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Come Out. Hang Out. Have Fun at The Meat Up, One of St. Thomas's Latest Hot-Spot for Good Food with Friends and Family

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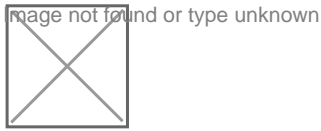
Meat Up in St. Thomas By. Robert Moore for VI Consortium

ST. THOMAS -- When a couple of Virgin Islands' millennials with business minds and abiding love for all things culinary put their heads together, the result is The Meat Up – the latest new place for dining, socializing with friends and spending some family time together.

“I love food,” said Melissa Pond, a managing partner in the mid-island dining spot that opened last week in Market Square East plaza, along Weymouth Rhymer Highway, between Raphune Hill and the Tutu countryside. “I really enjoy having a great experience

with friends and family. And that is what we wanted to bring to St. Thomas.”

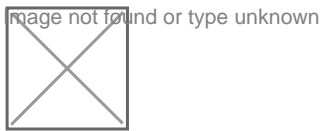
Indeed, the folks at The Meat Up did. The space is large and welcoming. Charles Martin and Kirrye Majors tend to the intimate bar, offset from the tables and booths of diners. Staffers Destiny Finn, Thea Hughes, Lasha Medina, Shannikqua Liburd and Aquaha Escobar serve up a full menu of “ ... small bites ... big bites ... starters... salads ... sweets ... super sweets,” and a “Kids Club” menu designed for the youngest diners.



The Meat Up, St. Thomas's Latest hot-spot for food, friends and family time.
(Robert Moore, VIC)

“It is definitely hard for a new restaurant – for any restaurant – to find the right people who can provide good customer service for our guests,” said Patrick Young, the Meat Up general manager. “So, it is about the team. And we have been lucky enough to put together a great staff. We have a lot of talent in the kitchen and wait staff, and we want to keep a robust staff that helps to circulate the money back into the economy.”

The Meat Up is situated in the sweetest of places – not in the touristy destinations, but in the heart of the well-trafficked middle-island. It sits between newly re-opened Cost U Less and the Caribbean Cinemas movie theatre, not far from Home Depot or the Humane Society. The same location previously housed a popular pizza joint, shut down after hurricanes Irma and Maria.

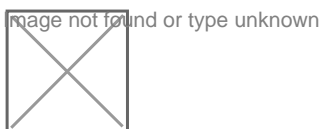


The Meat UP in St. Thomas (Robert Moore, VIC)

“Come Out. Hang Out. Have Fun ...” is the calling card of The Meat Up. The vision of the publicity-shy, young, local owners come from a simple place: The partners were looking for a “family friendly establishment that is moderately priced. That was out goal.”

St. Thomas offers plenty of high-end restaurants in the high-traffic tourist areas. Not so much in or near mid-island and the country. “We’re trying to make something affordable enough for everyday people and families to come and enjoy,” Mr. Young said.

Despite the name, there are vegetarian menu options available now or in the days to come. But among the specialties: smoked meats, such as the full rack, long bone ribs basted with a signature glaze or bbq sauce. The house-smoked brisket and Rosemary Chicken are a few of the diner favorites so far.



The Meat UP in St. Thomas (Robert Moore, VIC)

Keep in mind that for now, The Meat Up won't be offering live entertainment. But enjoy the TVs that line the walls on football or sports night.

"When you step into that space, we wanted it to feel different," Ms. Pond said. "It is. People really like the atmosphere. It is not the usual."

Restaurant Hours: The Meat Up is open 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Monday through Thursday, and 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Friday through Sunday.

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