

Indoor Skydiving Center iFly Opens This Month in Gaithersburg

Facility simulates free-fall experience for individuals and groups

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Local residents curious about the sensation of free fall—but maybe not so eager to jump out of a plane—can soon get the experience right off I-270.

Later this month, iFly Montgomery will open at 9400 Gaither Road, across the highway from the Rio Washingtonian Center, in Gaithersburg.

The center uses fans in a tunnel space to simulate the free fall portion of skydiving, general manager Kathryn Eckert said. After some training, people of all ages and abilities can take flight, a few feet off the ground.

“We definitely want to make flight accessible to everybody,” Matt Owen, the sales manager at iFly, said. “If you’re afraid of heights or even if you’re an experienced skydiver, you’re still going to have a great time flying at one of our tunnels.”

The flights are quick—the standard package offers just two flights for one minute each—but Eckert said that matches the typical skydiving experience. Many people don’t realize that the free fall from a skydiving plane to the ground typically only lasts about 45 seconds, she said.

Before customers can fly, they put on flight gear and receive instruction focusing on how to move and respond to the instructor in the tunnel. Then instructors accompany them as they lean into the tunnel, and both are suspended about 4 feet in the air by four powerful fans.

Two flights for one person are \$79.95 for off-peak hours and \$89.95 for weekends. Reduced prices are available for groups of six people or more.

Part of an international chain, iFly has 69 other locations around the world, including one near Baltimore.

“We’re very excited about coming into Montgomery County,” Eckert said. “Just because of the great people here. We’re excited to have it on this side of Maryland.”

The center is aiming for a mid-May opening and is accepting reservations starting May 25.



The new iFly Montgomery is preparing to open.

VIA KATHRYN ECKERT