

# Commercial landlord forces tenant out with 50% spike in rent

By Kathryn Reed

A 50 percent increase in rent is forcing Wolfgang Puck Express in the Heavenly Village to close.

When the center opened about a decade ago it was the second store to open. Many have come and gone since then. Rents have always been a complaint from store operators.

“The landlord wants more money and my boss doesn’t want to pay,” restaurant manager Luis Gonzales told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Wolfgang Puck Express will close April 15. Photo/LTN

Today rent is \$10,000 each month. The landlord wants \$15,000 per month, according to Gonzales.

Gary Casteel, who owns Trans Sierra Investments, did not return phone calls. His company operates the retail operations at the South Lake Tahoe center.

While Gonzales said business has been good, it hasn’t been good enough to endure a dramatic spike in rent. It’s one of

the few places in the tourist district that locals visit regularly.

With Casteel not talking, it's not known if he has a tenant lined up.

Another restaurant is slated to open this month in the village – Base Camp Pizza Co. Contractors are working on the interior.