

Texas Live!



Cordish bringing expertise to Arlington

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The Texas Rangers broke ground in late September on the new \$1.1 billion Globe Life Field and earlier in March officials with The Cordish Companies broke ground on Texas Live!, the \$250 million dining, entertainment and hospitality district that will surround the area.

The \$250 million project will have 200,000 square feet of restaurants, retail and entertainment venues and an outdoor event pavilion. It will also have a 300-room hotel with 35,000 square feet of meeting space, as the first in a new brand, Live! by Loews.

Texas Live! is part of a greater \$4 billion vision by the Texas Rangers Baseball Club for the

Arlington Stadium District that includes a new \$1 billion ballpark. Texas Live! will be constructed by a joint venture of Manhattan Construction Co. and Arlington-based Con-Real. Manhattan also built the nearby AT&T Stadium.

The Texas Live! project is expected bring 3 million new visitors here upon opening in 2018. Globe Life Field is expected to open in time for the start of the 2020 Major League Baseball season. Texas Live! will create 2,000 new construction jobs and 1,025 new permanent jobs.

While entertainment districts are not uncommon – look no further away than Irving's Music Factory development, Texas Live! is the rare bird with not one, but two sports components.

Cordish, which owns Power Plant Live in Baltimore and the

Maryland Live casino at the Arundel Mills malls, is involved in similar developments outside ballparks and sports arenas in Atlanta, Kansas City, Philadelphia and St. Louis. The Baltimore-based company was founded by Louis Cordish in 1910 and first began developing projects in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. area.

Blake Cordish, fourth generation and principal in The Cordish Companies was in town to catch the opening and he sat down with Robert Francis, editor of the Fort Worth Business Press to talk about plans for Texas Live!.

One of the things I've noticed is that you've got some local companies and organizations already involved, like Revolver and Lockhart Smokehouse.

We were fortunate for the Lockhart's. The barbecue's going to be great.

Listen, we believe the best answers for Texas Live! are to get the best operators and companies, and that means from the local community, that means from the state, that means from the country. And you've seen that in the announcements we've made, which are focused on the best in class. Everyone has their favorite barbecue, of course, but Lockhart's is one of them, right? Revolver is a really special, cool, incredible history to it. But then you have a Guy Fieri, on the other hand.

He brings his own national panache and is an amazing celebrity chef. Loews is, in our opinion, one of the premier hospitality hotel companies in the world.

Tell us about the partnership with Loews.

We decided together, for the first time, to launch a combination of the brands, of Live by Loews. Live is a brand of our company. To give you a sense of scale, we welcomed last year 50 million visitors in one year through Live developments. We use the brand in casinos, we use it in entertainment districts, and now we're using it in hotels in partnership with Loews. The fact that Loews and the Tisch family picked Texas Live to unveil this flagship new brand, I think speaks to ... it's an affirmation, if you listed the companies we've talked about. Frankly, it's an affirmation of what I was saying to you earlier,

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in terms of the potential and the power and the strength of the vision that the Rangers have come up with, and the development as a whole.

We will continue to make announcements like that [Loews and other restaurants, etc.] like you've seen. But what I hope and believe is it will continue to be the same foundational principles, which is we're going to find the best in class, and they will pick them from a local, regional, and national perspective.

Sporting events obviously draw people here, but how do you keep them coming back even when there are no ball games?

A couple of the areas that I think are probably most important to us at the end of the day is creating that 365 destina-

Line-up of venues for Texas Live! announced so far

- Rangers Republic, a 30,000-square foot family-friendly dining and entertainment venue allowing fans unprecedented access to the Rangers.
- Live! Arena, a multi-level, 35,000 square foot gathering place that will be the "living room" of Texas Live!
- Arlington Backyard, a 5,000-square foot outdoor event pavilion expected to host over 250 annual events including concerts, charitable functions and community events.
- PBR Country Bar, the flagship bar for Texas Live! will marry an electric combination of "cowboy cool" and big-time Texas entertainment. Its 7,000-square foot balcony will overlook Arlington Backyard.
- Guy Fieri, the Emmy-award winning chef, restaurateur, author and TV personality will launch a one-of-a-kind flagship restaurant.
- Revolver Brewing, from Granbury, will open a working brewery, bar and tasting room connected to the Live by Loews!
- Lockhart Smokehouse, a Texas family's iconic barbeque eatery offering meats smoked over Texas post oak.

tion. One of the ways that we do that is we have a very robust event calendar, when there are not major events going in the stadiums. So we create our own events. Why do we have

a Backyard, a 5,000-person concert venue? We're going to host well over a hundred events a year that will draw 3-, 4-, 5-, 6-, 7,000 people. And those events will range from music, country

western to rock, to art festivals, major food festivals, barbecue festivals, et cetera. Our focus is on the non-event days.

That's one of the ways that we're going to create a 365 des-

ination is give people unique reasons to come. Most of them will be for free. Why have we been successful in other places, where we've been involved in these comparable projects, is that we've really focused passionately on providing great reasons for people to come and enjoy themselves. You get valued experiences without having to pay for them every time. People need that. Bring a family of five, it's expensive to do stuff, it's expensive to go to a ball game. To be able to get a broader experience and not always have to reach to your wallet's really important.

Creating that living room for a community, that's part of how we do that. We've been successful with that, in this very rich calendar of events, rather than focusing on event day.

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