

Another Legit Restaurant Opens on Granby: Saint Germain

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Saint Germain, a modern American restaurant featuring vintage cocktails in the old Havana's space, opens tonight. It's the latest restaurant to ride the wave of new residential units flowing into Downtown.



Behind Saint Germain are Tiffany Kidwell-Gaylord, who created the original Havana's 15 years ago, and her younger brother, David Hledik, whom big sister effusively adores.

"He's the star," said Kidwell-Gaylord, who also opened Club Soda and Isla, but recently took time off from the restaurant industry to deal with health issues. "This one is about his culinary genius. He's worked with me at the restaurants since he was 14. He started as a dishwasher and worked his way up the line."



Lamb Neck "BO SSAM"

After spending time honing his craft at restaurants in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and at SOBU and Root in New Orleans, Hledik and his girlfriend, a mixologist named Lou Lou Martin, decided to bring their talents home to Norfolk.



Beets/Frill/Nitro Herbsaint/Blue Cheese/Cocoa-olive Crumble/Nib Syrup/Cane Sugar

"We're doing craft cocktails and vintage cocktails," Kidwell-Gaylord said, noting the menu will include items inspired by molecular gastronomy. "We're making our own bitters, tonics, and sodas. Nothing is coming from a gun or a can. Everything in the restaurant has been hand-made."

Clearly restaurateurs are bullish on Downtown Norfolk right now. Saint Germain joins a freshman class with the recently opened Sweat Tea's, Grilled Cheese Bistro and, soon, the Barrel Room. The sophomore and junior classes are stocked as well, with Chartreuse Bistro, Luce, Field Guide, Gershwin's, and The Parlor over in the arts district. It's a good time to be hungry with a few dollars in your pocket in Downtown

Norfolk.

"With Buddy (Gadams) building so many apartments, that's giving energy to guys like me who are pitching," said Bobby Wright, who owns numerous Downtown properties, including the space now occupied by Saint Germain. "We've got a stable base of residents, tourists, and shoppers. Now is the time to open up and become a new habit for residents of Buddy's 8 or 9 new buildings."

It hasn't been an overnight process. A livable urban core creates a market for apartments, which leads to new development, which gives a home for new residents who, then, can support all of the restaurants and retail. My, how far Downtown has come in the last 5 years, the last 25 years.

"If you look at Granby, there are plenty of things we'd like to have more of," said Wright. "More retail. The more buildings, the more residents, the more puppy dogs, the more bikes attached to light poles."



It's not just more, Wright stressed, but a quality more.

"Seems like everything is going to the next level," he said. "Slover, The Main, Cordish (Waterside)---we're looking higher. We're looking for the next ring, things that will re-attract and keep people coming back Downtown."

One such homecoming story is Kidwell-Gaylord, who is also a fan of Terrapin, Todd Jurich's, and Coastal Grill.

"Of course I'm going to toot his horn," she said, "but I think my brother is going to be a food pioneer in this area."

Saint Germain opens every evening at 5pm, and soon for lunch. For more, [here they are on Facebook](#).

About Jesse Scaccia

Editor-in-Chief, AltDaily

Jesse is the editor in chief of AltDaily. He has many biases and local involvements. They include being the chair of the public art committee and board member for the Norfolk Arts District; being a Public Art Commissioner for the City of Norfolk; former employee of TFC Recycling; graduate of ODU, where he taught writing; advocate for gay rights, animals rights, women's rights; member of Re:Vision Norfolk and Bike Norfolk; he believes that the mall is a sin and that without locally-owned businesses a city isn't worth a damn. He ran for City Council, lost, and then was nominated for School Board but that didn't happen either due, in part, to an absurd poem scandal (really!). He is a vegetarian and a yogi. He believes that marijuana should be legalized and would prefer that all hand guns be replaced with squirt guns but tyranny is also the worst, so he's not picking that battle. He's a former public school teacher in NYC and TV producer for BET. Email him: [jesse at altdaily.com](mailto:jesse@altdaily.com).

