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New York company to open two automated ping-pong locations in Miami



Not counting Miami, PingPod has 15 locations in the U.S. and one in Bristol, U.K.

COURTESY OF PINGPOD

By Erik Bojnansky – Reporter, South Florida Business Journal
Jan 16, 2024

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A table tennis startup, which allows customers can reserve a table at any time, will soon open two locations in Miami.

New York-based PingPod is set to open PingPod Brickell and PingPod Wynwood on Jan. 19, said David Silberman, co-founder and CFO of PingPod Inc. The Brickell location, which will have four tables, is located in the 22-story AC Hotel complex at 115 S.W. Eighth Street. PingPod Wynwood, which has four tables - one of which is in a private pod - is in the 11-story Strata Wynwood building at 2201 N. Miami Ave. Both PingPod locations are about 2,500-square-feet.

Founded in New York in 2020, PingPod operates more than a dozen locations in major metro areas such as New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago as well as Bristol in the United Kingdom. Customers wishing to play table tennis can book a table 24 hours a day, seven days a week via an app for between \$20 and \$50 an hour, depending on time and table type. Once a table is booked, users can unlock the door of the pod through that app.

Unlike other athletic ventures, such as gym facilities, PingPod doesn't require on-site employees. The savings in labor costs is among the reasons why Sequoia Heritage, KittyHawk Ventures, Draper Gain Family Office and other investors gave PingPod \$10 million in Series A funding last year.

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In Miami, just one general manager is employed to oversee both locations. Other than the only people who work at the locations are "coaches who are independent contractors," Silberman said. Security and surveillance is handled by outside specialists, a release for PingPod stated.

Silberman said PingPod opted to open two locations in Miami because that city experienced "a major influx of people and brands over the past three years, and we couldn't be more excited to join the party."

The company also opted to open in the Brickell Financial District and the Wynwood Arts District because they were "the two locations everyone in Miami said we *had* to be in," Silberman said. "We are pretty fortunate to have landed in these two neighborhoods given how little inventory there was."



Since the pandemic, wealthy households and well-paid professionals have relocated their residences - and some cases their businesses - to South Florida as a means to avoid state income taxes and find decent weather. That influx has also encouraged companies and entrepreneurs to open offices, restaurants, and other ventures in the tri-county area.

That growth has been particularly intense in Miami's Brickell Financial District and Wynwood where commercial rental rates have skyrocketed in recent years. As of the fourth quarter of 2023, the average listed rent for a retail space in the Wynwood/Design District submarket was \$80.27 per square foot, according to preliminary figures from Colliers. In the Brickell Financial District retail spaces are listed for \$70.38 per square foot.

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Besides Miami's popularity as a destination, Silberman said his company sensed a business opportunity when it comes to table tennis.

"Miami seems to have it all these days, but we think the city is lacking in the ping pong department, and PingPod is now here to fill that void," Silberman stated.

Nevertheless, ping pong tables are featured in some new developments such as the **recently completed Dorsey in Wynwood**. In fact, there is a growing demand for facilities that include pickleball, padel, indoor tennis, and other athletic activities.

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