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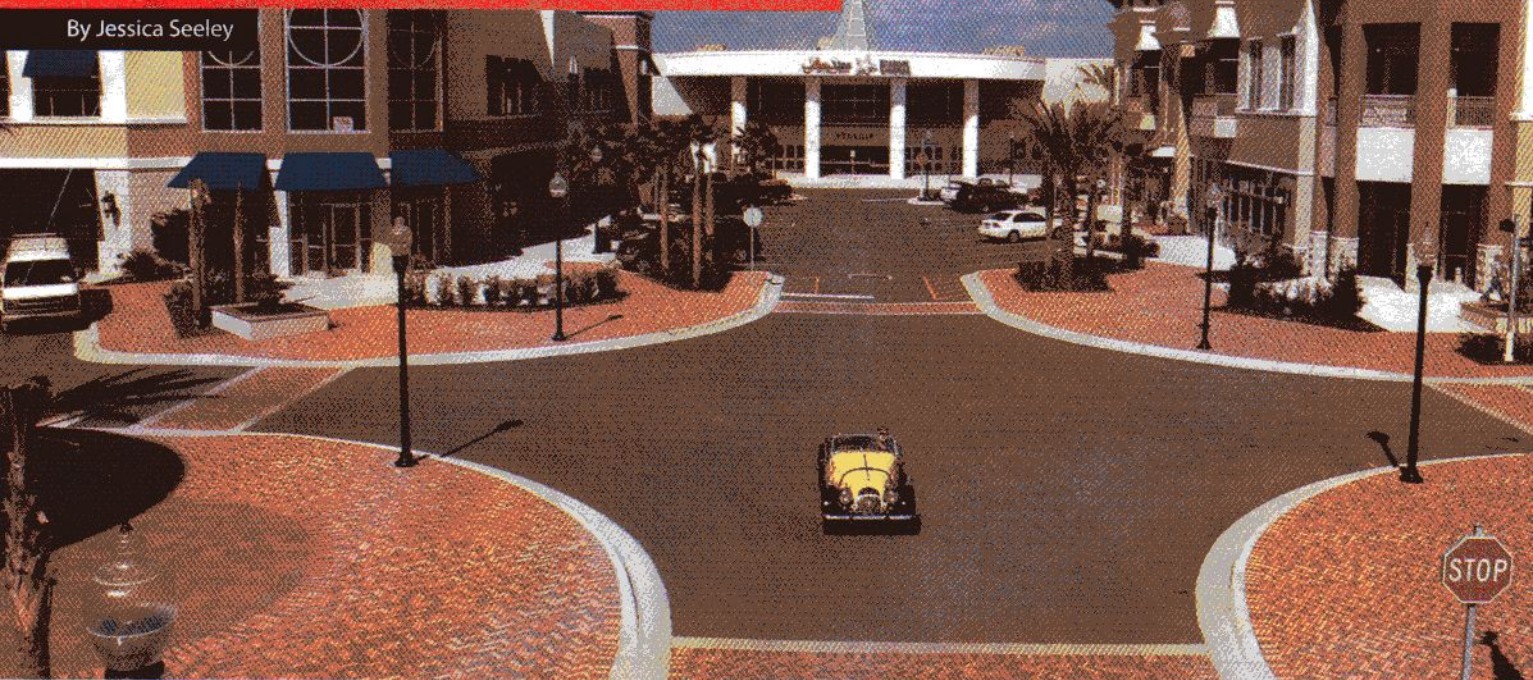


COMPLIMENTARY

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Colonial TownPark: Urban Living in Lake Mary

By Jessica Seeley



Colonial Properties gained inspiration and knowledge from similar centers all over the country.

A breeze has been blowing through Central Florida lately. This breath of fresh air can be attributed to the crop of open-air shopping centers popping up around almost every corner.

One of the newest kids on the block is Colonial TownPark. Located on the cusp of upscale Heathrow off 46A, TownPark has made a stir of its own since its grand opening.

Upon my visit, I immediately felt like a 4-year-old again as a storefront decorated with giant lollipops stood before me. I entered Sugar Sugar, TownPark's best-smelling retailer, and was warmly greeted by husband-and-wife owners Keren and Larry Speck.

The pair opened Sugar Sugar, their first business venture, about 4 months ago. "We chose Colonial TownPark for the location because of the fast-developing area, the timing, and the many surrounding businesses." Sugar Sugar features over 50 flavors of candy, which by the way, they make by hand daily. The process is a series of heating and cooling, allowing for designs to be fashioned in the center of the tiny works of art. The company even specializes in customized candy by adding names of sweethearts, businesses, and more. "The movie theater draws a lot of street traffic, which helps our business," Keren Speck adds. People are intrigued when they watch through the window as we make the candy—so they come inside."

Another of Colonial TownPark's residents, Walk on Water, features fashion lines rarely seen in Central Florida such as Lilly Pulitzer, Jack Rogers, Lacoste, and Brighton. The store also carries accessories and other clothing suitable for a day at the beach or a casual night out.

Wade Robinett of Colonial Properties, which owns and operates Colonial TownPark, labels the venue as more of a lifestyle center. Colonial Properties' vision for TownPark was a "mix-use, village-like center where people can live, eat, and shop." Colonial Properties gained inspiration and knowledge from similar centers all over the country—including TownPark's cousin, Winter Park Village. "We looked at their strong points and where they made their mistakes," Robinett says.

Is TownPark living up to its counterparts? "With new developments, you put a plan together and hope for the best," Robinett says. "Lunchtime traffic is good because of the other businesses in the area. We were a little concerned about nighttime traffic, but it has been very steady."

And Colonial Properties will continue to build these types of centers because of the public's response. "It's convenient. Unlike mall shopping, they can drive directly up to the store they want to visit," Robinett adds.

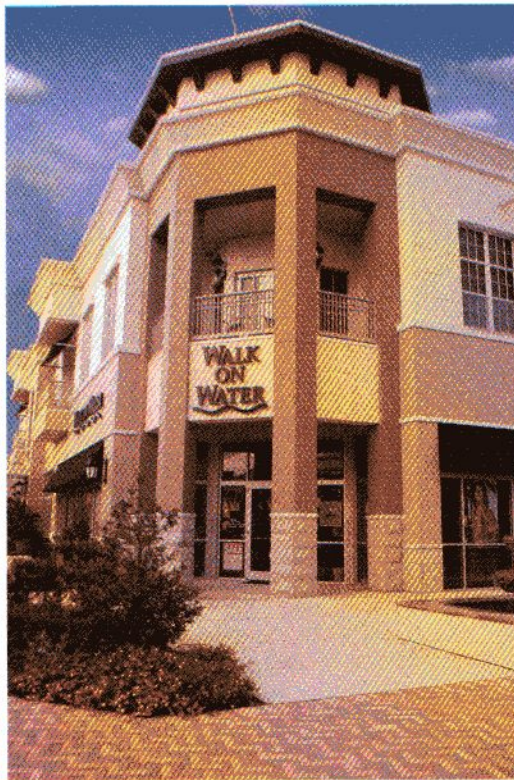
All that shopping works up an appetite! Good thing TownPark holds over 7 restaurants featuring a variety of cuisines. Dexter's, already a beloved restaurant to Central Floridians living near Winter Park or downtown, opened its third and newest location in the center. Dexter's trendy, upscale environment caters to TownPark's mainly adult demographic. They serve a variety of fine wines in a fun, artistic atmosphere.

Amura Japanese Steakhouse's claim to fame is their innovative sushi bar. "No California rolls," Yoko, one of the managers, tells me with a giggle after I mention them. "We specialize in high-definition sushi," Yoko says. Amura accommodates a total of 150 people with

25 coveted spots at the sushi bar and even boasts Hibachi grills for private parties of 50. The restaurant has also gained bragging rights for its liquor bar which features 101 different types of martinis.

Blackfin Grill, with a location in Winter Park Village as well, also serves great food and provides a relaxing atmosphere. Live music can be heard throughout the week, which gives patrons a reason to sit back and linger with another glass of wine or dessert.

To beat the heat, I stumbled upon Coffee Cafe, a quaint restaurant with shelves stacked with books and magazines, offering coffee drinks, desserts, and light meals such as soups, salads, and paninis. Barb Janssen and her husband opened the cafe in March 2004. "The major restaurants have brought more people to our business—they have a meal then come to us for an after-dinner coffee or dessert," Janssen says. With a rather alternative and eclectic selection of beverages, ranging from coffee to Italian sodas to fancy spring water (what I had) to beer and wine, Coffee Cafe attracts many of TownPark's adult clientele. Janssen says, she also chose TownPark as the home for her business because of the abundant office



space in the area and the people that, in turn, will bring to her cafe.

Amidst the new-to-the-area, trendy places, TownPark does have a few familiar faces. You can still grab a slice of pizza from Papa Joe or a sub from Jared. Albertson's provides, not only a familiar logo, but also a quick place to run and get a gallon of milk.

It seems there's something for everyone wrapped up in this "lifestyle center." Women can enjoy treatments at the day spa and browse fine jewelry at Portfolio. Soon men will be able to enjoy the sports bar scheduled to open later this year. Even kids and teenagers can enjoy a treat at Cold Stone Creamery followed by a movie at AmStar Cinemas, TownPark's oldest tenant, which turned on its projectors in November 2003.

Unlike similar centers, Colonial TownPark has a quaint feel. No monstrous retail chains or restaurants tower over you as you walk the perfectly landscaped streets. Although TownPark is home to over 20 businesses, its design creates more of a neighborhood feel. For this open-air center, good things come in seemingly small packages. ↓