

Chaz & Odette to open in former Toast! Kitchen & Wine Bar location in Shadyside

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By Melissa McCart / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

A new restaurant called Chaz & Odette will open at 5102 Baum Blvd. in the former Toast! Kitchen & Wine Bar space by early fall.

It is a partnership between chefs Odette Smith-Ransome, former assistant professor of culinary and hospitality management at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, and her former student Charles (Chaz) Smith, who had run his own catering business, Culinary Artists Catering Company, for more than a decade.

The lunch and dinner menu will be influenced by international cuisines and will feature flatbreads, sandwiches and “burgers with personality” for lunch, said Ms. Smith-Ransome, and dishes such a Tomahawk pork chop with mashed potatoes and collards for dinner, she said. They plan on making their own chutneys, condiments and pickles, too.

Ms. Smith-Ransome, who had been teaching at the Art Institute for 12 years, said she met Mr. Smith when he would come with a group for an evening class.

“He said he wanted to get into the culinary arts and I supported that,” she said. She became his mentor.

After running his own catering company for over a decade, Mr. Smith decided he wanted to open a restaurant and asked for her help. The two began a conversation about joining forces and decided to team up in this endeavor.

In addition to having a long-established work relationship, the two can tap resources from their days at the Art Institute, whether it would be for staff or customers.

Terri Sokoloff of Specialty Bar & Restaurant Brokers is handling the sale.

“With their combined talents and experiences, they will be able to bring a unique, fresh concept to the menu and the area,” Ms. Sokoloff said, citing Ms. Smith-Ransome’s travels through China, Europe and the Mediterranean and Mr. Smith’s travels through India and Southeast Asia.

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