



Coming Soon

How Forthcoming Industry Kitchen Plays to Downtown's Changing Demographics

By Laura Shunk Wed., Sep. 10 2014 at 1:18 PM
Categories: [Coming Soon](#)



Industry Kitchen

An artist's rendering of the future Industry Kitchen

Merchants Hospitality is responsible for a number of restaurants down in the Financial District -- besides SouthWestNY, the first restaurant to re-open immediately following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, it counts Clinton Hall, Pound & Pence, Merchants River House, and Watermark Bar among its portfolio. And it has more projects in the works, too, including **Industry Kitchen** (70 South Street), a restaurant tucked beneath the FDR slated to open this fall.

Abraham Merchant, president and CEO of the group who also lives in Battery Park City, says the neighborhood has changed immensely over the last 13 years. "Pre-9/11, 30,000 people lived below Canal; now 60,000 people live below Canal," he says. "Brookfield Place is doing amazing job of renovating the World Financial Center. Battery Park City used to be an area that New Yorkers didn't know, but now people are gravitating downtown. The museum has brought a lot of traffic, and millions of square feet are being developed. This is the third largest commercial office district in the country after midtown and Chicago, but people live here; families live here. It's truly a neighborhood."

That changed, somewhat, the group's approach to its developments. "The area is looking for better product and ingredients," Merchant says. "Price becomes a little less of an issue - it's more about where can we deliver quality product, and how fresh can we be?"

That's the mentality that fed the plan for Industry Kitchen, an Economic Development Corporation-selected concept that fits into the development of the waterfront. Merchant says the focus here will be on seasonal market ingredients and simple American cuisine. And while the group has yet to identify a chef, he cites dishes like kale salad, pasta, and pizzas, which will be fired in one of two wood-burning ovens, which will anchor the cooking here. The other oven will be devoted to entrees like oven-roasted shrimp.

The list will pair to a line-up of a dozen of what Merchant's calling "super-craft beers," rare pours made in small batches that will rotate frequently.

The space itself is being designed by SHoP Architects, the same architects who built Barclays Center and much of the South Street Seaport -- "It's a great industrial building," says Merchant -- and will be outfitted with community tables inside and a patio outside. And it's meant to complement other waterfront development going on in the area. "We really want to commend the EDC for creating this beautiful esplanade," says Merchant. "That's been the catalyst for everything that comes down here."

Expect more from Merchants Hospitality downtown in the future, too -- "Any time we see a location downtown, we go for it," says Merchant. "We know the changing landscape. Our decisions are somewhat emotional, but they have been very profitable, too. There's good synergy in the neighborhood."

Industry Kitchen should come online in November.