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HEARD & SCENE

Taking Bites Out of the Batali Cookbook

Summer Soiree Benefits Winter Rink

Designer Katie Gallagher, Rosario Dawson and DJ Cory Kennedy.

New Bar Makes a Mark On the Waterfront

By Mike Vilesnky

"It's chill vibes," said Cory Kennedy. "It's chill, classic vibes."

Ms. Kennedy, the Internet-personality-turned-DJ, was selecting the soundtrack Wednesday evening for the latest Manhattan bar opening: Watermark, an establishment atop a pier near South Street Seaport.

Even before guests took a bite of a Watermark's sliders, they were inclined to like the place if only for its fortunate, waterfront location.

"I think it's gorgeous," Ms. Kennedy said. "If you could only get this space with this weather all of the time."

She selected "California Dreamin'" from a playlist, in her capacity as DJ, as if to underscore her point.

The bar and restaurant that bubbled up this year by the South Street Seaport did so with buzz. Locals wondered: Would the glass structures on the pier become another upscale burger joint or a swanky after-hours hangout?

Watermark, during its opening party, appeared to be perhaps both.

It is a relatively rare waterfront eat-and-drink spot that aims to cater to Lower Manhattan locals, rather than the out-of-towners the area tends to draw, and the opening event sought to mark (and market) the bar's entry into the crowded world of New York City dining.

"The Seaport was maybe a bit touristy in the past," said Abraham Merchant, a restaurateur and co-owner of the space. "We wanted to give this beautiful architecture to locals." (Mr. Merchant is a Battery Park resident himself.)

Not all of those locals were invited past the velvet ropes and red carpet and into the restaurant for the space's opening party, but actress Rosario Dawson and designer Katie Gallagher breezed through. Mr. Merchant said Ms. Dawson is a friend of a friend.

Nonetheless Ms. Kennedy had a point: amid lobster rolls and rosé, the party did indeed have "chill vibes." Magazine editors and 20-somethings turned up to gossip while gazing at the view of Brooklyn and beyond on the outdoor pavilion.

Telly Hayzigeorgiou, another co-owner, compared the evening to night life in his native Greece.

Manhattan, after all, is a "beautiful, beautiful island," he said.