

UC San Diego

UC San Diego News Center

By Jade Griffin

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Soda and Swine. Photo by Zack Benson/Spoonfed Agency

Campus Welcomes Soda and Swine, Enlists Next Wave Commercial to Attract Additional Innovative Retail Operators

The University of California San Diego is renowned for its prime location, perched atop the cliffs of the Pacific Ocean. Now, as the campus undergoes an exciting transformation with the addition of new student housing and the creation of new living and learning campus neighborhoods, UC San Diego is working to improve campus retail offerings by attracting innovative and exciting dining, convenience services, and entertainment operators to elevate the campus experience for staff, faculty and students at the picturesque campus.

UC San Diego is enlisting the help of Next Wave Commercial, a local commercial real estate firm specializing in urban food and beverage operators, to help discover, cultivate and deliver an improved retail experience to campus. As Next Wave Commercial commences work with the university, the company is looking to build upon the recent success of UC San Diego in attracting and securing its first popular local restaurant to join the campus: North Park-based eatery Soda and Swine, run by UC San Diego alumnus and culinary visionary Arsalun Tafazoli, '06. The new Soda and Swine—the third in San Diego—will open this year in the renovated campus space formerly occupied by Porter's Pub.

“We are dedicated to enhancing the student experience at UC San Diego,” said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “We believe that offering more exciting gathering places like Soda and Swine, where students, faculty and staff can all come together, will ultimately foster a more connected campus environment.”

Tafazoli established his first restaurant, Neighborhood, in 2007, just one year after graduating from UC San Diego, where he studied political science and philosophy. Today, Tafazoli runs a cadre of community-centric restaurants around town, including Noble Experiment, Polite Provisions, Craft and Commerce, Ironside, Underbelly, and Born and Raised—all part of his CH Projects. According to Tafazoli, he established the restaurants as public gathering places to help cultivate creativity, dialogue, questions and conversations—all cornerstones of any dynamic college experience.

Tafazoli learned about his alma mater's efforts to enhance the student experience and the pieces fell into place. “When I was at UC San Diego, it was a good place to go and focus,” Tafazoli said. “But there weren't many gathering spots that fostered a social college experience. Now, there's a shift happening to support that kind of interaction, and to be part of that renaissance is a beautiful thing.”

Campus surveys have indicated that as the campus grows, students are looking for more food options that embody the “San Diego experience.” The region has increasingly become known for its exciting and innovative food offerings, and was ranked by Zagat as one of the nation's top 25 “Food Cities” for 2017.



Arsalun Tafazoli. Photo by Jonh Dole/Spoonfed Agency



Soda and Swine UC San Diego rendering

The embodiment of retail spaces in new campus development projects such as the North Torrey Pines Living and Learning Neighborhood will make way for new gathering spaces where the entire campus community can come together to connect, collaborate and unwind. The Living and Learning Neighborhood, set to break ground in June 2018, will be a vibrant, mixed-use community on west campus, between Muir and Marshall Colleges, with an additional 2,000 beds for students as well as classrooms and large auditoriums. The dynamic neighborhood is planned to provide elevated dining options as well as

service and convenience retail to enhance the student experience and minimize the need for students to travel off-campus. Next Wave Commercial will play a key role in helping to identify local operators, like Soda and Swine, that are a good fit for the campus' new retail spaces.

“Given our relationships with many of the best operators in San Diego and beyond, our firm is a natural fit to help UC San Diego achieve their ideal restaurant and retail tenant mix,” said Nate Benedetto, co-founder of Next Wave Commercial. “We are honored to be working with such a renowned institution and look forward to promoting the incredible opportunities for tenants within UC San Diego’s growing real estate portfolio.”

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