



# Get ready for a second location of Porked, opening in East Liberty

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By Melissa McCart / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Porked is poised to open at 220 N. Highland Ave. in September, an expansion of the Lincoln Place sandwich shop that debuted in 2017.

Natalie Bobak and her partner Tony Molnar are the owners, overseeing a menu of BLTs stacked high with bacon, pulled-pork nachos, and family meals like bone-in pork chops, hot sausage and ham, along with sides like garlic-mashed potatoes and slaw. Prices range from \$9 to \$13 for sandwiches and \$12 to \$18 for larger plates; family meals run around \$35. Certain sandwiches for kids are half-price.

Ms. Bobak is a resident of Lincoln Place; she joins the restaurant industry having come from teaching at Pittsburgh Public Schools, where she had worked for over a decade.

Ms. Bobak says her partner was thinking about the concept that [turned into the first Porked location](#) (5203 Interboro Ave.) and she was on board. She found the original space when she was picking up her daughter from dance class, where she noticed a building for sale next door that was the size she was looking for — around 1,000 square-feet. Of that first location she said, “The idea is to create a community within the restaurant,” which is the goal for the East Liberty location, too.

The restaurant will debut in the space that had been Union Pig and Chicken from 2012 until 2016.

Ms. Bobak was turned on to the North Highland spot through Specialty Group broker Terri Sokoloff.

“I was really impressed with their food, the energy and the cleanliness of the operation,’ she said in a press release; and that the second location for the restaurant, “will bring a specialized food offering to an area that is steadily growing year after year.”

The new restaurant is on the stretch that will also be home to a new Vietnamese restaurant from Trinh Phan and partner Trang Somphonphakdy called [Two Sisters Vietnamese Kitchen](#), at 216 N. Highland Ave. in East Liberty. It will be a casual, sit-down BYOB Vietnamese restaurant serving pho, rice bowls and Vietnamese-style vermicelli dishes.

Porked joins a handful of pork-centric and barbecue spots in town, including [Spork Pit](#) (5349 Penn Ave.), which opened last week from chef and co-owner Christian Frangiadis — who's also behind Spork at 5430 Penn Ave. in Garfield that debuted in 2016. With cafeteria-style ordering, Spork Pit offers pulled pork, brisket, ribs, sausage and turkey by the 1/4-, 1/2- and pound. The restaurant includes 30 seats inside and an expansive deck with communal tables.

Over in Lawrenceville, [Walter's Barbecue](#) is queued up to open at 4501 Butler St. around Sept. 1 from Chris Morgan and Joel Bolden, founders of Morgan's Barbecue in Brooklyn. The 2,500 square-foot space will feature a kitchen and dining room, with another 3,400 square feet dedicated to outdoor seating. The smoker will be parked outside. The menu will include Frito chili pie and smoked wings as well as pulled pork, smoked pork sausage and brisket.

In Bloomfield, [Sugar and Smoke](#) is poised to open in the fall in what had briefly been Jabo's Smoque House and Saloon (4412 Liberty Ave.), and before that, longtime community anchor restaurant, Del's. Ms. Sokoloff also brokered that space with owner Andrea Robinson, who will open her full-service restaurant in the 6,000-square-foot space with a menu of brisket, turkey ribs, po'boys, etouffee and jambalaya.

Another barbecue spot that debuted in 2016, Pork & Beans Downtown (136 6th St.) debuted under the Richard DeShantz Restaurant Group umbrella. Well before that, there was [The Dream BBQ](#) (7600 N. Braddock Ave.) from Dave Jenkins that's been open for over a decade,

along with Wilson's from the Wilson family at 700 N. Taylor Ave., a name that's been associated with Pittsburgh barbecue since the 1960s.

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