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## **CENTRAL STANDARD TAVERN OPENS AT MKE AIRPORT**

*Fast-growing Milwaukee distillery partners with MKE and SSP America for second location*

**MILWAUKEE (April 15, 2026)** – Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport (MKE) is excited to officially welcome Central Standard Tavern as the Airport's latest concession. The new addition expands the Milwaukee-born and Midwestern-loved brand, bringing an authentic experience to travelers on Concourse C at MKE Airport.

"This expansion of Central Standard's brand represents another exciting step in showcasing Milwaukee's creativity and entrepreneurial spirit to travelers from around the world. Central Standard is helping us highlight the strength of our local businesses and the pride we take in sharing Milwaukee County's story with every visitor who passes through MKE," said County Executive David Crowley.

Developed in partnership with airport food and beverage leader SSP America, the 1,069-square-foot tavern features 51 seats, including seating around a signature four-sided bar and an adjacent drinks rail designed to encourage moments of connection and conversation, which are hallmarks of the Central Standard hospitality culture.

"Central Standard Tavern enhances the overall experience for travelers by offering a distinct, locally crafted option they can't find anywhere else. This partnership strengthens the Airport's mix of amenities, supports local business, and gives travelers an authentic sense of Milwaukee," said Airport Director Brian Dranzik. "We showcase the very best of our city to travelers from across the world, and we're excited to continue elevating the MKE Airport experience with our valued partners at SSP America and Central Standard."

MKE travelers can enjoy a menu combining Central Standard's popular original food offerings with its signature cocktail recipes. Travelers can additionally purchase Central Standard bottles, including its nationally recognized, Fred Minnick Top 100 Cabin Strength Bourbon, to take home. Central Standard's spirits will also be represented throughout MKE's bars, restaurants and retail shops.

"MKE Airport has been an incredible partner to work with, and we couldn't be more excited about showcasing our second Crafthouse & Kitchen to the world," said Central Standard co-founder & CEO Evan Hughes. "Whether travelers are arriving or departing, we want to create a memorable first impression of Milwaukee and to share the craft quality that defines Central Standard."

"The Airport is where stories intersect, where we see people meeting, parting, celebrating, or just catching their breath between places," said Jim Kanter, Chief Commercial Officer at Central Standard. "We designed this new space to be more than a bar or restaurant. It's meant to be a place to gather, connect, and get a genuine taste of Milwaukee hospitality whether you're just arriving or on your way out."

Travel industry research consistently shows that travelers are seeking authentic, place-driven dining experiences that reflect the cities they visit. By expanding its hometown presence into MKE, Central Standard aims to create a destination that reflects the region's craftsmanship, approachability and strong sense of community. In recent years, MKE Airport has worked with a variety of local businesses, such as Bartolotta Restaurant Group and V&J Foods, to bring a local flavor to the concourses.

Central Standard's original Craffhouse & Kitchen is located at 320 E. Clybourn Avenue in Downtown Milwaukee. Last year, Central Standard announced that it will relocate its main distillery operations to a 73,000-square-foot space within the historic Harley-Davidson campus in Milwaukee's Near West Side neighborhood. The new location is expected to open later this year.

#### **About Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport**

*[Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport](#) is celebrating 100 years of flight in 2026. Since 1926, MKE Airport has been serving Milwaukee with nonstop flights, nonstop innovation, nonstop employment, and nonstop adventures. The complete list of nonstop cities can be found at [flymke.com](#). MKE is owned by Milwaukee County and operated by the Department of Transportation, Airport Division, under the policy direction of the Milwaukee County Executive and the County Board of Supervisors. The Airport is entirely funded by user fees; no property tax dollars are used for the Airport's capital improvements or for its day-to-day operation.*

#### **About Central Standard Distillery**

*Central Standard Craft Distillery, a small-batch, craft distillery in Milwaukee and the fastest-growing top-10 Wisconsin-based distiller, handcrafts award-winning bourbon, whiskey, vodka and gin from locally sourced ingredients, including cherries grown in Door County and honey harvested in Germantown. Founded in 2014, Central Standard spirits have won 40 medals across multiple craft distilling categories. As part of their commitment to sustainability, Central Standard is certified by the USDA-recognized Grown Climate Smart program, which ensures grains are grown using environmentally responsible practices. Learn more at [thecentralstandard.com](#), or by following them on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#).*

#### **About SSP America**

*[SSP America](#) is a division of SSP Group plc (LSE:SSPG), a global leading operator of food and beverage outlets in travel locations employing 49,000 colleagues in around 3,000 units across 38 countries. We specialize in designing, creating, and operating a diverse range of food and drink outlets in airports, train stations, and other travel hubs across six formats: sit-down and quick service restaurants, bars, cafés, lounges, and food-led convenience stores. Our extensive portfolio of brands features a mix of international, national, and local brands, tailored to meet the diverse needs of our clients and customers.*

*Our purpose is to be the best part of the journey, and our focus is on making every journey taste better – bringing great food and welcoming hospitality to travelers across the globe. Sustainability is crucial for our long-term success, and we aim to deliver a positive impact for our business while uniting stakeholders to promote a sustainable food travel sector.*

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