

THE REAL DEAL

NEW YORK CITY REAL ESTATE NEWS

Gourmet food boom lifts Battery Park City

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From left: Shake Shack, Blue Smoke and Battery Place Market

Long chided for being too clean, too green and too removed from the city's buzz, Battery Park City is beginning to establish itself among mature Manhattan neighborhoods.

According to the New York Post, it's starting with a restaurant boom.

Restaurateur Danny Meyer has opened three eateries in the area, including a Shake Shack at 215 Murray Street, a Blue Smoke at 255 Vesey Street and North End Grill at 104 North End Avenue. Further, Francois Payard opened a bakery across the street from Shake Shack, and Battery Place Market has opened its second outpost in less than a year because of the popularity of its gourmet pastries and coffee. Finally, Harry's Italian Pizza Bar and the Conrad hotel are both opening Battery Park branches.

"I did enjoy that we were the quiet, sleepy nook that nobody knew about," says Barbara Ireland, a broker with DJK Residential. "But in order to entertain an out-of-town guest, you had to jump in a cab or go to Tribeca. Now we're the hottest spot."

While the influx of eateries hasn't necessarily resulted in a hot sales market, in part because of the expenses associated with the Battery Park City Authority's land lease structure in the area, rents are booming. In buildings such as the Solaire and the Verdesian, both developed by the Albanese Organization, and the condo-turned-rentals at Liberty Green and Liberty Luxe, rents are increasing and vacancy rates are dwindling, the Post said.

"We've had an approximate 5 percent increase [in rents] every year," said Lydia Rapillo, vice president of residential leasing at Albanese. [Post]