Retractable roofs. Prim palm trees reaching for the sky. Escalators ascending into a shower of LED lights that gush electric hues of pink and blue over dance floors, mixology bars, and plush, velvety stools. Leather couches snaking through palatial, decadent lounges. These are the details that comprise this throbbing establishment in Mexico City, where the restaurants explore a range of flavors spanning everywhere from Asia to Acapulco and the massive TV screens lining the walls seem almost as long as the bowling lanes. Alboa Prime Entertainment and Dining embodies every aspect of the entertainment center concept to its fullest extent. It is a place of exquisite beauty and vibrant energy you won’t want to leave.

**BEST NEW CENTER**

**ALBOA PRIME ENTERTAINMENT AND DINING**

- **Mexico City, Mexico**
- **Owner:** Boutique Bowling de Mexico
- **Architect:** Loguer Design
- **Manufacturer:** QubicaAMF

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This Polynesian-themed establishment features dining rooms in which chandeliers glitter over tables adorned with candelabras, while colorful, weathered wood chairs and tables acquired from island locations throughout the world furnish every room. Enjoy drinks with names such as “The Flaming Zombie” at Sea Dogs & Mermaids, one of Tikitiki’s three cocktail bars. Then dine out on the balcony of the restaurant, Beach Bums and Cannibals, where you can take in views of the town of Sai Kung and its beautiful harbor amid a tropical breeze. Then dance away what is left of the night while a live band jams on stage by the The Octopus’s Garden bar — or take in the show from one of the rattan chairs cushioned with pillows as colorful as a pack of tropical Starbursts. Or — we almost forgot! — go bowling! Tikitiki is equipped with 10 Brunswick Anivlane Glow-In-The-Dark lanes with Brunswick’s GS-X pinsetters.
Best New Center — Traditional

**Bowl 'N Lounge**

Niederzier, Germany

**Owner:** Timo Lott  
**Architect:** Felies & Heinrich  
**Manufacturer:** Brunswick Bowling Products

Make no mistake: This is a traditional center, equipped with 14 Brunswick Pro-Lane lanes along with Brunswick's GS-X pinsetters and Ignite masking units. Like last year’s winner, however — Magic Bowl in Linden, Germany — Bowl 'N Lounge in Niederzier is not afraid to think beyond the confines of the “traditional.” Equal dashes of class and style color a large, regal dining area with long tables cloaked in layers of tablecloth and menus and napkins as gorgeous as the ambiance. Elsewhere in the center, a cocktail bar glows with a chic, mod vibe punctuated by lime and aqua lighting. The era of the “traditional” center is rapidly declining amid the emerging trend of boutique and entertainment centers, but establishments like Bowl 'N Lounge tastefully strike a balance between the two, demonstrating that “traditional” does not have to mean “boring.”
ROUND 1 BOWLING AND AMUSEMENT

Bloomington, IL

Owners: Round 1 Entertainment  
Architect: Cornerstone Architecture  
Manufacturer: Brunswick Bowling Products

Though the 40,000-square-foot Round 1 Bowling and Amusement inside Stratford Square Mall in Bloomington, Ill., is equipped with Brunswick's Anvilane lanes, GS Series pinsetters, and Center Stage furniture, the emphasis here unabashedly is on “amusement.” Karaoke? Check. Ping pong? Check. Billiards? Check. Darts, a loaded arcade throbbing with energy and an equally impressive prize room? Yes, yes, and yes. The Japanese theme of some games and toys owes its inspiration to the owner's roots, as Round 1 is a Japanese-based company headed by President and CEO, Tamiya Sakamoto, that is spreading its entertainment-center concept throughout the U.S. with centers currently in California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Texas, and Washington. Also a winner for “Best New Ancillary Profit Center.”

HEADPINZ

Fort Myers, FL

Owner: Pat Ciniello  
Architect: Dynamic Designs  
Manufacturer: QubicaAMF

Pat Ciniello’s experience as chairman of the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame board left him in love with an era he hoped to replicate. The concept of the “Pinboyz” VIP area in his new Headpinz center in Fort Myers soon was born, featuring a billiards table from 1908 that his son, Marc, found at a billiards shop; an old-time bar from the same time period that Pat purchased on eBay; equipment from a four-lane center in Virginia he also purchased on eBay, complete with over-ground ball returns and semiautomatic pinsetters; and many other artifacts that make the entranceway taking patrons out of the rest of Headpinz and into Pinboyz feel like a passage into a bygone world.
The industrial chic ambiance of this, the second Bowl ‘N Barrel location erected by former Southern Methodist University roomies, Kyle Noonan and Josh Sepkowitz, evokes the rustic spirit of a European beer dive with its brick-laden interior, exposed pipes, and dim lights dangling over Chesterfield sofas. Noonan and Sepkowitz concede the repurposed warehouse feel of Bowl ‘N Barrel San Antonio was a deliberate and carefully arranged calculation rather than, you know, an actual, repurposed warehouse. The extremely minimalist lane facades and Victorian hall windows measure the vast lengths Noonan and Sepkowitz went to as they developed that vision for the venue, and the gorgeous results promise to keep patrons too dazzled to bother with debates about authenticity.
**Best New Center — Exterior**

**Pinstack**  
Plano, TX  
**Owner:** Entertainment Properties Group  
**Architect:** Coeval Studio  
**Manufacturer:** Brunswick Bowling Products

Pinstack’s radiant presence in the North Texas night drapes an outdoor lounge in a gush of light that likely has lured its share of patrons passing by after a long day at work, while the cedar-walled edifice is crowned with no-frills signage whose neon, Neutra 2 condensed bold lettering evokes a mid-20th-century vibe. The exterior’s design exhibits a subtlety and restraint other FECs eschew in favor of over-the-top concepts that may grab attention but also may overwhelm. Guests could be overwhelmed by the entertainment options inside this 50,000-square-foot space, too, where a ropes course tops a stacked arcade while the restaurant serves up culinary marvels such as mac-and-cheese pops. But the inviting exterior will at least have teased them in, and that is all any new business can ask for.

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**Best New Center — Lounge/Restaurant**

** Piedmont Social House**  
Charlotte, NC  
**Owners:** Charley and William Hodges  
**Architect:** Overcash Demmitt Architects  
**Manufacturer:** QubicaAMF

This Prohibition-era themed boutique establishment aspires to be “the social hub of Southwest Charlotte,” and its hip digs and menu loaded with local fare make a convincing stab at that lofty designation. Of the 72 beer taps and 40 beers total Piedmont boasts, 10 are from Charlotte-area breweries. The food, too, pays its homage to the Carolinas. The Cajun-tinged Low-Country chicken soup includes andouille sausage, re-roasted tomatoes, onions, celery, carrots, and rice. Other Carolinas cuisine includes chicken-and-waffle sliders, fried catfish and grits, “fried green’maters,” and succulent, buttermilk-brined fried chicken. You won’t have trouble finding a TV to watch while enjoying your down-home repast; Piedmont has 40 HDTVs. And don’t forget to bowl off the calories after your meal! Piedmont has 12 lanes featuring QubicaAMF’s SPL II Integra with XLI pinsetters and BES-X masking units.
The owner of Hooch & Blotto's, Nick Scott Jr. of the third-generation owned hospitality company, Scott Enterprises, knew he had a good thing going with the sports bar's homage to the days of Al Capone. The large, Prohibition-era themed establishment nonetheless struck Scott as needing something to "elevate the customer experience beyond gourmet burgers and craft beers." Enter QubicaAMF, whose Highway 66 lanes fused the place with a dash of character that Scott then complemented with custom lane facades, leather lounge couches, and high-top tables. He also installed QubicaAMF's cutting-edge Scoring system, BES-X, whose "custom themes and interactive games have been a real hit." Scott says bowling has created "a new buzz around Hooch & Blotto's." We bet his patrons agree.

**BEST RENOVATED CENTER**

**HOOCH & BLOTTO’S**

Erie, PA

Owner: Nick Scott Jr.
Architect: Dynamic Designs
Manufacturer: QubicaAMF

Woodland Bowl's status as a perennial host of some of the highest-profile PBA Tour events over the decades, including the U.S. Open, the USBC Masters, and the PBA Tournament of Champions, made its recent renovation a particularly buzz-worthy project. The center's new exterior by Paradigm Design, an architectural firm based in Grand Rapids, Mich., symbolizes the comprehensiveness of its transformation. A large bowling pin lording over the new entranceway sparkles with red and white lighting. The brick columns lining the walkway to the door remain, but are now coated over in a sleek, silvery-white tone as LED lights bathe them in an electric hue of blue at night. Rings of green lighting crown the top of the building. The boldness of Woodland's makeover suggests this is a center as sure of its future as it is proud of its history.

**BEST RENOVATED CENTER EXTERIOR**

**WOODLAND BOWL**

Indianapolis, MD

Owner: Jim Doty
Architect: Paradigm Design
Manufacturer: Brunswick Bowling Products

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OLROUND VEEENDAAL

Owners: Bas Van Oldenborgh and Sander van Muiswinkel
Architect: De Horeca Fabriek
Manufacturer: QubicaAMF

The transformation of Olround Veenendaal is so fresh and daring that it leaves you certain it has to be a brand new center, not the result of a renovation, which it is. Decadent dining areas featuring rustic, brick walls, fire pits, and plush, ample seating complement the equal doses of class patrons get on the lanes. QubicaAMF provided spectacular and unique masking units while also powering Bowltech’s White Lanes. The center feels as comfortable hosting traditional bowling events as it is kicking up a party on Saturday night, when LED lights flash through the dimmed atmosphere to create as convincing a club environment as any entertainment center.

PINHEADS FEATURING ALLEY’S ALEHOUSE

Owner: Kevin Walter
Architect: The Design Shack
Manufacturer: QubicaAMF

Patrons of Louie’s Sports Bar inside Pinheads could hardly have recognized the place after it became Alley’s Alehouse. Where there were pedestrian tables topped with tin napkin dispensers and ketchup and mustard squeeze bottles, there is now silverware bundled in black, cloth napkins at rest on high-top tables fashioned out of dark, thick wood. Where there were a couple of cushioned seats tossed in the corner by an arcade game, there is now an ornate, brick replacement with large, leather seats and sofas gathered around it; where there was a drab, tile floor and carpeting there is now wood flooring. Alley’s Alehouse, ultimately, constitutes one of the most remarkable makeovers of a bowling-center lounge in years.