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Mickey D's goes upscale

Speaking of two-in-one restaurants, the world's largest restaurant chain will soon open one of its own at 1515 Poydras St. in the Central Business District.

RESTAURANT SHOP TALK

In September, McDonald's Corp. will open Chef Mac's, which promises to be a more upscale version of its modest fast-food restaurants.

Chef Mac's will be combined with a traditional McDonald's restaurant inside 1515 Poydras St. on the corner of Poydras and LaSalle streets in the CBD. The Chef Mac portion of the store will offer a classier environment and more comfortable seating than most McDonald's restaurants, said Steve Plotkin, vice president and general manager of the Great Southern region for McDonald's Corp. Though table service will not be available, the staff of Chef Mac's will wear "bistro-style" uniforms and chef jackets, Plotkin said.

Chef Mac's is part of the company's plan to offer more diverse menu items to customers.

"We are doing a lot of testing and trying a lot of new and different concepts at McDonald's," he said. "This is just one thing we are looking at to create a better customer experience."

The menu at Chef Mac's will include such nontraditional fast-food fare as southwest shrimp and corn chowder, chicken Alfredo, beef fajitas and Cuban po-boy panini. It will also serve a variety of desserts as well as espresso and cappuccino. Menu items at Chef Mac's will cost between \$2.99 and \$3.99.

Plotkin said the Chef Mac's concept is already being used at two McDonald's locations in Orlando, Fla.