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PastaMania to set up on capital's riverfront

Mon, 15 June 2015 Charles Rollet

A piece of Italy is coming to the capital's riverside area, where Singapore-based Italian-style fast casual franchise PastaMania has begun construction.

In April, the Singaporean food conglomerate Commonwealth Capital Group joined with local partner K Distribution Company to build a total of six outlets of its PastaMania and Gelatofix franchise in the Kingdom.

The first outlet, which is tentatively slated for opening in September or October of this year, will be built in a renovated "historic" building located opposite the night market and adjoining the Bopha Titanic Restaurant along the river.

Yeo Yin-Yin, managing director of international business at Commonwealth Capital Group, said, in a statement, that she hoped the 500-square metre site "will be the part and parcel of the everyday life of the Cambodians".

Yin-Yin said Phnom Penh's riverside was chosen because it "offers some similarities to the Italian piazza where it is the centre of activities for Italians, connecting people, commerce, and culture together."

Commonwealth Capital Group said it chose Cambodia to expand its franchise due to the country's young consumer profile.

"Over 60% of the age profile of PastaMania and Gelatofix are less than 35 years old who are [professionals, managers, executives, and businessmen], white collars and students," Yin-Yin said.

"This corresponds well here with over 50% of Cambodian population below 25 of age."

An Italian architect has been hired to design the building, which the firm said will be retained with a couple of Italianate pillars and Feng Shui elements thrown into the mix.

Commonwealth Capital Group's announcement to enter the Cambodia market came at a time when an April study by Park Cafe Food and Beverage which revealed that more Cambodians were eating out in Phnom Penh, while the number of restaurants in the city had also increased to 2,180 from 1,726 last year.

The study indicated that more upscale restaurants, such as fast food chains, cafes, and bubble tea outlets, have seen increasing attention from young people between the ages of 15 to 30.

The reason for this rise, according to the survey, was Cambodia's rising income.

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