

Not the same ol' same ol'

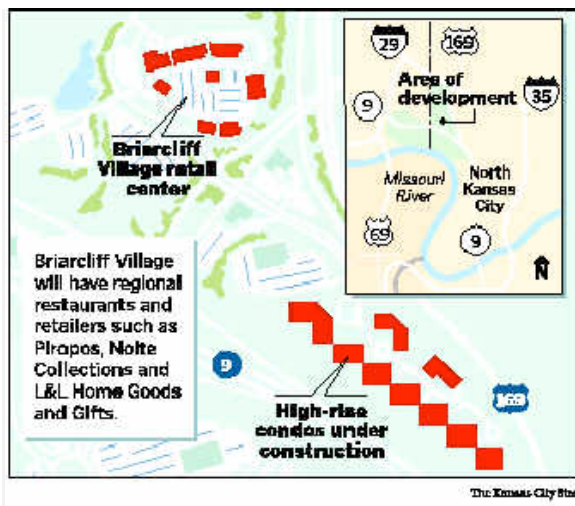
Northland's Briarcliff Village will skip chains and focus on local businesses

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The Kansas City Star



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"We will serve the Northland's growing affluent market, but the destination stores also will serve the whole metropolitan area," Briarcliff Village developer Charles Garney said. Several stores and restaurants are scheduled to open in late summer.



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Mike Nolte, owner of Nolte's Bridal Collections

Step into nearly any new shopping center from Boise, Idaho, to Bar Harbor, Maine, and you'll probably find most of the same retailers.

But when the new \$30 million **Briarcliff Village** retail and office project officially opens in the Northland later this year, there won't be a **Barnes & Noble**, **Best Buy** or **Bed, Bath and Beyond** in sight.

Instead, **Briarcliff Development Co.** decided to go for locally owned, unique retailers in the mid- to high-end range for the center at Briarcliff Parkway and U.S. 169.

"We felt people were tired of all national chains," said Charles Garney, chief executive officer of Briarcliff Development. "There was a real need for the type of retail we're collecting up here. People are very excited and very eager for it to open."

With more and more shopping centers to choose from, competition is becoming fiercer. While signing the trendiest national chain stores has been the most popular way to draw consumers, it may limit the market since customers have no reason to drive across town to a center with the same tenants as one near their homes. Some developers, like Garney, are setting themselves apart and becoming regional draws by signing one-of-a-kind, destination operations.

Tuileries Plaza, a new office/retail center about 12 miles from Briarcliff, counts a locally owned restaurant, tanning salon and home furnishings store among its draws. In Johnson County, **Heatherwood Village** at 149th Street and Metcalf Avenue also has jumped on the trend with a locally owned bakery, fitness center, clothing store and other shops. About 90 percent of the tenants at **Crown Center Shops** are locally owned, and other older centers are continuing to add local tenants to their mix.

Garney began the residential portion of Briarcliff West in the early 1990s and has a home overlooking the office and retail development. He patterned the complex much like J.C. Nichols did in developments such as the **Country Club Plaza**, with built-in residential and office space to support the retail, and vice versa.

About 260 homes and 120 luxury apartments are occupied in Briarcliff West, with 260 condominiums under construction. An additional 150 homes and 56 luxury apartments are planned. It also will have more than 1.2 million square feet of office space, with about 4,400 employees expected to work in the development when it is completed in five years. Many of those employees are expected to be customers for the shops and restaurants.

Most of the retail tenants said they were attracted to Briarcliff by the other unique operations, the view of the downtown skyline and the high quality of the buildings, which are designed to resemble a mountainside village in Italy.

"We will serve the Northland's growing affluent market, but the destination stores also will serve the whole metropolitan area," Garney said. "We're building world-class restaurants here."

The popular Argentine-themed restaurant **Piropos** will relocate from Parkville to Briarcliff this summer. Co-owner Gary Worden hopes to add new customers by offering lunch to office workers and those living in upscale residential developments in the area, as well as workers from downtown, which is only about a five-minute drive away. Many of Piropos' customers are from Johnson County.

Worden plans to turn the Parkville location into a full-time banquet facility that will be called **Piropos Private Dining on the Hill in Parkville**.

Another Briarcliff tenant will be the second location for **Nolte's Bridal Collections**. The new store, called **Nolte Collections**, will concentrate on eveningwear but also will carry Vera Wang's bridal collection.

"I think this will be the destination shopping center in Kansas City — the architecture, the money for foundations, the park-like setting, the unique façade of buildings," said Mike Nolte, owner of Nolte's Bridal Collections in Overland Park.

Lloyd Parker and Leo Andrade have owned and operated **L&L Home Goods and Gifts** in Arrow Rock, Mo., for two years. But the store, about 90 miles from Kansas City, is tourist-driven, while Briarcliff will serve local residents.

"We live in the neighborhood and are familiar with the market and know the demographics, so we knew there was a need for it," Parker said.

Tim Doolittle, a partner in **Village Cafe**, agreed. The cafe plans to buy as much local product as it can. "We're keeping the money in the community and supporting each other," Doolittle said.

At the village

Briarcliff Village is about 70 percent leased. Developers are pursuing a gelato shop, pastry store, salon, spa, cosmetics boutique, women's specialty clothing and accessories stores, a florist, an interior design group, a stationery and paper products store, and a bath and body store. RED Brokerage is the broker.

Restaurants and retailers that have signed leases in the center are:

- **GreenAcres Market** : The 12-year-old Wichita-based organic grocery will open a second location. The 9,700-square-foot store, which will have a deli, health and beauty aids and a vitamins and supplements area, is scheduled to open in October.
- **L&L Home Goods and Gifts**: Home decor retailer with another location in Arrow Rock, Mo., is scheduled to open in July.
- **LATTeLAND** : The freestanding coffeehouse with a drive-through and outdoor patio is scheduled to open in early September. The Kansas City company has three other locations.
- **Moda Domani** : The men's custom tailoring and suits store has operated downtown for more than seven years after relocating from Arizona. It plans to move to Briarcliff in July. Owner Anthony Fakeri is a third-generation tailor. The company name is Italian for "style of tomorrow."
- **Nolte Collections** : While Nolte's Bridal Collections in Overland Park mostly sells bridal with some evening wear, this new store will carry 90 percent evening wear and 10 percent bridal, including Vera Wang wedding and bridesmaid dresses. A late August opening is planned.
- **Piropos on the Hill in Briarcliff**: The popular Parkville Argentine-themed restaurant will relocate to an expanded space in Briarcliff with more parking. The restaurant is scheduled to open in late July or early August.
- **Prairiebrooke Gallery**: Third location for the Overland Park-based gallery is set to open in late July or early August.
- **Rimann Liquors of Briarcliff**: Third location and first in Missouri for the locally owned, full-line liquor store specializing in wine. The Briarcliff store is scheduled to open in late summer.
- **T. Wynn Studio** : A women's upscale apparel store is to open in late summer.
- **Tivol**: Third location for the Kansas City-based company is scheduled to open in September.
- **Trezo Mare** : Michael Peterson will be the executive chef of the upscale seafood restaurant, set to open in mid-October.
- **Village Cafe** : A freestanding breakfast, lunch and dinner operation using many locally grown products and made-from-scratch items, with some cooked over pecan wood. It will have a full bar and patio with fire pit. Kevin Heaton, Joe Gallagher and Tim Doolittle will be the owners. Heaton and Gallagher also own **Stone Canyon Pizza** in Parkville, and Doolittle had been a chef at **Stolen Grill** and **City Tavern**. It also will offer delivery services to offices as well as carryout. It is scheduled to open in early October.