

Inside Amex's new — and stylish — Centurion Studio lounge in Fort Lauderdale

(Courtesy of The Points Guy, Zach Griff)



When most people think of visiting South Florida, odds are that they consider [flying in and out of Miami](#).

While the [Miami International Airport \(MIA\)](#) is certainly the region's largest airport, the nearby Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL) has grown considerably in recent years.

South Florida as a region has become [more popular than ever](#) during the pandemic, and, to cater to the increased demand, FLL has seen expanded service from both legacy and ultra-low-cost carriers in recent years.

JetBlue and Spirit count Fort Lauderdale among their largest bases, and Delta recently [grew its presence in FLL](#) with the opening of a renovated terminal that includes a [brand-new signature Sky Club](#).

Historically, Fort Lauderdale hasn't had much in the way of airport lounges because the airport has been primarily dominated by low-cost carriers. Other than a lounge outpost for Delta and United, premium

flyers on other airlines haven't had any special places in which to relax and get refreshed before their flights.

But, that's about to change in a big way. American Express and [its Centurion Studio partner Escape Lounges](#) have been busy building a new lounge in the airport's Terminal 3.

The lounge has been hotly anticipated by locals and visitors alike, and its doors are finally open as of Tuesday *Oct. 25). Here's a look inside.

Location

The new Escape Lounge is located in the airside connector hallway between Concourses E and F. The airport has been working to modernize this area, and several new shops and restaurants have opened here in recent months.

Now, the lounge will be the signature amenity located in the connector.

The entrance is nearly impossible to miss — just look for the large sign or the blue Amex logo. The glass doors also give you a preview of what's inside.

The lounge's location in Terminal 3 is ideal for anyone flying on American, JetBlue and Spirit, as well as a few other smaller domestic and international carriers. All E, F and G gates are connected post-security, so if you're flying from any of these gates, the lounge will be no more than a 10-minute walk away.

This Centurion Studio Partner lounge is open daily from 5:30 a.m. until 9 p.m.

Access

American Express [inked a deal in July 2021 with Escape Lounges](#) to rebrand the company's network of airport clubs as Centurion Studio.

True to the name, the access policies for these Centurion Studios largely resemble those of the [signature Centurion Lounge network](#).

Customers can access a Centurion Lounge by flashing [The Platinum Card® from American Express](#), [The Business Platinum Card® from American Express](#) or [the Centurion Card](#).

Platinum cardmembers can bring up to two guests into the lounge, though the [guest policy is changing](#) in 2023.

[Delta SkyMiles® Reserve American Express Card](#) cardmembers also receive complimentary access to the Centurion Lounge when flying [Delta](#) with a ticket purchased on [any American Express card](#) issued in the U.S. You can bring up to two guests for a fee of \$50 each.

The big difference with Escape Lounges is that anyone can enter by purchasing a day pass. Pre-reserving a pass online costs \$40, while walk-up entry costs \$45 per person, pending availability.

The space

From the moment you step inside the over 5,000-square-foot lounge, you might think you've entered a signature Centurion Lounge. Though this space bears the "Studio" moniker, the design and furnishings resemble a flagship Centurion outpost.

The design itself was inspired by South Florida living, and it shows. From the colorful couches to the bright lighting, this space fits right into the surrounding neighborhoods.

The lounge's reception area is inspired by sand dollars, which can be found on beaches along the region's coastline. Two receptionists will welcome you to the lounge, after which you'll be invited to find a seat.

The main lounging area is located just behind the lobby, and it's split between three seating zones. There's a row of bench seating, a small room with couches and another room with individual chairs and a high-top coworking table.

A partition adorned with eight chandeliers separates the living areas, which makes the lounge feel even more spacious and luxurious.

There's another seating area that runs along the perimeter of the lounge near the windows. Here you'll find salmon-colored chairs and green couches.

Those who are looking to catch up on work will likely want to sit in the business area near the entrance that features two high-top tables.

Note, however, that there are no phone booths or individual workstations in the lounge, which makes sense given that the airport primarily serves a leisure market.

As such, much of the lounge's footprint is designed as a dining area.

There are a variety of two-top dining tables surrounding the buffet area, and the design of the chairs is inspired by coastal living (think woven patterns and lots of white and cream colors).

Even the ceiling received a unique wood treatment with a zig-zag geometric pattern that's sure to impress.

Regardless of where you sit, you'll always be within arms reach of a power outlet and USB-A port. The lounge did a great job ensuring that each seat has easy access to power.

Complimentary Wi-Fi is available throughout the space with download and upload speeds that measure 30 Mbps and 15 Mbps, respectively.

The lounge was just setting up the buffet and bar area during TPG's visit. The bar is surrounded by stylish green wallpaper and frosted glass mirrors that combine to exude a sophisticated vibe.

Most alcoholic drinks are available on a complimentary basis, though some require an additional buy-up.

Meanwhile, the food on offer is curated in partnership with Chef Laurent Tourondel, the man behind the renowned DUNE by LT restaurant in Fort Lauderdale.

While I didn't get a chance to sample the offerings, the lounge was putting together a tasting during my visit. The presentation looked quite polished, and entrees such as French toast royale and impossible meat sliders sounded tasty.

No matter where you sit, you'll enjoy plenty of natural light thanks to the lounge's tall west-facing windows. Aviation enthusiasts will undoubtedly appreciate the view of the ramp and the runways in the distance, while others may just appreciate the last few minutes of Florida sunshine through the tinted windows.

In terms of amenities, the lounge features two individual restrooms. Given that the lounge can comfortably seat over 150 people, there'll likely be a queue for the restrooms when it's busy.

There's also a single shower suite next to the restroom that can be flexed as a third bathroom should it be needed.

There's a small conference room located in a corner near the bar. It can be rented by the hour, though it'd be great if it were used as an overflow space when the lounge gets crowded.

Speaking of crowding, I'd expect that this space will be full throughout the day. Many South Florida-based flyers hold an Amex Platinum card, and as the only lounge option in Terminal 3 and 4, it's poised to be quite popular.

During the tour, I noticed scores of people oohing and aahing at the lounge from the outside. Many approached the (closed) doors to ask when it opens.

If this small sampling during a two-hour window on a Monday morning is any indication, people are clearly excited.

Bottom line

The new Escape Lounge in Fort Lauderdale couldn't come soon enough.

The airport's Terminals 3 and 4 haven't historically had a lounge option, and the new American Express Centurion Studio Partner outpost fills that gap — and then some.

The design is perhaps the nicest I've seen in any [Escape Lounge to date](#), and travelers are sure to appreciate the tasteful touches on the walls and around the seating areas. While I didn't get a chance to try the food and beverage offerings, the dining experience looks like it'll be quite tasty.

As with most airport lounges these days, your experience will vary greatly depending on the crowding levels. With seating for just over 150 guests, this outpost is sure to be packed throughout much of the day.

However, with a gorgeous design, a stylish mix of seating options and tasty food, it'll likely still provide a relaxing escape from the terminal.