



New wine bar, Cork on Saginaw, to open in downtown Flint

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Lara Mossa | The Flint Journal



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'We would like to stay in Flint. We both like they vibe that is going on down here,' said Marge Murphy of Flint, right, as she stands next to the co-owner of Cork on Saginaw and husband Scott Martin in the building that will house the new wine bar called Cork on Saginaw at 635 S. Saginaw St., in downtown Flint Wednesday afternoon. The new wine bar will feature a menu that will have a seasonal feel. Murphy and Martin received their building permit today and are waiting their approval of their state liquor license. The projected open date is the beginning of January.

FLINT, Michigan — Local chef Marge Murphy and her husband, Scott Martin, will pop a few corks to celebrate when they open their new business this year.

Cork on Saginaw, a wine bar with bistro-style food, is scheduled to open in time for the December holidays.

The Flint couple have been working on the project for two years and received a Class C liquor license from the Flint City Council on Monday.

Cork on Saginaw will offer a full bar, seating for 60 and a wine-dispensing system that will allow customers to pay for 1-to-2-ounce samples of wine with a credit card. The business also will sell bottles of wine.

The store will feature more than 100 varieties of wine. Prices will start at \$4 a glass or \$1 an ounce for samples. Snacks will be \$4 to \$5 and small plates will range from \$5 to \$13.

Co-owners Murphy and Martin are renovating the 3,000-square-foot space at 635 S. Saginaw St. The building, next to Flint City T-shirts, used to be Dial Finance.

The pair are leasing the building and plan to create a casual, contemporary feel, Murphy said.

The bar will have eggplant-colored leather chairs, marble counters and a polished cement floor. In addition, the owners plan to renovate the lot next to the building in the spring for outdoor seating.

Cork on Saginaw will be open for dinner, starting at 4 p.m., and will serve homemade food, such as soup, salad, dinner entrees and appetizers. It will be closed Sundays and Mondays.

The owners looked at locations in Flint Township and Fenton but wanted to support the local community, Murphy said.

"I wanted to be part of what's going on downtown," she said. "We're offering something different, something no one else is doing."

Murphy, who has owned Special Occasions catering for 11 years, will dissolve that business and move her catering services into the wine bar.

Rivaling local hangouts, such as coffee shops and local bars, wine bars are tavernlike businesses that focus on selling wine and typically feature a wide selection of wines available by the glass.

The trend began to gain popularity in the 1990s, and wine bars have started popping up in metropolitan neighborhoods across the country. Some are associated with wine retailers.

The new bar will fit nicely with the mix of restaurants downtown, said Larry Ford, director of the Downtown Development Authority.

"It's terrific," he said. "I'm delighted about it. It's a different style. It's going to afford us another offering. It will attract people from outside the city to come down and enjoy the magic of the new downtown Flint."

The downtown district has three major restaurants and about five specialty diners, he said. Besides eateries, Ford said the downtown area could use a few service stores such as a pharmacy.

This year, downtown Flint already has welcomed an 8,000-square-foot grocery store called Witherbee's Market & Deli and the reopening of the Durant Hotel.



[Enlarge](#)

John Ehlike | The Flint Journal

John Ehlike | The Flint Journal The soon to be kitchen area at the building that will house the new wine bar called Cork on Saginaw at 635 S. Saginaw St., in downtown Flint Wednesday afternoon. The new wine bar will feature a menu that will have a seasonal feel. Murphy and Martin received their building permit today and are waiting their approval of their state liquor license. The projected open date is the beginning of January.

Cork on Saginaw gallery (3 photos)

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