



Press Release

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Skanska Announces SeaSide Poké as Newest Tenant in Understory at Capitol Tower

Island-Inspired Concept Brings Fresh Poké Bowls to New Culinary Market in Downtown Houston

HOUSTON – Skanska, a leading global development and construction firm, has announced a long-term lease with SeaSide Poké for [Understory](#), the 35,000-square-foot community hub and culinary market at its Capitol Tower office development.

“We are excited to add SeaSide Poké to our eclectic lineup of upscale food offerings at Understory. This addition compliments the vibrant and engaging community space we are creating at Capitol Tower in Downtown Houston,” said Matt Damborsky, executive vice president for Skanska USA Commercial Development in Houston. “We believe their fresh take on traditional Hawaiian cuisine and commitment to sourcing only the finest local ingredients will appeal broadly to all frequenting the area, and look forward to bringing their fresh poké bowls to the Central Business District when Understory opens this summer.”

Established in 2017, SeaSide Poké is best known for serving fresh, flavorful chef-driven poké bowls with Houston flare. The diverse menu uses locally-sourced produce from Texas farms and sustainably caught fish to create traditional Hawaiian fare married with Houston inspirations. This opening at Understory marks SeaSide Poké’s second Houston location, following the opening of their first outpost at 2118 Lamar St. in East Downtown.

“We could not be more excited to work with such a fantastic group at Understory. It is a privilege to be surrounded by some of Houston’s most notable establishments and we believe it will help propel us towards our goal of becoming one of Houston’s culinary staples,” said Kristy Nguyen, co-founder of SeaSide Poké. “Our involvement at Understory will be a great way to showcase Houston’s diversity, culture and fortitude that we hold near and dear to our hearts. It is an honor to be a part of the effort to give back to our community and to show off our pride in delivering high-quality, delicious and nutritious food in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner.”

The island-inspired concept will occupy 498 square feet of the 9,000-square-foot culinary market, which is now 80 percent leased with one of seven restaurant stalls and the cocktail bar remaining.

SeaSide Poké joins East Hampton Sandwich Co., Boomtown Coffee, Mama Ninfa’s Tacos y Tortas, MONA Fresh Italian Food and Flip ‘n Patties as the first six tenants at Understory. The opening at Understory marks the third Houston location for East Hampton Sandwich Co. and Boomtown Coffee, and the second location for MONA and Flip ‘n Patties. Mama Ninfa’s Tacos y Tortas is a new concept from the well-known local name that will debut at Understory.

Designed by the Michael Hsu Office of Architecture, [Understory](#) will be a dynamic experience-based destination that brings the community together through culture, commerce and cuisine. In

addition to an abundance of naturally lit community space and a full-service restaurant, Understory features a culinary market with seven chef-driven concepts and a cocktail bar. A design hallmark of Understory is the open-air blending of the street and tunnel levels, facilitated by the “Great Steps,” a 30-foot-wide monumental staircase and gathering place that will create the first true street level gateway to the tunnel network. This gateway will be highlighted by a large hanging art installation that will be visible from Capitol, Rusk, and Milam streets.

Situated at 800 Capitol St. on a prime block in Houston’s Central Business District, Understory’s location near cultural landmarks such as Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, the Alley Theatre, Revention Music Center, Market Square Park and Wortham ideally positions the space to become part of downtown’s vibrant cultural life. Upon its opening in 2019, Understory will be the first space in the tunnel network to be active seven days a week, from morning to night, with a wide variety of culinary, retail, and cultural offerings. The community will enjoy access to high-speed Wi-Fi, mobile device charging stations, engaging art, games and thoughtful furniture arrangements, as well as a state-of-the-art fitness center for the exclusive use of building tenants.

With a distinctive design that was inspired by the craft of food, Understory will feature approachable, open cooking concepts with high-end finishes to create an inviting space with sweeping views of the street, tunnel entries and market hall. Kitchens will have a warm, handcrafted look, with artist murals, copper clad kitchen hoods, wood butcher block counter tops and white marble. A wide variety of soft furnishings will create a cohesive, yet layered, experience.

When Capitol Tower lights up Houston’s skyline later this year, it will be the most sustainable office tower in Houston, using 25 percent less energy than typical baseline facilities. Pre-certified under LEED v4 Platinum, one of only four core-and-shell projects nationwide, the 754,000-square-foot sustainable office development will feature a number of green amenities, including SkyPark, the first and largest green roof in Downtown Houston to be open to all building tenants.

Nick Hernandez, Crystal Allen and Lacey Wilke from Transwestern represented Skanska and SeaSide Poké in the transaction.

Skanska’s other developments in Houston include the first LEED Platinum campus in the Energy Corridor – the two-building [West Memorial Place project](#) - which offers direct access to the Terry Hershey Park hike and bike trails. Skanska also developed 3009 Post Oak, a 302,000-square-foot office building in the premier Uptown Houston location at Post Oak Blvd and Hidalgo.

Skanska has built and restored local landmarks in Houston for decades — from historic renovations, like San Jacinto Memorial Building on the Houston Community College campus, to the new construction of world-class sports facilities, including NRG Stadium, and invaluable healthcare resources like the expansion of LBJ General Hospital’s emergency department. Skanska continues to leverage its local knowledge and global expertise to shape the region’s commercial, healthcare, sports and entertainment facilities.

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Skanska is one of the world's leading construction and development companies. In the U.S., Skanska's core operations include building construction, civil infrastructure and developing self-financed commercial properties, which together generated \$8 billion in revenue in 2018. As a developer in the U.S., Skanska has invested a total of \$2.3 billion in commercial and multi-family projects. With U.S. headquarters in New York City, Skanska has offices in 28 metro areas with 9,000 employees nationwide. Skanska is an industry-leading innovator in both safety and project execution, and offers competitive solutions for both traditional and complex assignments to help build a more sustainable future for our customers and communities. Global revenue of parent company Skanska AB, headquartered in Stockholm and listed on the Stockholm Stock Exchange, totaled approximately \$20 billion in 2018.