

June 13, 2010

Red Lobster remodel continues

A remodel project on Red Lobster should be completed this month, although a firm date has not been scheduled. The company, owned by Darden Restaurants, is remodeling nearly 700 locations across the country. Tony Morales, director of operations for Red Lobster restaurants in the Oklahoma City area, answered a few questions about the Shawnee location.

What has been the biggest change?

The biggest change guests will notice at our Shawnee Red Lobster location once the remodel is complete is our new, redesigned atmosphere inspired by the seaside village of Bar Harbor, Maine. The new look will give guests an opportunity to experience fresh, delicious seafood in a vibrant, nautical setting, right here in Shawnee. In addition, the lobby of the Shawnee location will be bigger, and the dining area will be expanded to seat additional guests.

Six area Red Lobster restaurants, including the Shawnee location and others in Oklahoma City, Norman and Stillwater, are undergoing the redesign; they are part of an overall effort to remodel all of nearly 700 Red Lobster locations in the next few years.

What can customers expect from the new Red Lobster?

Within the restaurants, guests will find dark-wood paneling, warm-toned fabrics, soft lighting and nautical decor such as signal flags and seaside-inspired artwork. New exterior features include shingle and stone towers, ship lanterns, flags snapping in the breeze and Adirondack-style benches, all intended to transport guests' minds to the coast.

For what reasons was the restaurant expanded?

Guest feedback drove the remodel. We've made great investments in our menu and service over the years, and guests told us they thought our next opportunity was to refresh the look and feel of our restaurants.

What can customers expect from the menu?

Guests can still find their favorites, like Lobster Pizza and our signature hot, freshly-baked Cheddar Bay Biscuits, but now they can enjoy them in a cozy, warm atmosphere.

Additionally, certified grill masters prepare fresh fish, tender lobster and other seafood over the open flame of wood-fire grills. A Today's Fresh Fish menu is updated daily to reflect the wide variety of fresh fish available.

If there are any changes to the menu, what will those changes mean for customers?

While we continue to stay true to our promise of bringing top-quality, fresh delicious seafood to America, we have recently evolved our menus to introduce more culinary-forward items.

While not directly tied to the remodel, Wood-fire grills have recently been introduced in every Red Lobster across the country. Certified grill masters prepare fresh fish over the wood-fire grill, bringing out the natural flavors found in seafood.

Our Today's Fresh Fish menu features between five and eight fresh fish selections daily. In addition, more contemporary flavors and seafood combinations have been added to the menu, such as Wood-Grilled Mango-Jalapeno Shrimp Skewers and Wood-Grilled Shrimp Bruschetta, in order to provide guests with a higher-quality experience at the same affordable price for which Red Lobster has always been known.