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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2025 | TIMESTELEGAM.COM

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SUNY Morrisville grad relocates to Utica, brings fried chicken chain

Cara Dolan Berry
Utica Observer Dispatch
USA TODAY NETWORK

“The best fried chicken ever! 100% Dominicano.”

So says the copy in the logo for “Equis Pica Pollo,” a simple concept – a small but welcoming, bustling and bright cafeteria-style restaurant serving Dominican fried chicken, sides and sweets in the Caribbean/Latino neighborhoods of historic Northeast cities.

The 18th Equis Pica Pollo – meaning in English, essentially, “just delicious Spanish chicken,” cut the ribbon Nov. 12 to grand open its doors in the foodie-

fete that is the ethnically diverse small city of Utica.

“Eventually, we were going to bring one here. I was always going to bring one here,” Aneury Tamrez said of opening an Equis Pica Pollo on the corner of Mohawk and Eagle streets in the Corn Hill neighborhood, which he now calls home.

The creation myth of Equis Pica Pollo

The relatively young endeavor was embarked upon by a trio of Dominican American “almost like brothers” entrepreneurs who grew up together in

Brooklyn and the Bronx. Carlos Rijo worked to make his vision of opening a Dominican-style fried chicken digs a reality when he opened his first Equis Pica Pollo in his home borough of Brooklyn in 2021.

Supporting him part-time between attending SUNY Morrisville and working for M&T Bank in the Mohawk Valley was Tamrez, his “like brothers” best friend who shared Rijo’s entrepreneurial spirit and now brought a head for and a background in business and banking to the partnership.

After opening a second site in

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Partners Joel Ruiz and Aneury Tamrez pose inside their eatery, Equis Pica Pollo, as it opens its 18th location in Utica on Nov. 12. The restaurant serves authentic, fresh, fast, Dominican fried chicken, sides, and sweets.

CARA DOLAN BERRY/OBSERVER-DISPATCH

What to know for hunting season in Mohawk Valley



The regular big game season in New York kicks off Nov. 15. PROVIDED BY JEFF ENGEL

Casey Pritchard
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Mohawk Valley hunters will be hitting the woods starting Nov. 15 as regular game season kicks off and the Oneida County Sheriff’s Office is urging hunters to practice safe hunting.

“Hunting season is a tradition enjoyed by many residents and visitors in our region,” Oneida County Sheriff’s Office officials said in a statement. “Please remember to follow all laws and best practices to ensure a safe and successful season for everyone.”

The regular hunting season for deer and bear runs through Dec. 7 in the Southern Zone, which encompasses Utica and much of the Mohawk Valley. The season started Oct. 25 in the Northern Zone, which borders the city of Rome and Rt. 49 to its west and Rt. 365 to the east.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Amanda Lefton said in a press release

that this is the state’s most popular big-game hunting season.

“This November, hundreds of thousands of big game hunters will head afield to enjoy the outdoors and a chance to harvest deer or bear in New York’s Southern Zone,” said Lefton. “As stewards of hunting traditions and New York’s deer population, all hunters should keep their conservation responsibilities as a top priority while enjoying time afield.”

“Foremost among these responsibilities are following safe hunting practices and protecting the health of New York State’s deer population by harvesting antlerless deer and preventing the spread of deer diseases such as (chronic wasting disease).”

Safety tips for NY hunters

The Oneida County Sheriff’s Office published the following list with safety tips for hunters going out into the field.

- Tell someone where you will be

hunting and put hunting plans in writing, including dates, times, location, and expected time of return.

- Be familiar with the area you want to hunt.
- Always treat every firearm as if it is loaded.
- Dress properly and be prepared for the worst possible conditions and check weather reports before heading out.
- Always wear hunter orange to be highly visible to other hunters.
- Check hunting equipment before and after each outing, and maintain it properly. Familiarize yourself with its operation before using it in the field.
- Clearly identify your target before and what is beyond it before firing. Never shoot at movement, sound, or a patch of color. Identify your target completely.
- Be alert when hunting, other recreationists may be in the area as

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Early holiday weather forecast

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The Thanksgiving Day weather forecast for the Mohawk Valley ranges from mild to cool to chilly temperatures, with clear – maybe sunny – skies in some regions, and rain showers in others, but free from snow, according to The Farmers Almanac.

As for the lead-up to the day that all but officially kicks off the 2025 holiday season, Central New York weather is predicted by The Farmers Almanac to be what upstaters rely on it being this time of year, all over the thermometer.

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IKEA grand opening set for first store in upstate NY

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Upstate New York IKEA lovers won’t have to wait much longer as the big day is almost here – Syracuse’s store will open later this month.

The new Destiny USA location will host its grand opening on Nov. 21, the company announced Nov. 12. It’s the third store to open in New York and the first in upstate.

“As we continue to grow in the U.S., we’re thrilled to bring the IKEA experience to the community in Central New York,” says Javier Quiñones, CEO and

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