

Food trucks get a new location for summer

Four food trucks paired with live entertainment at East Point on weekends

CHRIS DONOVAN
TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SAINT JOHN • There were unfamiliar delights in the parking lot of East Point Shopping on Friday as the air filled with music and the smell of pizza and schnitzel wafted from food trucks.

East Point struck a deal with four food truck operations – The Funky Monkey, Checkpoint Germany, Parking Lot Pizza, and The Smoked Grenade – that involves the shopping centre providing live entertainment and a pop-up patio in the parking lot every weekend as the trucks provide refreshments to customers.

The food trucks will be parked in the lot every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. until September, according to East Point spokesperson Joel Levesque.

“The response has been very encouraging so far, there were people lined up here before the truck even opened,” said Levesque. “We think it will be good for the food truck lovers, good for the operators, and good for Saint John.”

Levesque said there are a few factors that he believes have contributed to the early success of the new location for the food trucks.

“The food truck trend is growing in North America with gourmet food trucks, not just burgers and fries but really unique menus, and we have some unique representation here. I think it’s a long way from being at its peak. The other thing is that people are expecting more from shopping centres. People expect an experience, they want to come to the stores but they also want something else. So we are providing them with food and entertainment to go along with their shopping experience,” he said.

Levesque said the ultimate goal is to drive more traffic into the stores that surround the food trucks and entertainment stage.

“The food trucks have quite a fan base,” said Levesque. “So by parking them here, we are introducing people to a new place they may not have been to before. Maybe they will see a store they didn’t realize was here.”

Levesque said they will likely expand to include more food trucks as the summer progresses.

“We’ve gotten inquiries from other trucks and I think we will include some more as it grows in popularity,”



Visitors sit down for lunch at the pop-up patio in the parking lot of East Point Shopping on Friday. PHOTO: CHRIS DONOVAN/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

he said.

Michael Uberall, owner of Checkpoint Germany, said Saint John is a particularly profitable city to run a food truck business.

“We don’t really go to Moncton or Fredericton unless there is an event that we get invited to, but our truck is in Saint John almost every day; it is a great city for a food truck,” said Uberall, whose business is based in Oromocto.

Uberall said the officials in Saint John are more welcoming than elsewhere.

“People all over the province get excited about food trucks, but the regulations are much better in Saint John, I think they are better at looking further ahead than Moncton or Fredericton,” he said



Ashley Giddings orders lunch at Parking Lot Pizza on Friday. PHOTO: CHRIS DONOVAN/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

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FOOD TRUCK WEEKENDS

East Point Shopping

ON SITE FOOD TRUCK VENDORS
11am to 8pm

The Smoked Grenade
July 22, 23, 24

Parking Lot Pizza
July 22, 23, 24

Check Point Germany
July 22 & 23

The Funky Monkey
July 22, 23, 24

LIVE MUSIC
12 noon and 6pm

Friday, July 22
Matthew Martin (12 noon)
Wayne Hansen (6pm)

Saturday, July 23
Eloie Richard (12 noon)
Clinton Charlton (6pm)

Sunday, July 24
Hilary Ladd (12 noon)

PLUS: Check out GREAT SPECIALS at participating East Point stores.

East Point Shopping

East Point Shopping

Food Trucks will be located between GAP Factory Store and Le Chateau. See you there.