

January 23, 2010

Burger King bar debuts in Miami

By Blake Ellis, contributing writer

NEW YORK (CNNMoney.com) -- Burger King Corp. said Friday it plans to open a Whopper Bar in the South Beach area of Miami next month.

To keep up with Miami's night life, Burger King ([BKC](#))'s new Whopper bar will offer American beer and Whopper sandwiches around the clock, staying open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It will be the chain's first U.S. location to sell beer, and the restaurant will offer a delivery service for local customers, a walk-up window for orders on the go and an outdoor dining area.

"Not only is South Beach in our backyard, but the warm weather, famous nightlife and colorful personality of the destination make it a great fit for a Whopper Bar restaurant," Chuck Fallon, Burger King's North America president, said in a company statement.

Burger King's bar will offer variations on its traditional Whopper sandwich, including an exclusive addition: the Black & Bleu Steakhouse XT. Customers will be able to choose from 20 sauces, displayed in a "visible toppings theater."

And when South Beach locals pick up a 4 a.m. burger, they will also have their choice of Anheuser-Busch and MillerCoors beer, including Budweiser, Miller Lite and Budlight Lime at a cost of \$4.25.

"That adds a new element to the Burger King brand," said Tom Forte, an analyst at Telsey Advisory Group. "It also creates a different mystique for going to a Whopper Bar versus a traditional restaurant."

The Whopper Bar concept was introduced in March 2008, and the first bar opened a year later at Universal Orlando Resort in Florida. Burger King has also opened bars in Munich, Singapore and Venezuela.

Las Vegas, New York City and Los Angeles could be some of Burger King's next Whopper Bar targets, the company said.

Forte said he won't be surprised if beer pops up on the menus of other fast food restaurants as well.

"In the restaurant industry, if it works for one, others will try," said Forte. "Other operators are watching from the sidelines to see how effective this is for Burger King and then may consider it."

"Edgier" restaurants with the same core demographics as Burger King -- such as Carl's Junior and Jack and the Box -- may be next to jump on the bandwagon, he said