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Warehouse Chic in West Palm Beach



Composition Coffee, which began as a pop-up at Elizabeth Street Station in the Warehouse District, upgraded to lofty digs in West Palm Beach's Industry Alley, one of three adaptive reuse developments to take up residence in the city's historic trackside warehouses. Photo: Anna Mucci Photography.

Along the railroad tracks west of the Intracoastal, a trio of hip redevelopments is infusing the inland heart of the Palm Beaches with exciting shops, innovative restaurants, and a burst of creative energy.

You know South Florida for many things: its carefree exuberance, its lavish beachfront lifestyle, maybe even its [historic Art Deco architecture](#). But how about its propensity to repurpose aging railway warehouses into bustling micro-neighborhoods brimming with highly curated cultural happenings?

Though this inland renaissance might sound ironic for a pastel-hued coastal city contiguous with some of the world's most coveted beachfront real estate, it also couldn't be more authentic. [West Palm Beach](#) has long been home to creative industries, largely established to support its burgeoning neighbor — and its world-famous lifestyle — across Lake Worth. Also consider that the singular catalyst for the city's existence was the arrival of Henry Morrison Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway, which not only still exists but runs Brightline between [Orlando](#) and [Miami](#). It's too fitting that the railroad that built the Palm Beaches is helping breathe new life into the area, both through its forward-thinking present and, indirectly, through the history it left behind.

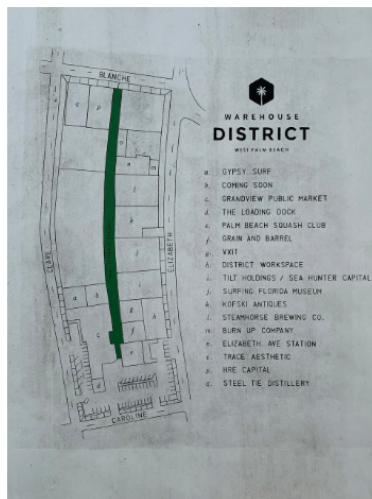
Here are the three exciting trackside hubs keeping West Palm Beach life exciting.

[The Warehouse District](#)

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Inspired by [Manhattan](#)'s High Line, the Warehouse District doesn't shy away from its past. Instead, the old railroad spur running through it has largely been left in place and landscaped. The namesake structures of the complex were built between 1925 and 1968 for the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, an FEC competitor that followed the present-day Tri-Rail line on its route from Virginia to Florida through [Raleigh](#), [Savannah](#), and other southern cities. Murals from a cast of local artists adorn exteriors, underscoring a colorful array of dining, retail, and office tenants across the near-85,000 square feet of repurposed space.

Grandview Public Market is an anchor attraction of the Warehouse District, a relationship not unlike the Chelsea Market and the High Line. This robust food hall boasts Asian, Caribbean, Mediterranean, and Mexican cuisine staples among its vendors — plus burgers, baked goods, and a coffee bar. It also hosts weekly events, including live music, karaoke, and yoga, casting itself as a place to gather among friends and the community rather than strictly a food destination (though stuffing your face there certainly isn't frowned upon).



The rambling buildings where freight cars were once unloaded today form The District Railway (below), a portion of the complex extending from Grandview Public Market at the north end to Steel Tie Spirits (top right) at the south. Photos: E.J. Kelley.

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At the south end of the old spur track, Steel Tie Spirits Co. produces craft rum and vodka using natural, locally sourced ingredients. Father-son duo Ben and Clint Etheridge, themselves descended from an old Florida railroad family, named their distillery in tribute to a story passed down from an ancestor, which told of a skilled track worker on Flagler's line that the foreman demanded wear a railroad spike around his neck as a reminder to stay sober. Tours are offered Thursday through Sunday, with flights and cocktails served at the bar. The warm, library-like tasting room might just boast some of the biggest exposed brick walls in the county.

The Warehouse District has served as an incubator of sorts, with businesses starting there — Pumphouse Coffee, for example — subsequently upgrading to standalone spaces. So, while the district has been subject to turnover, something that captures peoples' attention always seems to pop up. Currently, the lone sit-down restaurant is Isla & Co., an Aussie all-day café with roots at [Williamsburg's](#) William Vale Hotel. For all your surfing and surf-inspired apparel needs (and ukulele lessons), there's also the ever-vibey Gypsy Life Surf Shop, complete with its own Volkswagen bus.

1500 Elizabeth Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33401

[Industry Alley](#)

Located along the FEC tracks two-ish miles from the West Palm Beach Brightline station, Industry Alley has a dining, retail, and office space triumvirate similar to the Warehouse District. Immediately striking upon entering is the sense of unity among the warehouses. All are done up in black, with signage painted in white and neon pink as the chief accent color. You'll find concrete outdoor seating areas throughout, shaded by coconut trees. Yet, despite the cosmetic glow-up, no part of Industry Alley hides its roots. In particular, the interiors flaunt loft-like proportions, bright and airy beneath industrial-chic exposed metal beam ceilings — regardless of whether it's a taco joint, a barbershop and perfumery, or a chiropractic practice.



Composition Coffee leverages its space's extant industrial scale and design elements to create the sun-dappled, two-level shop West Palm Beach adores. Photos: Anna Mucci Photography.

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Composition Coffee is Industry Alley's preeminently inviting inhabitant. Coincidentally, the shop started as a Warehouse District pop-up before moving to its current charming digs a few years ago. When the sun is shining through, and the scent of coffee wafts through the air, it's the kind of place you'll want to stop, stay, and sip for a while. Though Composition is the one brewing up your coffee, it sees itself as just one small part of a process that includes farmers and roasters in equal import. As such, Composition carefully selects its collaborators, so you can rest assured you'll receive a superior cup when your order slides up on the counter. Fittingly, *Food & Wine* has shouted Composition out as one of Florida's best coffee shops.

Rust & Wax Record Shop also draws a crowd and, akin to Composition, began as a pop-up tent before starting its brick-and-mortar life in Industry Alley. If you're on the hunt for something even tangentially related to music, Rust & Wax likely has it — from new and used vinyl records to CDs and tapes to books, shirts, and pins. Listening parties are regular occurrences. Browsing, experimenting, and discovery are all encouraged.

2600 Florida Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33401

[Nora](#)

Nora further expands on the Warehouse District and Industry Alley concepts, cranking them up to and well past 11. This positively massive project has received \$1 billion in investments and plans for new construction buildings to mingle alongside and complement a fleet of refurbished warehouses. The first phase of Nora — an acronym for North Railroad Avenue — is set to open in 2025, encompassing dining, retail, hospitality, and wellness spaces spanning 150,000 square feet. If the other two redevelopments were merely aesthetically influenced by New York City, Nora has swung the West Palm Beach doors wide open to the Big Apple. Familiar NYC names like H&H Bagels and Juliana's Pizza — plus NYC-born chains like Van Leeuwen Ice Cream and Rumble Boxing — are flying down south for more than just the winter. Pastis, a French bistro in the Hudson Riverside Meatpacking District, will open its second South Florida location on the ground floor of Nora's boutique five-story hotel.

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Nora's first phase is in progress, with a goal of preserving and repurposing extant Railroad Avenue structures alongside newly constructed ones. Photo/Renderings: ASD Sky.

Sunday Motor Co. is perhaps Nora's most singular tenant, roaring down I-95 from [Northern New Jersey](#), bringing the communal spirit of cars and coffee culture with it. Coincidentally enough, its primary space up north also leverages adaptive reuse, operating out of a converted Mobil service station. The combination cafe and automobile meet-up spot thrives on bringing people together, whether for a cup of joe or to share mutual admiration over sets of wheels. It has also hosted major events, like the North American public unveiling of BMW's M5 Touring model. There's even streetwear-inspired apparel for the taking and wearing. Luckily for Sunday Motor Co., South Florida loves its cars as much as anywhere, so the fit may very well be seamless.

Spatially, Nora sits right along the Brightline tracks, around a mile from the train station and from Clematis Street. Nearer is the Flagler Memorial Bridge, making trips across to [Palm Beach](#) proper and shopping at Royal Poinciana Plaza a breeze. Phase two of Nora is set to open in 2026, including the aforementioned hotel, as well as office spaces and a residential development.

905 N Railroad Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33401