

Restaurant week coming to Norfolk and Newport News

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Restaurant week is coming to two Hampton Roads cities, so if there are several restaurants you've wanted to try, this may be a good time to do so. Downtown Norfolk's restaurant week is Jan. 15 through 22.

Jessica Kliner, director of marketing and communications for Downtown Norfolk Council, said Norfolk started its Restaurant Week in January 2005.

"When we started we only did one restaurant week in January, but due to success and demand, we added a summer restaurant week in July as well in 2007 and have continued with a January and July every year since," Kliner said.

A variety of Norfolk restaurants are participating, including: 219 An American Bistro; 456 Fish; Big Easy Oyster Bar/Norfolk Seafood Co.; Bodega on Granby; California Pizza Kitchen; Freemason Abbey; Gershwin's; Monastery Restaurant; Omar's Carriage House; Saffron Indian Bistro; Shula's 347 Grill; Spirit of Norfolk; Texas de Brazil; Todd Jurich's Bistro; The Vineyards; Vintage Kitchen; and Voila! Kliner noted several longtime downtown restaurants have participated in every restaurant week since it started.

"It says a lot about the staying power of these restaurants as well as the success of restaurant week," Kliner said.

Lunch specials starting at \$12 per person will be offered at certain restaurants and fixed-price dinners for \$25 or \$35 per person. Reservations are recommended at all participating restaurants.

"Our award-winning Downtown Norfolk Restaurant Week is the perfect opportunity to sample our distinct cuisine scene," said Mary Miller, president and CEO of Downtown Norfolk Council. "Participating restaurants get creative with special menus and pairings with wines from Torres and specialty cocktails from Silver Fox."

Newport News is also having its restaurant week, which is actually over a two-week period. The fourth annual Newport News Restaurant Week is Jan. 21 through Feb. 4.

More than a dozen restaurants are participating, including: Al Fresco Italian

Restaurant; Circa 1918 Kitchen & Bar; Fin Seafood Restaurant; Kitchen 740; Saffron Mediterranean Cuisine; Schlesinger's Steakhouse; The Melting Pot; Travinia Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar; Tucanos Brazilian Grill; Cove Tavern; Crab Shack on the James; Rick & Libby's; Second Street Newport News; Tradition Brewing Co.; Tuscany Ristorante Italiano, Fountain Plaza Café; Indulge Bakery & Bistro; Manhattan's New York Deli & Pub and Harpoon Larry's Fish House & Oyster Bar.

Lunchtime at select restaurants includes a two-course meal for \$10, while different restaurants will have three-course dinners for either \$20 or \$30 depending on the establishment and meal selected (tax and gratuity is not included).

“Whether you decide to return to an old favorite or try something new, Newport News Restaurant Week offers something for every budget and taste bud,” said Cheryl Morales, chair of the event.