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Bar of Modern Art vets helping reshape Spice Bar

The creative team behind the Bar of Modern Art is putting its expertise into spicing up a one-time Park Street competitor.

Tom Starker and Pam Theodotou have partnered with Columbus-based Corso Gallicchio Ventures LLC for an ownership stake and operational control of Spice Bar, the club that was the development company's first venture onto Park Street.

"How can we get more customers? Where were our customers at? They were at BoMA," said Chris Corso, co-owner of Corso Gallicchio with Mike Gallicchio. "When that partnership fell apart, we thought we'd reach across the aisle. They know food. They know how to run a place."

The new venture, which will shift the venue more toward a restaurant than a club, is a rebirth for both Spice and for Starker and Theodotou, who sold their stake in BoMA and left the East Broad Street club and entertainment venue within the last year because of disagreements with other investors.

Though their recent history is as competitors, Corso and Starker worked together in the past on some of Corso's previous ventures, including now-defunct Columbus clubs Mekka and Red Zone.

Starker said the name will stay the same but much of the business will change. He dubs the new Spice a "gastro-lounge" offering contemporary "four-star food, but not at fine dining prices."

It has the culinary chops. Executive Chef Brian Parker's previous two stops were at BoMA and M, Cameron Mitchell's fine-dining restaurant at Miranova.



RESTAURANTS

DAN EATON

The club aspect is being toned down, but will not go away. The 11,000-square-foot space, including the patio, will offer three different environments for patrons — the main dining area, the bar and the patio — though Starker said he could not share specifics about those changes yet.

"It will have our stamp on it," Starker said. "It won't be based around art, but it will have a big-city feel."

He also said they hope to draw a wide array of customers, from those who want to eat, to those who want to dance, to those who just want to grab a drink before or after a hockey or baseball game.

Spice will be open through Halloween weekend, closing Nov. 2 for the renovations and reopening Nov. 18.

Corso said being free of day-to-day operations of Spice Bar will allow him to pursue other opportunities on Park Street. Corso Gallicchio owns more than 35,000 square feet of space along the road that bridges the Arena District and the Short North.

Victorian Village deli decides it's supper time

At a time when profit-squeezed restaurants are reducing hours and reformulat-

ing menus, Spinelli's Deli is doing the opposite.

The Victorian Village breakfast and lunch destination has added dinner hours, a move that's led to added staff and an expanded menu, but one that does not have co-owners Joe Spinelli and Bill Ward nervous, even in these times

of tight margins.

"This is actually our conservative expansion," Spinelli said. "We decided we wanted to grow and it made more sense to expand this than to open a second store or move to a new location."

The business, 767 Neil Ave., is open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Friday, while keeping the same weekend hours of 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Spinelli said the restaurant hired three new employees and added roughly 15 dishes to the menu for the dinner hours. The five flatbread pizzas — including a Sunflower Seed Chicken Caesar, a recipe

submitted by a loyal customer — are between \$6.99 and \$7.99

and the five pasta selections are between \$6.99 and \$8.49. The familiar breakfast and lunch menu is available at dinner as well.

Spinelli declined to share annual sales, but said the business is up 10 percent in 2008 with 65 percent of sales coming from in-store purchases and the balance from catering.



**Spinelli's
Deli**
Victorian Village's Neighborhood Deli

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