

Specialty Retailers

Stew Leonard's signs lease for wine, cheese store

04.2010

SPRINGFIELD, N.J.-Stew Leonard's Wines and Spirits will open a 12,680-square-foot wine and cheese shop here at Echo Plaza.

"We selected Echo Plaza because of the very strong demographics of the market, the high auto traffic of the location and the accessibility to the site from neighboring communities," said Amanda Deveaux of Stew Leonard's Wines and Spirits, in a prepared statement. Stew Leonard's Wines and Spirits is a licensee of the food and spirits purveyor Stew Leonard's, the specialty retailer based in Norwalk, Conn. "We are very selective in our site selection process and determined that this particular location met all of our requirements for a successful operation."

At press time it was unclear when the store would open. Gourmet News was unable to reach a spokesperson before press time. Once open, the store will feature more than 2,000 varieties of wine from around the world, a fine wine room with top-rated wines, as well as a gourmet cheese department. The store will host weekly in-store samplings, as well as numerous special events and educational seminars featuring well-known wine makers and award-winning wines.

"Stew Leonard's Wines and Spirits is an outstanding retailer that will generate a tremendous amount of traffic to Echo Plaza, and we are very excited to have them," said Ethan Goldsmith, leasing representative for Levin Management, the leasing agent for the 66,000-square-foot shopping center, in a prepared statement. "The new ownership has been very aggressive in renovating Echo Plaza, which has enabled us to re-anchor and elevate the profile of the center in a relatively brief period of time considering current market conditions."

Now owned by Larken Associates, Echo Plaza is situated on U.S. Route 22 near the Garden State Parkway in Union County in one of New Jersey's most heavily traveled commercial corridors. The daily traffic count is 100,000, and the property is at the center of a three-mile population of nearly 103,000 with an average household income of \$139,943 and a median household income of \$99,243.

Stew Leonard's will join No Body Denied Health Club, which recently leased 21,500 square feet, as the new co-anchors for the renovated property. Other tenants at Echo Plaza include Outback Steakhouse, Sherwin Williams, Echoqua Italian bistro and Chen's 22 Chinese restaurant.