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Terminus project in Buckhead gets two more restaurants

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Cousins Properties has landed two more upscale restaurants for its Terminus project, a massive office, condo and retail development in the heart of Buckhead.

Cantina Laredo, a Mexican gourmet restaurant, and III Forks, a high-end steakhouse, have signed agreements to move into Terminus 200, a 25-story office tower expected to open in August 2009.

Cousins, an Atlanta-based real estate firm, and Consolidated Restaurant Operations, a Dallas company that owns both III Forks and Cantina Laredo, are expected to announce the deal today.

Terminus 200 is the second major office tower in the 10-acre Terminus development, anchored at the corner of Peachtree and Piedmont. Terminus 100, a 27-story office tower, opened last year. 10 Terminus Place, a 32-story luxury condo building, opens this month.

Terminus already is home to several restaurants, including AquaKnox, BrickTop's, MF Buckhead, Lola Bellini Bar & Restaurant and Flying Biscuit.

Cantina Laredo and III Forks will give Terminus restaurants in categories not currently represented, said Larry Gellerstedt, Cousins' executive vice president and chief development officer. Terminus will have nine restaurants when III Forks and Cantina Laredo open.

"It just continues to build on the theme of Terminus of making sure it's a very active space," Gellerstedt said. "For folks who work there and live there and visit there, there's a lot of variety you can come to Terminus and experience."

The restaurant industry has been hit by a slowing economy, but Terminus remains a draw for restaurants wanting to add outlets, Gellerstedt said. Its location in Buckhead and the mixed-use space make it attractive, he said.

"I think it makes an even stronger statement [about Terminus] that they're willing to step up and do this in these economic times," Gellerstedt said.

Terminus offers a good launch pad for III Forks and Cantina Laredo, said John Harkey Jr., chief executive of Consolidated Restaurant Operations.

"We are extremely excited to serve the Atlanta market," Harkey said in a statement. "Buckhead is one of the most robust dining and entertainment areas in the country."