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Correction

New oyster bar coming to East Liberty

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See correction at end of article.

After 10 years as a place to get Ethiopian food and then a year of Caribbean-infused Mexican fare, a restaurant space in East Liberty will soon be offering oysters along with Cajun-inspired cuisine.

[Chef Adam Kucenic](#) is in the process of leaving his position at the Pepperwood Grille in Greensburg to launch [Muddy Waters](#) Oyster Bar in the restaurant space on Highland Avenue [in which Casa Rasta closed recently](#) and after [a 10-year run as Abay, Pittsburgh's first Ethiopian restaurant, before it.](#)

Kucenic said he's been working to establish a restaurant in the city for some time after a well-traveled career in the restaurant business and saw a niche for a oyster bar in the city's East End after seeing them crop up in New York near an Ace Hotel there, a hotel brand coming soon to East Liberty as well.

"Oyster bars are starting to come back in popularity and we don't really have a good one in Pittsburgh," said Kucenic.

The name is based less on the famous blues musician [Muddy Waters](#) than on where oysters are harvested, although Kucenic acknowledged the influence.

"It's little bit of a mix of the blues, the south, New Orleans and also where the oysters are from," he said. "When they harvest the oysters, that's where they say they're going, out to the muddy water."

Kucenic's group reached a deal with the owner of the property, Glickman Real Estate Co., about a week ago.

[Muddy Waters](#) expects to operate with a strong bar business, said [Terri Sokoloff](#), a principal of Ross-based restaurant services firm Specialty Group, which will handle a liquor license transfer for the new restaurant.

"He's focusing on the bar aspect and he's bringing in the oysters from the east and west coast," said Sokoloff. "I think he's going to do something really funky. He's going to take a modern spin on a classic concept."

The bar is expected to specialize in wine, bourbon and a range of cocktails.

Kucenic is launching [Muddy Waters](#), his first restaurant on his own, after working in international destinations such as Paris and Moscow, as well as throughout the United States, including with Roy Yamaguchi, a James Beard award-winning chef.

[Muddy Waters](#) joins a busy restaurant row along Highland Avenue that extends from Shadyside into East Liberty that includes Casbah, Mad Mex and Noodlehead, as well as Spoon, BRGR and Patron Mexican Grill.

Kucenic hopes to open [Muddy Waters](#) by October, depending on the length of the space buildout and the liquor license transfer process.

Planning to live in an apartment nearby, Kucenic said, "I think it's the best place for us to be."

Correction

Specialty Group did not represent Muddy Waters in the lease negotiations for its new East Liberty restaurant a a previous version of the story reported. Specialty Group sold a liquor license to the restaurant and is also handling its transfer.

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