

Momentum building at The Banks; new "Escape Game" venue will be next addition to lineup

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(Photo: Provided)

A new escape-room venue is coming to The Banks, bringing one of the fastest-growing forms of entertainment in the U.S. to Cincinnati's riverfront.

The Escape Game is slated to open toward the end of the year in a 6,000-square-foot space between the Ta of Belgium and Pies and Pints along West Freedom Way, according to Jeffrey R. Anderson Real Estate, the management and retail leasing agent for The Banks.

The Escape Game is known for its elaborate, high-tech productions in escape rooms at the Mall of America in Minneapolis, and many other cities across the country.

"We are pleased to bring this top-of-the-line operator to The Banks," said JR Anderson, vice president of the Norwood-based real estate firm. "The Escape Game represents another reason why The Banks is the place people come to play."

The Escape Game will be divided into a handful of themed rooms that "lock" players in until they solve a series of puzzles or riddles to escape.

The live escape rooms – typically used for corporate team-building exercises, date nights and family outings – aren't actually locked. Players can leave any time.

But that would defeat the purpose of the physical adventure concept, which has already caught fire with gamers in the Cincinnati area at Breakout Gan in Hyde Park and Houdini's Room Escape in Montgomery.

The Escape Game is the latest in a string of new tenants that have opened their doors or announced their opening at The Banks since Jeffrey R. Anderson resumed leasing agent duties about six months ago.

Since then, The Banks has seen the opening of Columbus-based Condados Tacos on the first floor of the AC Hotel by Marriott on Joe Nuxhall Way.

A new upscale restaurant and entertainment concept, Galla Park, is slated to open later this summer in the space formerly occupied by the Crave restaurant at the corner of Second Street and Joe Nuxhall Way.

And Joella's Hot Chicken will soon bring its Nashville-style hot chicken concept to the space formerly occupied by Santo Graal along Freedom Way near Great American Ball Park.

New tenants are expected to fill approximately 24,000 square feet of remaining retail space at The Banks over the next three to four months, according to JR Anderson.

And the real estate firm is close to a deal to develop a completely new building to accommodate a casual dining restaurant on an empty lot next to the Yard House on East Freedom Way now used for outdoor events.

Jeffrey R. Anderson would own the building and part of the restaurant's operation, according to JR Anderson, who declined to name the restaurant.

But he insisted it would be a unique concept: "We're not trying to replicate uses. I don't want to do 'Yard House II.' "

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