

# Outback Steakhouse parent launches Tender Shack, a zingy new delivery-only chicken restaurant, in Tampa

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Bloomin' Brands Inc. has quietly hatched a new concept: The delivery-only Tender Shack, which is delivering chicken tenders and sandwiches throughout Tampa Bay. Third-party delivery service DoorDash lists Tender Shack as newly added and delivering from the Carrabba's Italian Grill at 700 N. Dale Mabry Highway. The menu includes tenders, fries, sandwiches, signature sauces, cookies and soft drinks. A spokeswoman for Tampa-based Bloomin' confirmed Tender Shack was a new concept for the restaurant company that launched Thursday on DoorDash. Besides Carrabba's, Bloomin's portfolio of brands includes Outback Steakhouse, Bonefish Grill, Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar and Aussie Grill. Tender Shack will be delivered via DoorDash from Carrabba's kitchens throughout Tampa Bay, said [Cathie Koch](#), a spokeswoman for Bloomin'. "It's an extension of our off-premises business as people continue to seek new and flavorful options through delivery," Koch wrote in an email to the Tampa Bay Business Journal. Off-premise was a major focus for Bloomin' (NASDAQ: BLMN) before the novel coronavirus pandemic took hold in the U.S. — and its investment in that infrastructure has paid off during the pandemic. Takeout and delivery [sales carried Bloomin'](#) through state-ordered shutdowns; third-party apps helped the company grow its customer base. The menu and verbiage are a departure for Bloomin', which is best known for casual dining classics like Bang Bang Shrimp and Bloomin' Onions. Tender Shack's tagline is "dang good chicken"; its menu includes "Nashville Hot AF Tenders" and a "Dang Good Seasoned Tender Sandwich." Condiments are a big offering; there are six varieties available, including buffalo parmesan ("Trust us. It's on point," the menu says) and ginger soy glaze ("Korean BBQ

meets Tokyo"). The concept is taking direct aim at Tampa-based PDQ, which is also known for its tenders and signature sauces. [Bob Basham](#), the co-founder of Outback, is also a co-founder of PDQ. But PDQ is far from the only competition Tender Shack faces. The fried chicken market has exploded since PDQ debuted in 2011. Chick-Fil-A, Zaxby's, Raising Cane's and Wingstop are consistently ranked among the fastest-growing concepts in the country. In Tampa, the parent company of Beef O'Brady's, [has opened The Hatchery](#), a fried chicken concept that it's been working on in 2017. Independent restaurateur [Dave Burton](#) has also recently unveiled plans for a [chicken restaurant](#): Chicky Chicky Bang Bang will open inside the South Tampa location of Tampa Pizza Co. "People seem to be craving comfort food," Burton told the Business Journal in August. "It's relatively inexpensive, it's versatile, etc. Also, restaurants are looking for ways to reinvent themselves and maximize revenue in creative ways."