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Ben Crandell: My dad missed the birth of his first son, family legend has it, while transfixed a few blocks up Fifth Avenue by another new creation.

Himmarshee Public House: A sneak peek at the new 'sporting lounge'

A preview of the newest upscale pub in Fort Lauderdale, opening in the Himmarshee District this weekend

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CAPTIONS 1/13



By Ben Crandell, SouthFlorida.com 6:41 a.m. EST, November 7, 2013

Mark Falsetto can recite the now-familiar numbers, the breakdown on the 2,000 new residential units that are on the books for downtown Fort Lauderdale.

But the owner of downtown's newest restaurant and nightspot is just as interested in looking backward as he opens Himmarshee Public House this weekend.

Falsetto has used a new coat of paint to highlight the nostalgic lines of the old building that takes up the north side of the 200 block of historic Southwest Second Street.

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In the tug of war between downtown's new upscale pubs, Falsetto's bid to bring a classier crowd back to Himmarshee has history on its side.

"We're sitting in the historic Himmarshee Village, the entertainment district of downtown, so we wanted to use the Himmarshee name. It means a lot to me," says Falsetto, 34, a South Florida resident for nearly two decades.

No one is naming the other names, but Himmarshee Public House, which Falsetto calls "a sporting lounge," will jump into a competition among other recently opened downtown spots that also tout curated craft beer.

Recent history has not been kind to the space at 201 SW Second St., which has been home to a motley parade of gloomy restaurants, dance clubs and bars.

None of that is news to Falsetto, who owns the popular, foodie-oriented burger joint Rok Brgr across the street. But Himmarshee Public House looks like a winner.

Ditching the lacquered-mahogany pub cliches, Falsetto's team has created a bright, open and sophisticated space, with ash-gray walls punctuated by plenty of new windows.

The large bar in the center of the room is bricked with plasma TVs overhead, and the 300-inch LED is visible in the back (a VIP area), but there are plenty of tables available where screens do not distract.

Falsetto hopes to appeal to business lunchers, sports fans, the young cocktail crowd (a DJ begins at 11 p.m. and a late menu will be offered until 2 a.m.) as well as the pre- and post-event Broward Center audience.

"Public House has something for ... all demographics. I even put root beer on tap for the children," he says.

Himmarshee Public House is scheduled to debut at 5 p.m. Friday, but will be open to the public at 10 p.m. Thursday, after a private event ends.

For more information, call 954-616-5275 or go to Facebook.com/PublicHouseFTL.

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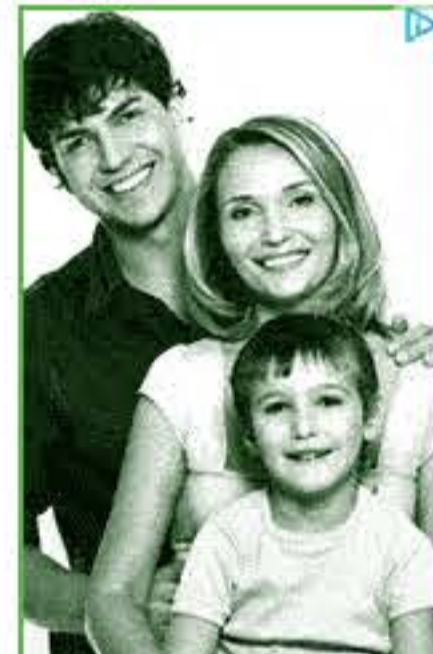
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