today, the dining room at Stage is as Marathe originally dreamed it would be—loud, lively, and full of people sharing plates of vibrant, aromatic food, like Plantain Chaat. His spin on this Indian snack blankets the starchy fruit with yogurt, pomegranate arils, tamarind, mint, and crispy potatoes. It's a bold dish that hits all of the senses, especially when paired with a Go Man-Go cocktail (gin with local mangoes, lemongrass, ginger, and turmeric). As I sipped my drink and snagged another bite of yellowfin tuna ceviche with coconut milk, puffed rice, and peanuts, I started thinking about my next trip home, and a strange new feeling came over me. I realized I was already planning where I was going to eat.

## A Few West Palm Pointers

*Now that you know where to eat, here's how to spend the rest of your Florida trip*

### Shop Around

**The Square** features big retailers such as Lululemon and H&M as well as local options like the children's bookstore Rohi's Readery. **Antique Row** offers about 40 vintage shops. **City Girl Consignment** has good deals on quality brands of women's clothing.

### Get Outside

Golfers of all skill levels are welcome at **The Park**, an impressive new 190-acre course. Bird-watchers will love exploring the wetlands of **Grassy Waters Preserve**. Catch a shuttle boat to **Peanut Island**, and snorkel in turquoise waters. **Mounts Botanical Garden of Palm Beach County** is filled with lush foliage.

### Experience Art

The **Norton Museum of Art**, one of the city's jewels, is home to more than 8,200 works. Nearby at the **Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens**, you'll find a tropical hideaway filled with palms and orchids.

### Stay In Style

**The Ben West Palm** is an upscale downtown option with a bar and saltwater pool on the roof. Opened in 2022, **AKA West Palm** is within walking distance of The Square. **Canopy By Hilton West Palm Beach Downtown** also has rooftop views from its breezy lounge.