

Exclusive

## ***Top Chef's* Tom Colicchio Will Be Head Chef at Exclusive Non-Alcoholic Social Club — See Photos of the New Space (Exclusive)**

The acclaimed chef and 'Top Chef' judge brings his signature cuisine to The Maze alongside founder Justin Gurland, set to open Oct. 15 in New York City

By **Moná Thomas** | Published on September 25, 2025 11:11AM EDT



Justin Gurland and Tom Colicchio outside of NYC's The Maze.  
Credit : The Maze

### NEED TO KNOW

- Tom Colicchio is set to lead The Maze's culinary program in New York City
- The alcohol-free social club, opening on Oct. 15, already boasts a 2,600-person waitlist
- The menu will feature seasonal dishes, mocktails and Colicchio's take on NYC's best burger

New York City is leaning into the growing desire for non-alcoholic third spaces.

Opening Oct. 15, Manhattan's Flatiron District will welcome [The Maze](#), which will be the N.Y.C's first alcohol-free members club. The Maze's founder and CEO, Justin Gurland, 42, who is partnering with [Top Chef](#) judge and James Beard Award-winning chef [Tom Colicchio](#), 63, to bring The Maze to life, gave PEOPLE an inside look into the 4,600-square-foot venue space ahead of its debut to the city.

Gurland, who has been sober for 17 years, says the club was born out of a simple need: community. "When I was learning to make friends again and hang out, I was rebuilding my life," he tells PEOPLE. "The conversation often turned to, 'What are we going to do tonight? Where can we go that we're not being pushed out of?' In many ways, that was the idea — can we just build the place to go?"



Inside The Maze in New York City, NY.  
Credit: Opa Architecture and Laube Studio

Gurland, who's also a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW), explains that The Maze isn't just for those in recovery. With a record number of people drinking less nationwide, for a variety of reasons, as previously reported by [PEOPLE](#), and loneliness being declared [a public health epidemic](#), adult communal spaces that are not centered on alcohol are becoming far more necessary than they've been in the past.

"We've seen people who are sober curious, people who just feel better not drinking, or people who hit 40 and realized hangovers weren't as easy to bounce back from," says Gurland. "And what's exciting is that so many of them haven't had a place to meet each other until now. They've been awkwardly standing with a Diet Coke in their old crowd, or they just didn't go out. This gives them a community."

The response has been overwhelming. More than 2,600 names filled the waitlist over the summer, and applications remain open. Each potential member goes through an interview with Gurland and SVP of Membership [Dan Brody](#), in person or via Zoom.



(L-R) Justin Gurland and Tom Colicchio in The Maze.  
Credit: Allie Goldberg

“It’s not about exclusivity, it’s about intentionality,” he says. “We want a wide mix of people, different backgrounds, different interests, but with the shared intention of actually showing up and being part of the community.”

Membership into The Maze will cost patrons \$3,300 annually (sales tax included) plus a \$1,500 initiation fee. Following the grand opening, which will cater to a select group of approved members, the club will operate six days a week (closed on Mondays), with Mondays remaining available for private events and gatherings.

For Colicchio, the partnership felt like the right challenge at the right time. “Having been part of the New York food scene for decades, I’ve seen it evolve in countless ways — but what The Maze has created is truly different,” he shares with PEOPLE. “This partnership gives us the chance to build a one-of-a-kind destination where members are at the heart of the experience, coming together around food, culture, and community in a way the city hasn’t seen before.”



Tom Colicchio in The Maze in New York City, NY.  
Credit: The Maze

Food will be central to The Maze experience. Colicchio's team is crafting a menu designed to be approachable enough to eat multiple times a week, but still memorable. Patrons can expect finger foods like wings and dips, healthy options including salads and fish, indulgent pastas and a burger program that Gurland is especially excited about.

"I'm really big into burgers, so there'll be a few options," he says. "We want members to know that whether they want something light, hearty, healthy, or comforting, they'll find it here."

Since the Maze is a non-alcoholic curated space, the beverage program will highlight creative mocktails, pre-bottled non-alcoholic options and a full coffee bar through a partnership with Solid State Coffee. "Some people are fine with seltzer and lime, some want something exciting and theatrical," Gurland explains. "We'll have both. And we want to listen to members — if they say, 'We need more of this, less of that,' we'll take it seriously. It's a conversation."



Inside The Maze in New York City, NY.  
Credit: Opa Architecture and Laube Studio

Beyond the food and drink, Gurland emphasizes that the real draw is the sense of connection. “The goal has always been to build community,” he says. “We want people to walk in, feel welcome and leave feeling like they’re part of something bigger. Maybe they came alone, but they’re leaving with three new friends.”

The floor features a variety of social spaces for members to work on a laptop, chat with a group of newly-found friends or watch a sporting event on the multiple big screens and televisions hanging on the wall. Each area offers a sense of intimacy and comfort, with the moodiness of a speakeasy from the terrazzo tabletops to the warm color palette of brass, deep blue and emerald green.

“It’s crazy to see people signing up before our doors are even open,” Gurland says. “It tells me that we’re building something people really want — a place where you can come for food, culture, conversation, and connection, all without alcohol. That’s what makes *The Maze* special.”